

Realistic representations of contexts of use of the English language in ELT



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Introduction

The role of the English language in the world is currently undergoing significant changes, as it is becoming increasingly important in both international as well as national contexts. On an international level, a major development of the use of English is the increasing use of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). This extensive growth of ELF is the result of globalisation leading to more international communication, for which a shared communicative tool is needed. While the English language used to be learned by non-native English speakers (NNSs) in order to communicate with native speakers (NSs), it is now considered an important international language used in communication between NNSs with different linguistic backgrounds. In fact, there are approximately 300 to 400 million NSs, who are tremendously outnumbered by an estimated number of two billion NNSs (Bieswanger, 2008, pp.27-32). On a national level, a major development is that countries which traditionally consider English a Foreign Language (EFL) are increasingly using English in a more official manner. This is visible in, for example, universities using English as medium of instruction in order to obtain more international significance (Smit, 2010, p.59). Strikingly, this national development is both parallel as well as contrastive with the international increase of ELF. On the one hand, EFL countries are adjusting to the increasing international importance of the English language by adopting it in formal and official national settings. On the other hand, however, the expectations regarding the use of English in ELF settings and in official contexts do not match. Generally, effective communication is considered more important than accuracy in interaction between NNSs in ELF settings, while accuracy does play a significant role in formal settings such as education. This means that the English language is currently used in various contexts in which different norms and standards apply.

The extensive changes of context in which the English language is used suggest that learners of EFL need somewhat different linguistic skills than they did before these developments took place. For the past fifty years, the main goal of English Language Teaching (ELT) has been communicative competence. The increase of interaction in English between NNSs, however, adds new elements to the communicative skills EFL learners are likely to need (Bieswanger, 2008, p.30). The ability to communicate effectively in English may have already been the main focus of ELT, but with the increasing importance of the English language in both national and international contexts, this communicative competence has become even more

significant. At the same time, however, communicative competence cannot be achieved at the cost of accuracy, as learners do need to produce and process accurate standard English (SE) in an increasing number of formal settings. This means that ELT methods need to find a balance between teaching learners of English to communicate effectively in ELF settings, in which accuracy may not be the main goal, and preparing learners to use the English language in formal settings, in which accuracy is generally desired.

Previous research seems to suggest that there is a gap between what is taught in the average ELT classroom and the skills that learners of English need to master in order to obtain communicative competence in a world where ELF is used much more frequently than the standard American and British varieties of English. As Bieswanger (2008, pp.27-28) argues, ELF is hardly represented in ELT classrooms at all. Most ELT settings still use standard British and American English as the norm, even though only a very small percentage of the English speakers in the world actually speak these generalised varieties. Using these standards, as argued by Matsuda (2003, p.721), would only be suitable for students whose intention it is to communicate with NSs only. In many countries, however, the very reason why English is taught is because it is an important international language used all over the world. Therefore, it has been argued by several scholars that the curriculum should be adjusted to this purpose (e.g. Ates et al., 2015; Bieswanger, 2008; Hülmbauer et al., 2008; Matsuda, 2009; Suzuki, 2011). In practice, this means that English should no longer be considered a foreign language (EFL) learned for communication with NSs, but rather an international language (EIL), which can be defined as a form of English that is taught and learned with the intention of communicating with NSs as well as NNSs (Suzuki, 2011, p.145). Teaching EIL would not use SE as the only norm, as its main purpose is to prepare learners of English for international communication with other NNSs (Matsuda, 2003, p.719). Such a development would not mean completely letting go of all native-speaker norms, but would result in teaching methods which exemplify ELF by, for example, exposing students to non-native English varieties and allowing them to maintain their own foreign accents. Consequently, students could simultaneously be prepared for the use of English in ELF settings as well as more formal contexts.

A shift from teaching EFL to EIL can take place on several levels of ELT. It is not realistic to aim for the inclusion of all possible varieties of English in ELT classes, but there seem to be

three features of ELT that could be feasible to change in order to prepare learners for the non-standard varieties of English they are likely to encounter in the modern world. First of all, teachers could adopt new language models in which SE varieties are not necessarily the norm. For example, feedback on speaking exercises could focus on fluency rather than imitating native-speaker pronunciation. Secondly, textbooks and audio materials used in classrooms could use a wider variety of examples of interaction. For instance, listening exercises could include non-native English speakers in order to expose students to the varieties of English they are likely to encounter. Finally, ELT could be adjusted in terms of the way language proficiency is tested, as there could be more focus on range and fluency rather than accuracy according to NS norms. An example of this would be a complete acceptance of NNS accents in speaking exams. The adoption of one or more of these changes would indicate a correspondence between the global increase of ELF and the forms of English that are represented in ELT classrooms.

This thesis will investigate whether the mismatch between ELT and the real needs of students that is argued by several scholars is, indeed, visible in the context of secondary schools in the Netherlands, or that ELT methods illustrate a suitable balance between preparing students for ELF settings as well as more formal contexts. This will be done through attempting to answer the following two research questions:

1. To what extent do ELT methods at Dutch secondary schools prepare pupils for realistic contexts of use of the English language regarding the global increase of ELF on the one hand and the use of English in formal settings on the other?
2. How could a realistic representation of these contexts of use be established and/or improved in ELT methods at Dutch secondary schools?

In order to answer these questions, a number of issues need to be addressed. First of all, the shifting role of the English language in the world will be described and discussed in Chapter 1. The main focus will lie on the increasing use of ELF globally, but as the empirical research conducted in this thesis is based on a Dutch secondary school, the role of the English language in the Netherlands will be discussed as well. When deliberating on ELF, specific characteristics will be named and differences between ELF and SE will be defined. These characteristics and

differences will serve as an indicator of whether ELF is incorporated in the ELT classrooms investigated in this thesis.

Secondly, the current most dominant ELT methods need to be defined. This will be done in Chapter 2 through an overview of the most significant developments of ELT approaches and methods in the recent past and a discussion of whether the dominant approach corresponds with the current role of the English language in the world.

Chapter 3 will discuss previous research on the question whether current ELT methods suffice in preparing learners for the ways they are likely to use the English language in the real world. This will be done by deliberating on various case studies on this topic.

After this theoretical research, the balance between teaching English accuracy and preparing pupils for ELF settings that is visible in ELT classes at Dutch secondary schools will be investigated and described in Chapter 4. This will be done through a case study on a Dutch secondary school, which involves a textbook analysis, language testing analysis, classroom observations, questionnaires for pupils, and interviews with teachers and a teaching method developer.

Finally, based on previous research combined with the results found in this case study, Chapter 5 will provide recommendations on how English classes at Dutch secondary schools could be adjusted in order to correspond with the current role of the English language and the practical needs pupils are likely to have.

Chapter 1: Developments of the English Language

1.1 Introduction

Languages are characterised by their dynamic nature, as they are constantly developing. Naturally, this is also the case for the English language, which has undergone significant changes particularly in the past years of globalisation. As Hülmbauer et al. (2008, p.25) explain, it is important to acknowledge the fact that the English language is no longer what it used to be. English is evolving, as it is being used in very different contexts nowadays than it was in the past. The changes taking place in the English language are significant to consider when discussing ELT, as it seems desirable that changes in the language itself and its contexts of use should initiate corresponding changes in teaching methods and objectives. The two main developments of English discussed in this chapter are the increasing use of ELF on an international level, and the official status English has been obtaining in the Netherlands, which traditionally is an EFL country, on a national level.

1.2 English as a Lingua Franca

Due to globalisation, there is much more communication between speakers with different first languages (L1s), for which a common language between communicators is needed. The English language is a very common language to learn as a second language (L2), which has led to English often being the shared L2 between international interactors (Hülmbauer et al., 2008, p.26). On a global level, this development has resulted in a rise of communication between NNSs of English relative to NSs (Bieswanger, 2008, p.32). The variety of English that is spoken between NNSs is referred to as English as an International Language (EIL), or English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008, p.11).

It is quite complex to define specific characteristics of ELF, as it is not necessarily a particular variety of English, but rather a communicative function of English (Hülmbauer et al., 2008, p.27). In order to explain this thoroughly, firstly, the differences between English as a Second Language (ESL), English as a Foreign Language (EFL), and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) need to be discussed. All three are non-native English varieties, but they are connected with different contexts and countries due to different historical backgrounds. When discussing the role of the English language in specific countries, these countries are often divided into Inner Circle, Outer Circle, and Expanding Circle countries. The Inner Circle consists of countries

in which English is the L1, such as the United Kingdom and the United States. In these countries, English is used in both informal settings such as at home, as well as formal settings such as schools and the government. The Outer Circle consists of countries in which English was introduced by settlers in the colonial era, such as India and Nigeria. Here, English is often considered a second official language, as it is used in governmental institutions and education. In more informal settings, however, people often speak in different mother tongues. The Expanding Circle are countries that use English as a foreign language in order to communicate internationally. Despite the lack of an official status in the Expanding Circle, English can still play a significant role in these countries, but it is not officially acknowledged (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008, pp.16-17). ESL is traditionally taught in the Outer Circle, as English is considered an L2 there. The Expanding Circle considers English a foreign language and therefore teaches EFL (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008, pp.3-6). This means that both EFL and ELF are varieties of English used for international communication, but there is a distinction between these two as well. EFL is a language that is being taught and learned, which often happens by means of native English speaker norms. ELF, on the other hand, is a language that is being used, with no norms other than the ability to communicate effectively (Hülmbauer et al., 2008, p.28). Therefore, ELF is not one single variety, as it is spoken by so many different people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds who all use it slightly differently. In fact, it is argued that variability is one of the only solid characteristic of ELF, as all of its forms can be continuously adapted (House, 2009, p.143). The fact that ELF is not a specific variety of English is the reason why it could be defined as a function of the English language instead. Hülmbauer et al. (2008, p.27) explain that this communicative function means that speakers of ELF do not need to perfectly conform to native English speaker norms. ELF is a form of English consisting of an endless number of varieties that do not 'belong' to any English-speaking country and thus do not have standard norms or forms. The main goal of ELF users is not accuracy or to produce 'correct' SE, but to understand each other while using the English language with native- as well as non-native English speakers (Tomlinson, 2016, pp.54-55).

The fact that ELF is considered a dynamic form of English that does not conform to standard native-speaker norms can be problematic in various ways. The main problem seems to lie in the field of ELT, which is still very much based on traditional standards, such as American and British English. This means that the English that is taught and learned at school

does not match the actual practical needs that speakers of English will have in ELF settings. As Bieswanger (2008, pp.30-31) explains it, the standard British and American varieties of English that are usually taught in ELT classes are hardly ever encountered in real-life situations. The first reason for this is that not even most NSs speak the standardised forms used in ELT classrooms. The second reason is that learners of English are much more likely to encounter other NNSs, who have tremendously outnumbered the NSs (Bieswanger, 2008, pp.30-31). This begs the question how numerous and significant the differences between SE and ELF really are and to what elements of the English language they apply. As Bieswanger (2008, p.34) explains, the main difference between English varieties lies in pronunciation. ELF is spoken by many ESL speakers with different linguistic backgrounds, which implies that these speakers produce a different variety of English and, therefore, have different pronunciations. The fact that SE varieties are used as a reference in current ELT classes implies that L2 learners are not exposed to different pronunciations and accents and that they are expected to imitate SE pronunciation themselves. When applying the fact that effective communication is the main goal of ELF settings, however, ESL students would be better prepared for the way English is used in this setting when being exposed to non-standard pronunciations and, likewise, being allowed to maintain their natural foreign accent. Therefore, the absence or presence of this inclusion of non-standard accents and pronunciations should be paid attention to when analysing the practicality of ELT methods in today's global situation.

The emphasis on effective communication regardless of accuracy in ELF settings has led several scholars and linguists to go a step further than exposing L2 learners to non-standard varieties, as they argue for letting go of the native-speaker norms altogether (Bieswanger, 2008, p.32). Supporters of this innovation claim that it is not right to measure language proficiency by looking at aspects of the language that are no longer pertinent when it comes to speaking English in the real world. For example, striving to obtain a pronunciation that resembles the British RP should not be a priority in a world in which one is much more likely to communicate with other NNSs than with a user of RP. If speakers are to encounter NNSs, it does not seem necessary to be able to speak perfect SE, as the conversational partner probably does not do so either and the main goal in these situations is to understand each other. However, there is a downside to abandoning native-speaker norms. As Kirkpatrick (2007, p.14) argues, linguistic prejudice still exists in either the conscious or unconscious mind

of people. He mentions how empirical research has found that, for example, British RP is positively associated with perceived intelligence. These findings show that the extent to which speakers conform to the standardised forms do influence the way they are perceived. The use of non-standard or 'incorrect' English may not necessarily be an actual characteristic of ELF, but rather an illusion created by the ingrained perception of what exactly constitutes 'correct' English. Without linguistic prejudice and people holding on to SE being the only correct form, incorrect English would not exist and therefore not be a characteristic of ELF. Therefore, Ates et al. (2015, p.485) argue for considering the English language more pluralistic, including varieties arising from the growing number of speakers worldwide, which may not conform to native-speaker norms as much as others. Hülmbauer et al. (2008, p.32) also argue that the main matter that needs to be dealt with when it comes to the acceptance of ELF and EIL teaching is that communities need to accept that ELF should not be considered 'incorrect' English. They claim that this acceptance is already on the rise, but the main issues lie in the fact that it is still not considered acceptable in more formal settings. For example, people are not bothered by non-standard English in informal communication, but formal settings such as educational contexts should be characterised by SE. This ambiguity of the acceptance of non-standard English raises the question which differences between SE and ELF can realistically be incorporated in ELT classes. The fact that NNSs of English are expected to be able to produce SE in formal settings indicates that native-speaker norms are still necessary. This is also acknowledged by Matsuda (2003, p.721), who explains that the incorporation of ELF in ELT does not mean that the standard forms of the English language have to be completely let go off. The traditional standard varieties of English, such as British and American English, can and should still be used as reference in ELT. In fact, it is impossible to completely disregard the 'ancestor' of ELF, which is SE, as this is still the main influencer in any type of ELF communication (Hülmbauer et al., 2008, p.31). This means that SE is not only necessary in preparing learners for the use of English in formal contexts, but also for communication in ELF settings. This is the case, because speakers of ELF are not actually learning how to speak ELF, as they are simply using it by communicating in the EIL they were taught (Hülmbauer et al., 2008, p.28). This means that non-native speakers are still learning SE but it is argued that the focus should no longer be on producing and processing perfectly 'correct' English in all elements of the language. As Bieswanger (2008, p.34) explains, varieties of English usually differ most in pronunciation, which implies that this is an element of language learning that

may not need to conform to native-speaker norms as much as others. Combining this fact with the ever-increasing chances of encountering other non-native English varieties could suggest that an inclusion of non-standard pronunciations in ELT contexts would be practical. Thus, the increase of ELF could cause a change of focus regarding more flexible linguistic elements such as pronunciation. Being exposed to non-native varieties of English or being more accepting towards foreign accents would incorporate aspects of ELF in ELT classrooms. These kinds of developments are already visible in various ELT environments. Especially countries in which English is traditionally considered a foreign language are now increasingly teaching EIL. This change causes a shift in the main learning objectives, as native-speaker standards are less important while the main focus is put on understanding non-standard English and making oneself understood among non-native speakers (Matsuda, 2009, pp.169-170; Suzuki, 2011, p.145).

Additionally to the complications that the rise of ELF is causing in ELT, there are other consequences in the form of certain people being severely disadvantaged when it comes to education or careers. As Kirkpatrick (2007, pp.254-255) explains, the English language is becoming increasingly significant in science in particular, as the vast majority of scientific articles and journals are written in English. These articles are no longer written in the mother tongue of the authors, which leads to disadvantages among people who do not speak English, as they can no longer access recent scientific information nor can they contribute to the global scientific field by writing new articles themselves. Similarly, people or complete communities who do not speak English may not be able to access higher education or they may not have the same opportunities in the job market due to their inability to participate in the globalised world in which ELF seems essential. It should be noted, however, that formal settings like these often require the use of accurate and standard English. This, again, highlights the importance of not completely abandoning native-speaker norms. Interestingly, there are also claims of native English speakers being disadvantaged by the increasing usage of ELF. As McKay (2003, p.139) explains, the English spoken by NNSs is usually limited compared to NSs. Native English speakers are not used to these more limited varieties of English and may therefore have trouble understanding or making themselves understood when communicating with NNSs (Hülmbauer et al., 2008, p.27). In a world in which the non-native English speakers are outnumbering the native English speakers, this phenomenon may

actually result in the native speakers being disadvantaged in the long run. These problems are quite complex, as ELF, on the one hand, creates equality by speakers not necessarily having to conform to SE norms, while, on the other hand, inequality is created for specific groups who do not have the chance to acquire non-native varieties or to participate in the ELF community at all.

In short, globalisation has made English a lingua franca enabling international communication. ELF cannot be characterised by its many forms, but rather by its communicative function. The fact that ELF takes place in so many different varieties has resulted in the discussion whether native-speaker norms should be applied or disregarded. This discussion seems to mainly be a matter of perception, as linguistic prejudice stands in the way of acceptance. Proponents of abandoning native-speaker norms argue that, ideally, non-standard and 'incorrect' forms of English should be accepted in both informal as well as formal settings. This way, EIL can be introduced in educational settings in order to meet some of students' specific needs in the world and to create more equality in terms of global communication. However, native speaker norms should not be completely disregarded, as SE forms the foundation of ELF and is essential in the formal use of English.

1.3 English in the Netherlands

Another significant development regarding the English language is the increase of its formal use and official status in countries which traditionally consider English a foreign language rather than a second language. As discussed earlier, English was introduced to these Expanding Circle countries due to the spread of the language itself, which was mainly caused by globalisation and an increase of international communication. This spread of the language has become so extensive that scholars are speaking of a fourth crossing of the English language after the third crossing in the colonial era (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008, p.24). As a consequence of this extreme spread of the English language into Expanding Circle countries, the role of English has become very significant in various parts of Europe. On the one hand, this happened due to the economic and political power of countries such as the UK and the USA, and on the other hand due to European integration which called for a lingua franca. Nowadays, English plays an important role in almost all aspects of European life: international companies, relations, science, education, tourism, media, etc. This increasing importance of English within Europe has resulted in it often no longer being considered a foreign language, as it is gradually

taking the status of a second language (Edwards, 2016, pp.11-13). This shift means that the English language is now also being used in more formal and official settings. An example of such a formal setting is education. Until the recent past, education in Europe was usually only offered in the national language of the country. However, this is no longer the case, as there is a strong increase in the use of English at universities in both the Bachelor's, but mainly the Master's programmes (Smit, 2010, p.59). According to Smit (2010, p.62), the main reason why English is used in educational settings in Europe is that it encourages and enables international students to attend. A large international community gives the educational institution more prestige in today's globalised world. In order to be accepted into higher education, students frequently have to pass English proficiency tests, which often still use SE norms as the standard. Therefore, students are assessed based on their ability to produce a native-like English variety rather than their ability to participate in an English-based educational environment (Tomlinson, 2016, p.55). Interviews with students and teachers of such an English-based educational setting give the impression that they mainly see English as the language they can all use among each other and the language that gives them access to the rest of the world. Due to English being an L2 for all of them, they do focus on mutual understanding and adjusting their speech to accommodate for this rather than focussing on producing 'correct' English (Smit, 2010, p.63). These viewpoints illustrate that even within Expanding Circle countries, in which English has always been considered a tool for international communication, there seems to be a mismatch between the expectations of meeting native-speaker norms and the practical needs of students.

When looking at the Netherlands specifically, the English language is usually regarded positively. It is considered a language that gives the Dutch economy the possibility to be relevant on an international level, but it is also used within the Dutch government itself. Although English is not named officially in political contexts, it is reaching an unofficial second language status. This is visible in the fact that, for example, the website of the Dutch government has an English version and that many official political forms are available in English as well (Edwards, 2016, pp.42-43). Going back to the original example of education, English is used in Dutch higher education, as it is believed to prepare students for today's globalised world and to give them a better chance in international career opportunities. In 1992, however, a law was adopted that made Dutch the official language of education, unless

it was desirable for the specific learning context to use the English language. One of the exceptions that would constitute such a situation would be the presence of one or more international students, which, in reality, is very frequently the case. Therefore, education is still often realised in English (Edwards, 2016, p.31). Today, the Netherlands is the non-native English country with the largest number of English-taught higher educational programmes. Dutch is still commonly used in Bachelor's programmes, but 80% of the Master's programmes is taught in English. Strikingly, there are even complete institutions that have taken English as their official language of use or that have become officially bilingual (Edwards, 2016, p.32).

Despite this excessive use of English in education, the Netherlands is often still considered an EFL country, as it traditionally is an Expanding Circle country. Edwards (2016, pp.16-17), however, claims that 'English in the Netherlands can almost be called a second national language, rather than a strictly foreign one, given its wide use in the country in a large number of public spheres'. This statement suggests that the Netherlands is one of the countries that is moving from the Expanding Circle into the Outer Circle (Edwards, 2016, pp.16-17). This means that the importance of English is not only growing in international contexts, but that it is likely to continue to increase on a national level in this country as well.

In short, the role of the English language is changing on a national level in Expanding Circle countries, including the Netherlands. As this shift is taking place closer to home than the global growth of ELF, it may have an even greater impact on today's students of English. Therefore, it seems desirable for current ELT methods to adapt to the changes of the usage of English on national levels as well. Strikingly, these changes mainly take place in formal contexts, implying that native speaker norms and SE are more important on national levels than on an international level.

Chapter 2: The Development of Language Teaching

2.1 Introduction

As discussed in the previous chapter, the English language and its contexts of use have been and are still changing significantly, calling for developments to the same extent in ELT methods. During the twentieth century, foreign language teaching has, indeed, undergone major changes due to the emergence of various new language teaching ideologies (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.1). This period has been very influential in terms of ELT in the present, since it, as Richards & Rodgers (2001, p.1) claim, laid out 'the whole foundation of contemporary language teaching'. The history of language teaching and its dominant approaches can roughly be divided into two phases: the traditional grammar-focussed approach that was applied up to the 1960s, and the communicative approach that was adopted in the 1970s (Richards, 2006, p.6). This major shift that took place in the 1970s is referred to by Richards & Rodgers (2001, p.6) as the 'Reform Movement' within language teaching. This chapter will elaborate on this shift from traditional grammar-focussed language teaching to the now most standard language teaching paradigms. Subsequently, the potential problems arising from the shifting role of the English language in combination with dominant language teaching models of the present will be discussed.

2.2 Traditional Grammar Teaching

Traditional language instruction focussed on grammatical competence, which was established through teaching explicit rules, repetitive guided practice, and memorisation of correct sentences in order to form 'good habits' (Richards, 2006, pp.4-6). This way of language learning stems from the time when Latin was studied as a way of improving intellectual abilities rather than to actually become a fluent speaker. It was believed that studying the Latin language was beneficial for the mind, because it both conditioned the brain regarding learning in general, as well as allowed learners to gain information first-hand from classic literature written in Latin. From then on, it gradually became more common to study modern languages due to an increase in contact between speakers of different languages in Europe (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.7). These languages, however, were continued to be studied through traditional grammar-based methodologies (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, pp.4-5). Consequently, a method known as the Grammar-Translation Method was established as the

standard language teaching methodology in the nineteenth century. This method is characterised by the viewpoint that the ultimate goal of foreign language learning is to read its literature, which is accomplished through analysing grammar rules before applying them in translation tasks (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, pp.5-6). Other formerly dominant methodologies that stem from traditional language teaching are audiolingualism and the structural-situation approach, which both emphasise grammar and underlying structures of language (Richards, 2006, p.6-7). Audiolingualism, for example, is a method that focusses on teaching grammar through positive and negative feedback by having students imitate grammatical structures expressed by the teacher (Decoo, 2001). Especially the aspect of learning grammar through imitation strongly resembles the typical grammar-focussed approach. It is clear that this, and the other main teaching models from this era, were strongly influenced by the traditional methods of almost exclusively focussing on grammar and ignoring most communicative functions of language.

The traditional approach started receiving criticism when a shift took place in beliefs regarding the way languages are used as well as learned (Richards, 2006, p.4). The main concern that was being expressed was that the solely explicit ways of foreign language teaching at the time were likely to impede true fluency in the language (Doughty & Varela, 1998, p.114). This was considered a problem, as the increase of communication between people from different countries contributed to oral fluency being the new goal in modern foreign language learning. People no longer wanted to learn languages to improve intellectual skills, but to actually be able to communicate with people from different linguistic backgrounds. Additionally, new linguistic theories revealed that the human brain does not learn languages through 'forming good habits' and reproducing grammatical structures, as was traditionally believed to be true. A major contributor to this change of perspective on language learning was Noam Chomsky and his introduction of the notion of 'competence' as an addition to 'performance'.

2.3 Noam Chomsky's 'Competence'

Noam Chomsky (1965, p.4) claimed that there is a distinction between competence and performance when it comes to speaking a language. Performance points at the actual use of the language, whereas competence goes a step deeper into the brain and has to do with the knowledge of the language one has. These notions of performance and competence do not

always correspond, as many errors may occur in someone's performed speech while they do have the knowledge to acknowledge these errors (Chomsky, 1965, p.4). This suggests that competence includes more linguistic knowledge than what is visible in performance alone. Therefore, Chomsky (1965, p.4) says linguistic theory is 'concerned with discovering a mental reality underlying actual behaviour', as the observed language use may not be an exact picture of the actual competence and, therefore, the language proficiency.

These insights introduced by Chomsky resulted in the argument that there is more to language proficiency than explicit grammatical knowledge alone. This declarative knowledge may be visible in a speaker's performance, but internal and implicit knowledge is what determines their true proficiency. This means that the traditional grammatical teaching methods do not cover all aspects of language learning. Richards & Rodgers (2001, p.153) give a concrete example by stating that the traditional method does not take into account the fact that speakers of a language can produce and process an infinite number of unique sentences, meaning that the speaker requires a sense of creativity and flexibility that cannot be taught through simple repetition and memorisation. Speakers must have the competence to process and produce sentences they have never encountered before, which can only be accomplished through implicit knowledge of how the language works. This creativity was not addressed by traditional teaching methods, as these only focussed on reproduction and/or translation.

According to Richards (2006, pp.9-13), the abilities associated with competence rather than performance were not completely ignored in the traditional language teaching period, but it was believed that they were learned through experience and no explicit attention had to be paid to it during instruction. Due to the emphasis on the importance of competence in Chomsky's new perspective, this belief was questioned, as people started to believe that traditional teaching was lacking and that a new teaching method was needed. This new method was strongly inspired by Dell Hymes' notion of 'Communicative Competence'.

2.4 Dell Hymes' 'Communicative Competence'

Chomsky's notion of 'competence' was taken a step further by Dell Hymes' introduction of 'communicative competence'. As Duranti (2005, pp.19-20) argues, the main difference between Chomsky's and Hymes' definition of competence is that Chomsky believed that competence and performance could be studied separately in their role in language

proficiency, while Hymes claimed that both notions were a strongly intertwined feature of language proficiency.

Hymes claimed that successful communication requires knowledge of possibility, feasibility, appropriateness, and attestedness. Possibility refers to what is possible in a language in terms of grammar. Feasibility goes one step further and is about what can realistically be processed by interlocutors, regardless of whether utterances are grammatically possible. Appropriateness has to do with context and with the relationships between speakers. Finally, attestedness refers to whether something is actually done in real-life situations (Cook, 2003, pp.42-46). In other words, as Richards (2006, pp.9-13) words it, Hymes' definition of communicative competence 'included knowing what to say, how to say it appropriately based on the situation, the participants, and their roles and intentions'. All four features are taken into account when language is being produced in order to communicate effectively. This explanation gives a clear reason why the traditional grammar-focussed language teaching methodologies are not sufficient, as grammar is only applicable to the feature of 'possibility'. In order to be proficient enough to communicate fluently with others, the other three features need to be mastered as well.

While Chomsky's discussion of competence had already led to criticism towards the Traditional Approach, Hymes' introduction of communicative competence became the inspiration for a tangible new language teaching approach known as the Communicative Approach. Language teachers agreed that communication is the main purpose of language learning, which led to the introduction of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the 1970s and 1980s (Richards, 2006, pp.9-13). This teaching paradigm is characterised by the emphasis on fluent communication as the main goal of language learning rather than explicit knowledge of language features such as pronunciation and grammar (Cook, 2003, pp.35-36). As Cook (2003, pp.35-36) and Bieswanger (2008, p.29) argue, CLT did not only become the most standard methodology very quickly, it has remained the dominant model in ELT up until today. It is important, however, to acknowledge that the communicative approach has not always been a stable and successful one. Hymes' four types of knowledge within language proficiency were not always seen as interacting components, but more as separate skills that need to be mastered. According to Cook (2003, pp.46-47), this was part of an overreaction to the past language teaching approaches. He claims that possibility was often completely

disregarded, as it had too much to do with grammar, while feasibility and attestedness were considered too complicated to teach and therefore ignored. This means that in these cases an incomplete communicative teaching methodology was applied. This potential problem with communicative teaching models is useful to keep in mind when analysing models that are being used in present-day language teaching. It also contributes to an optimistic expectation that the Communicative Language Teaching methods themselves are not static and do adjust depending on the needs of language learners. The fact that CLT methods used to be prone to ignoring grammar all together, while this is now seen as an error in CLT history, implies that CLT methods are continuing to develop over time.

In short, language teaching ideologies and methodologies have changed significantly in the past centuries. The Communicative Approach has been the most dominant approach in language teaching ever since it was introduced in the 1970s. Due to the major changes regarding the national and international roles of the English language discussed in the previous chapter, the effectiveness of this teaching approach in today's context should be researched. Does the CLT paradigm as it is applied in the present correspond with the current needs of learners of English?

2.5 CLT in Today's World

The traditional grammar-focussed language teaching approach was no longer sufficient when the world was changing and more communication between Europeans resulted in the need for a more communicative model (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.7). As the world is still changing and international communication has spread out even more, the need for communicative linguistic skills has become even greater. This development has led several scholars to question the sufficiency of the standard communicative paradigm in today's context (e.g. Bieswanger, 2008; Matsuda, 2009; Suzuki, 2011).

The first and foremost indication of whether today's teaching approaches match the current global contexts in which English is used would be an analysis of the L2 learners' real needs. As Cook (2003, pp.35-36) argues, it is important to identify the goals and needs of students before and during the L2 learning process. By doing this type of analysis, teaching materials can be adjusted to fit the contexts in which students are likely to find themselves, making the learning process more authentic. This authenticity is not only useful in reaching the eventual goal, but it is also argued to improve motivation within the students as the

learning process will feel more useful to them (Cook, 2003, pp.35-36). It is clear that teaching approaches must meet the specific needs of students in order to be effective. In terms of ELT, this means that the teaching methods used have to correspond with partially contrastive needs stemming from the increasing use of ELF and the growing official role of English within EFL countries.

Many descriptions of CLT seem to correspond with the increasing use of ELF. For example, in the 1980s, when communicative language teaching was still in the developmental stages, William Littlewood wrote a book for language teachers with students who 'want to prepare themselves [...] to be able to communicate socially on straightforward everyday matters with people from other countries who come their way' (Littlewood, 1981, p.ix). This description of the ultimate goal of L2 learning emphasises the importance of social communication, which implies that a mutual understanding between speakers is more important than being perfectly accurate in the L2. Similarly, Canale & Swain (1980, pp.9-11) focus in their description of CLT on 'basic communication skills' that L2 learners are likely to need in real life. The emphasis on communicative skills fits very well in today's globalised world in which ELF is used as a tool for international communication. As ELF does not have any native speakers and, therefore, no native-speaker norms, there are no correct or incorrect forms of ELF, making communication through mutual understanding most important. Additionally to the focus on effective communication, accuracy is also incorporated in CLT methods. Littlewood, for example, acknowledges that grammatical competence is also necessary in order to be an effective communicator (Littlewood, 1981, p.x). Cook (2003, pp.35-36) agrees with this statement and emphasises that 'accurate use of the language system [remains] the major source for successful communication'. Instead of ignoring explicit grammar rules, communicative skills should be taught additionally to grammar.

The fact that learners of English are likely to encounter both ELF settings in which non-standard English is accepted as well as formal situations in which they are expected to conform to native-speaker norms may imply that communicative competence on its own does not completely suffice, but this ability to change one's language depending on context is actually part of communicative competence. Richards (2006, pp.9-13) names several factors that need to be taken into account when communicating appropriately, such as different situations, participants, roles of participants, and intentions. Cook (2003, pp.35-36) emphasises the

importance of teaching students to adjust their speech to specific contexts by stating that ‘the essence of CLT is a shift of attention from the language system as end in itself to the successful use of that system in context’. Nowadays, L2 learners of English are likely to encounter many different contexts in which they will have to use the English language. Learning how to adjust speech strongly corresponds with the growing number of ELF users, as each interlocutor may have a different level of proficiency or a different linguistic background, requiring the conversational partner to speak differently than they normally would in order to establish mutual understanding. Adaptive skills also match with the increasing official status of English in EFL countries, as L2 learners in these countries are likely to use English in both formal as well as informal settings, which require different ways of communication.

In short, the main aspects of the CLT paradigm seem to correspond well with the current role of the English language in the world. The emphasis on communicative effectiveness matches the increasing use of ELF, and the use of SE varieties as reference parallels the official status English is obtaining in EFL countries.

Chapter 3 – Previous research on the representation of ELF in ELT

3.1 Introduction

Due to the increasing importance of effective communication between NNSs in international contexts, a large number of previous studies have analysed the extent to which learners of English as an L2 are prepared for these settings in current ELT methods. The majority of the authors of these studies concluded that ELF is currently not sufficiently represented in ELT and, thus, that there is a mismatch between ELT methods and the real contexts of use of the English language. Elements of ELT that have been argued to underrepresent ELF range from textbook content, language models, teaching trainings, teachers' personal perceptions, and complete secondary school curricula. This chapter will discuss previous research conducted on this topic.

3.2 Case Studies

Many studies on ELT methods in various countries illustrate that native-speaker norms are applied in most cases. Indonesia is an example of a country in which SE models are considered the norm. As Jayanti & Nohrami (2014, p.6) explain, Indonesian teachers of English even have a strong preference for textbooks written and published in English-speaking countries, as they have feelings of distrust towards ELT materials produced in Indonesia itself. In fact, some teachers even describe materials produced in Indonesia as 'inaccurate and incomplete'. It is believed that learners of English can only be successful in communication if they can produce accurate and native-like speech. This perception of what constitutes language proficiency indicates that non-standard varieties are not represented well in Indonesian ELT settings. This seems to also be the case in Brasil, where Dutra & Costa (2016) distributed a questionnaire about non-standard pronunciation among prospective teachers studying modern languages at university. They argued that the increase of ELF including all its non-standard varieties could indicate that pronunciation according to native-speaker norms may not be necessary anymore (Dutra & Costa, 2016, pp.57-57). However, when analysing the data generated by means of the questionnaire, they found that most of the respondents preferred to keep standard pronunciation as the norm, as this has more prestige. Nevertheless, despite this refusal to let go of SE, the data also showed that there is a shift taking place regarding the awareness of

non-standard varieties (Dutra & Costa, 2016, p.69). Matsuda (2003, p.721), who analysed ELT methods in Japan, argues that this reluctance to diverge from SE does not correspond with the practical needs of learners of English. She explains that the limitation to SE in ELT will make it more difficult for learners to interact with the NNSs they are likely to encounter when they will use the English language outside the classroom. Therefore, she argues for a change in the way language proficiency is measured in Japan, which currently uses standard American and British English as the norm. She suggests that learners should not be assessed based on their formal accuracy, but rather on their communicative effectiveness (Matsuda, 2003, pp.723-724). These three examples of case studies on the representation and acceptance of non-standard varieties of English illustrate that many ELT contexts do not seem to incorporate the global increase of ELF at all, as they simply measure learners' proficiency by the extent to which they speak according to native-speaker norms.

Other studies found that non-standard varieties and their significance in today's globalised world are acknowledged in ELT, while, at the same time, the language model applied in these classes still does not allow much divergence from SE. Interestingly, Suzuki (2011) analysed teachers' perceptions about non-standard English in Japan, but found slightly less resistance regarding this matter than Matsuda (2003). Suzuki's study focusses on teaching programmes and teachers' opinions. He explains that the majority of teaching programmes solely use standard American or British English as language model, which means that teachers are likely to apply this model themselves as well (Suzuki, 2011, p.146). However, he did find that prospective teachers who followed a Multicultural Education course agreed on the fact that learners of English should at least be made aware of the existence of non-standard varieties (Suzuki, 2011, p.149). Despite this agreement, the participants did not consider non-standard varieties to be equal to SE. These data led to the conclusion that an understanding of the importance of non-standard varieties in today's world does not necessarily mean that teachers will include these varieties in their classes. Suzuki claims that this is due to 'deeply ingrained beliefs that there is a single useful form of English for international communication, and this is standard English' (Suzuki, 2011, p.151). The findings of this study imply that prospective teachers may not be willing to incorporate non-standard English in ELT classes, as they think these varieties are inferior to SE. A study with similar results was conducted by Young & Walsh (2010), who found that language teachers from various cultural backgrounds

were willing to acknowledge the fact that non-standard varieties are much more common in the world than SE, yet they still would not choose to cover these varieties in their classes. This study (Young & Walsh, 2010) researched which varieties are currently taught in ELT and which varieties language teachers would like to teach. They (2010, p.126) argue that the perceptions language teachers have regarding varieties of English strongly affect their overall behaviour inside the classroom. In fact, these opinions may influence the ELT setting even more than the actual teaching methods and materials that are being applied. Due to this importance of teachers' perceptions, twenty-six English language teachers from various backgrounds in Europe, Africa, and Asia were recorded while participating in discussions on this topic. All of the teachers were studying at the same university in the UK, but they were all experienced in teaching as well (Young & Walsh, 2010, pp.128-129). The vast majority of the participants stated that they used a standard variety, mostly American English, as language model in their classes, while not one participant mentioned ELF or EIL. Their reasoning for this choice was that they needed a standard and they felt like this standard would suit their students' needs best. When the suggestion of including ELF was made, most participants responded in a positive way, but only one stated that they would actually include it (Young & Walsh, 2010, pp.131-132). Overall, it was concluded that the teachers were not open to teaching a non-standard variety. They did acknowledge that SE may not correspond with the way English is used in the real world, but they stuck to their viewpoint of SE being more practical to teach, both for themselves as well as their students (Young & Walsh, 2010, p.135). It seems reasonable that these participants consider teaching SE more practical for themselves, as teaching one variety of English narrows down what needs to be covered in class and it makes it easier to determine whether students' are producing correct or incorrect speech. However, the fact the participants indicate that they think SE is more practical for L2 learners of English, while they do acknowledge that it is not the most commonly spoken variety, implies that they consider the prestige that comes with speaking formally accurate English of great value.

The reluctance to incorporate non-standard varieties in ELT may also be caused by more practical reasons, as seems to be the case in a study conducted in Germany. In this study, Bieswanger (2008) analysed the full curriculum of English classes at a German secondary school in terms of its inclusion of different varieties of English. He concluded that little time was devoted to non-standard varieties, although these are briefly mentioned in the curriculum

of the final two years of secondary schools. The lack of acknowledgment of varieties other than the norm are, according to Bieswanger, caused by the fact that there are not enough English classes to cover more than the bare minimum of what pupils need to know for tests and exams (Bieswanger, 2008, p.38). Furthermore, teachers thought it would be too complex to accept non-standard varieties, as this would make it more difficult to determine whether pupils' answers are correct or incorrect (Bieswanger, 2008, p.42). These data imply that the significance of non-standard varieties is acknowledged, but that the actual inclusion of these varieties is not feasible, due to practical reasons regarding limited classes and correcting pupils' work.

Additionally to classroom practices, Bieswanger (2008, p.42) also investigated the way prospective language teachers are trained. He found that non-standard varieties are not thoroughly addressed in these settings either. He argues that this results in teachers not having the skills to discuss different varieties in class, which could be the reason why these teachers consider any variety other than the norm incorrect. Therefore, he found, teachers do not think it is important to include non-standard varieties in classes, as these will not be accepted in exams. These findings indicate that the perception of teachers regarding the representation of ELF in ELT settings could be influenced by the way they are trained to become a language teacher. For this reason, Matsuda (2009, p.171) argues for change in teacher training programmes. She claims that elements of ELT such as curricula, language models, and teachers' perceptions solely illustrate that there is a mismatch between ELT and the use of English in the real world, but that analyses of these aspects do not result in solutions to underrepresentation of ELF. A better understanding of the way language teachers are trained would give more insight in the reasons why non-standard varieties are often not accepted in ELT. As Matsuda explains, changes can only take place if 'teachers [...] have a good understanding of the historical spread and current use of English' (Matsuda, 2009, p.171). Ates et al. (2015) conducted a study on teaching programmes and found that the lack of exposure to non-standard varieties in teaching degrees is, indeed, an important contributor to the fact that teachers do not seem willing to incorporate these varieties in their classes. They expected teachers to be more open-minded regarding non-standard English varieties if these are covered in their preservice training. Therefore, they investigated this claim by promoting non-standard English by means of instructional activities in a teacher programme before

conducting an analysis of the prospective teachers' opinions about non-standard English. They state that the 'findings from both quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data are promising', as the instructional exercises did lead to a change of perspective regarding the inclusion of non-standard varieties (Ates et al., 2015, p.496). These results indicate that specific teacher trainings could bring more awareness regarding the usefulness of non-standard English among teachers.

Naturally, willingness from teachers to expose their students to non-standard varieties and to prepare them for ELF communication in particular is not the only factor needed in order to truly represent ELF in ELT classrooms. Therefore, Vettorel (2018) analyses the inclusion of ELF and EIL on a different level, namely the textbooks used in English classes at an Italian secondary school. More specifically, Vettorel (2018, p.60) researched the inclusion of pragmatic communicative strategies in secondary school English classes in Italy. She claims that it is important to use more pluralistic language models in ELT settings in order to teach pupils practical skills for effective communication in encounters with other NNSs. It is argued that specific communicative strategies, such as negotiation and co-construction of meaning, are crucial in ELF contexts (Vettorel, 2018, p.58). Therefore, a textbook analysis of twenty textbooks was conducted in order to investigate to what extent these strategies are covered in Italian secondary school English classes (Vettorel, 2018, p.60). The generated data revealed that communicative strategies were not frequently included in the textbooks, despite some useful examples in, for example, vocabulary lists. Vettorel (2018, pp.67-68) concludes that 'the relevance of communicative strategies in L2 communication, and particularly in ELF, has not yet been acknowledged in ELT materials'. These findings strongly correspond with the earlier conclusions drawn from research on the representation of ELF in current language models and in teachers' perspectives. It seems like, overall, most parties involved in ELT are willing to bring awareness of varieties of English other than SE among learners of English, but, in practice, this action is not really taking place.

In short, previous research illustrates that there are still ELT settings in which SE is considered a strict norm, but there seem to be more ELT settings in which the significance of ELF and non-standard varieties is at least acknowledged. In practice, however, this acknowledgment does generally not lead to a true inclusion of non-standard English in the actual classroom. This seems to be due to factors varying from teachers considering SE

superior to other varieties, to more practical reasons such as not having enough time available and the unnecessary complexity of correcting students' work. It is argued that the reluctance to accept non-standard English in ELT is caused by its underrepresentation in teaching programmes, indicating that changes in this field would facilitate the inclusion of ELF in ELT methods. However, this potential inclusion of ELF is also dependent on other elements of ELT, such as teaching materials. Overall, ELF and non-standard varieties in general are not represented well in the case studies on ELT discussed in this chapter. However, this does not automatically mean that learners of English are not being prepared for realistic use of English. The underrepresentation of non-standard English implies a thorough reflection of SE in ELT settings, which means that accuracy according to native-speaker norms is emphasised. Therefore, learners of English seem to mainly be prepared for the use of English in formal contexts, which, due to the internationalisation of higher education, is also a growing context of use of the English language. This illustrates how a complete focus on preparing L2 learners of English for NNS communication in ELF settings is not necessarily a desirable phenomenon, as this would result in the underrepresentation of more formal communication English, which also constitutes a significant aspect of the global use of English.

Chapter 4 – Case Study: English Language Teaching at a Dutch Secondary School

4.1 Introduction

Based on the background literature discussed in the previous chapters, it can be concluded that the communicative competence that has been the main focus of ELT for an extensive period of time is becoming even more important in today's globalised world. L2 learners of English have an ever-increasing need to master linguistic skills necessary for international communication in ELF, but also for formal settings, such as higher education in particular. However, the discussion of previous studies on this topic illustrated that, in practice, the main focus of ELT appears to lie on the use of English in formal contexts, while L2 learners of English are not often exposed to the non-standard varieties they are likely to encounter in ELF communication. The case study in this chapter is designed to determine how the increase of ELF and the growing role of English in formal settings are reflected in current ELT classes at a Dutch secondary school. As there is tension between these two elements, with ELF settings requiring effective communication regardless of accuracy, while formal settings do require accuracy, the analysis will not be solely based on the question whether these two contexts are represented at all. Rather, the extent to which ELF and formal contexts are reflected will be analysed through a discussion on which end of the scale between effective communication and formal accuracy the ELT methods in this specific case study are located. The main focus regarding the inclusion of ELF, and therefore effective communication, will lie on the exposure of pupils to non-native speakers in listening exercises and the acceptance of maintaining a foreign accent in their own speech production. In terms of preparing pupils for more official and formal use of English, the teaching of formal accuracy and practical reading and/or writing exercises will be emphasised.

As there are many parties involved in ELT at secondary schools, triangulation is a particularly important aspect of this study. Triangulation can be defined as 'the combination of two or more data sources, investigators, methodologic approaches, theoretical perspectives, or analytical methods within the same study (Thurmond, 2001, p.253). The use of multiple types of data and methods typically results in more reliable interpretations of the

findings in quantitative research (Thurmond, 2001, p.253). As ELT, especially at secondary schools, involves many parties, data should be collected from as many of them as possible and, preferably, through different methodologies. It is important to determine the current language models applied by teachers and to discuss their personal perceptions of their role in preparing pupils for the way they are likely to encounter the English language in the real world. However, English language teachers cannot decide everything for themselves, as they are bound by, for example, the methods textbook developers and publishers decide to bring on the market and the elements of language learning that are tested in national exams designed by external exam boards. Therefore, contents of textbooks will also be taken into consideration in this study, as well as the types of exams pupils need to pass at the end of their ELT classes at secondary school. Finally, the pupils play a significant role in the questions whether and how the shifting role of the English language should be reflected in their English classes. Even if language teachers, textbook developers, and exam designers agree with each other, there is no point in applying a certain language model if pupils are not interested in it. This case study will attempt to include the majority of the significant parties in ELT at secondary schools in order to eventually arrive at well-triangulated conclusions and recommendations regarding the current and future inclusion or exclusion of the shifting contexts of use of the English language in ELT.

4.2 Methods & Participants

As briefly mentioned above, triangulation is an important aspect of this study. It allows for the inclusion and combining of various viewpoints on one phenomenon, which is particularly significant when dealing with a topic that involves many parties (McFee, 1992, p.217). 'Data sources triangulation' is the main type of triangulation applied to this study, as data is collected from as many parties involved in ELT as possible. Additionally, 'methodologic triangulation' plays a significant role, as each data set is generated through different methodological means (Thurmond, 2001, p.254).

The first method used is a textbook analysis. A total of four textbooks will be discussed through an analysis of the language models that are applied. All textbooks are aimed at pupils in *Havo 4/5* and *VWO 3/4/5*, and differ in terms of language of instruction (Dutch-English or English) and year of publication. The focus will lie on listening exercises and, in particular, the proportion of non-native speakers that are included in the audio fragments. Therefore, each

analysis will consist of twenty audio and/or video fragments of listening exercises, of which will be determined whether the speakers are NS or NNS and, when definable, which variety of English they speak. The topics of the fragments will also be stated, as these could indicate the authenticity of the exercises. When fragments are not specifically designed for textbook purposes, their original source will be mentioned. One of the textbooks is still being developed and, thus, does not have twenty audio fragments available yet. The analysis of this textbook will consist of the seven fragments that are accessible so far.

Secondly, the language testing methods that are provided to the secondary school by an external organisation, namely CITO, will be analysed. The element of language testing that will be discussed is listening, as this is one of the two proficiency skills that are usually tested by means of externally designed exams. The exam will be analysed in the same manner as the listening exercises in the textbook analysis. Consequently, information will be provided on the proportion of non-native speakers in the audio fragments and the varieties of English that are audible. The topics of the fragments will be included as well.

Thirdly, a classroom observation of a VWO 5 English class will be described and discussed. The observation will give a clear impression of the way language models are applied in real ELT settings and of the feedback that pupils receive on their language production. The main focus of the classroom observations will lie on the materials used for listening and speaking exercises, and the feedback provided regarding pupils' pronunciation. The class is taught by one of the interviewees participating in this study. This means that these practical observations can be compared with the perceptions and opinions stated by the interviewee himself.

Fourthly, the opinions and perceptions of English language teachers will be discussed through an analysis of four separate interviews (see Appendix 1). The first three interviewees are employed at the same secondary school. Their interview consists of two parts, of which the first part is to determine the way teaching methods and objectives are determined at the particular school where the teachers are employed. As this part of the interview solely contains factual information, it will be conducted with only one of the teachers. The second part of the interview is about the teachers' opinions about three main questions: 1) Should pupils be prepared for potential future use of English in formal and official settings? 2) Should

pupils be specifically prepared for encountering other non-native speakers? 3) Should native-speaker norms be let go off? It is noteworthy that there is a generational gap between the first two interviewees, who are experienced teachers, and the last one, who has just graduated from university. The fourth interviewee is a teacher at a different school, but is simultaneously in the process of developing a new ELT method. This means that the discussion of the fourth interviewee may not be applicable to the secondary school of this particular case study, but it will provide valuable information about the ideas behind developing new teaching methods. This interview will consist of questions about the particular language models she applies to her method and her underlying beliefs regarding preparing pupils for the use of ELF and the use of English in formal settings.

Finally, the opinions, expected needs and desires of the pupils will be analysed through the use of a questionnaire (see Appendix 2). The questionnaire consists of three main questions: 1) How do pupils expect to use the English language in the future? 2) Do pupils think the topics covered in class today are a sufficient preparation for their future use of English? 3) What are pupils' opinions about understanding and producing non-native accents? An important element of the third part is the question whether pupils think formal accuracy or communicative competence is most important in language production. This question is asked by means of a multi-item scale, which means that more than one item is used to address a single question that the questionnaire is attempting to cover (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2012, p.76). In practice, this means that pupils' opinions about, for example, having a foreign accent are asked in various different ways, in order to minimise the possibility that the specific wording of a question has influenced their response. In total, this multi-item scale consists of nine statements to which respondents had to respond whether they (strongly) disagree, were neutral, or (strongly) agreed. When combining the responses to the statements, for which some responses need to be mirrored in order to reflect the same opinion, this method will lead to a more reliable answer to the question whether pupils value formal accuracy or communicative competence more. The length of the questionnaire has also been a strong influencer on its design, as the pupils are more likely to be willing to fill out the questionnaire in a serious manner if it is not too long (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2012, p.78). This means that there may not be a lot of data to work with, but the data that is present can be assumed to be more legitimate. The questionnaire is written in the mother tongue of the majority of the pupils,

which is Dutch, as it has been argued that data collected through respondents' native language is of higher quality (Dörnyei & Csizer, 2012, p.79).

The questionnaire was filled out by 59 VWO 5 pupils of the same secondary school. Twenty of these pupils follow regular ELT classes and 39 follow Cambridge English classes. These two subgroups are taught by the same teachers, but they use different textbooks and are preparing for different exams. The questionnaire was filled out before explaining to the pupils what exactly it was about and what the aim of this study is, in order to prevent influencing their responses. The results of the questionnaires will be discussed by means of descriptive statistics. Overall, the data of all participants will be combined, but if there are noteworthy differences between the subgroups, these will be mentioned and discussed accordingly.

4.3 Results

4.3.1 Textbook Analysis

Textbook 1: *Of Course!*, published by Malmberg, 2017. (bovenbouw Havo/VWO)

The first textbook in this textbook analysis describes itself on its website as 'the most used teaching method in the Netherlands' and claims that it prepares pupils for both their final exams as well as their further education. It is explained that the listening and reading exercises are about topics that matter to pupils and therefore encourage discussion, resulting in pupils not only practising English listening skills, but also becoming critical thinkers and good readers (Malmberg, 2019). The vast majority of this textbook's content is in English, but there are some exercises in Dutch.

The textbook itself does not have any listening exercises, as it refers to a website on which a list of video fragments including listening exercises can be found. This list is updated frequently, which means that the listening material is never outdated. Each exercise also includes a vocabulary list before the video starts. The following table (*Table 1*) presents the topics covered in the fragments, the proportion of NS and NNS, and (when definable) the specific varieties of English that can be heard in the audio material. As the videos of this method come from online platforms, the external sources of these videos are also included in the table.

Table 1 – Audio fragments in Textbook 1

Fragment	Source	Topic	Native / Non-native speaker	Variety
1	BBC Earth	Bees	Native	Undefined
2	VOA News	Electric cars	Native & Non-native	American English & Dutch-English
3	ODN News	Brexit	Native	British English
4	Teen Kids News	Dr. Jane Goodall	Native	Undefined
5	Student Project	Beatles	Native	British English
6	Now This News	Climate change	Non-native	Swedish-English
7	Now This Opinions	Food waste	Native	Undefined
8	BTN	Plastic rubbish reduction	Native	Australian English
9	D News	Sinkholes	Native	American English
10	YouTube	Poem	Native	British English
11	Itv News	Student protests gun control	Native	British & American English
12	BBC News	Bobsleighbg	Native (Outer Circle)	Nigerian English
13	English Heritage	Norman Conquest	Native	Undefined
14	BBC News	Robots	Native	British English
15	BTN	Shoes industry	Native	Australian English
16	PBSO News Hour	Police eagles	Native	Undefined (Voice over)
17	The Brain Scoop	March for Science	Native	American English
18	HuffPost	Shootings involving teens	Native	American English
19	5 News	YouTube Singer	Native	British English
20	YouTube	George Orwell's 1984	Native	Australian English
Total			- 19 native speakers - 2 non-native speakers	- 6 British-English - 5 American-English - 3 Australian-English - 1 Nigerian-English

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 Dutch-English - 1 Swedish-English - 5 Undefined Native English varieties
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The vast majority of the video fragments contained native English varieties. In fact, eighteen out of twenty fragments solely included native speakers, whereas only one fragment exclusively contained a non-native variety. When looking into the varieties spoken in the audio fragments, the most frequently encountered variety is British English, which is closely followed by American English. The data show that Inner Circle varieties are, by far, best represented with a number of nineteen speakers included in the exercises. One Outer Circle variety, namely Nigerian English, was included. The two Expanding Circle varieties that were present in the material were Dutch-English and Swedish-English..

It is striking that the majority of the sources of the audio materials are news platforms. This means that the material used in the listening exercises cover topics that are currently of global interest and, therefore, that pupils are exposed to discussions of topics that they are likely to encounter in the real world.

Textbook 2: *Stepping Stones*, published by Noordhoff, 2018 (bovenbouw Havo/VWO)

Textbook 2 describes itself on its website as a textbook which ‘prepares pupils for the world’, by exposing them to different situations in which they may need to communicate in English (Noordhoff, 2019). Its main language of instruction is English.

The audio fragments are scripted and inauthentic, as they were recorded with the specific purpose of being used in ELT contexts. The analysis of the fragments is presented in the following table (*Table 2*):

Table 2 – Audio fragments in textbook 2

Fragment	Topic	Native / Non-native speaker	Variety
1	Hyperthymesia	Native	British-English
2	Pricing products	Native	British-English
3	The bystander effect	Native	British-English

4	Business	Native	British-English
5	Navajo code	Native	British-English
6	Shakespeare's plays	Native	British-English
7	UFOs	Native	British-English
8	Sleeping patterns of teens	Native	British-English
9	Treasure hunting	Native	British-English
10	Coincidences	Native	British-English
11	Value of different metals	Native	British-English
12	Cartography	Native	British-English
13	How to make memorable ideas	Native	British-English
14	Cryptology	Native	British-English
15	Literary critics	Native	British-English
16	Mathematics	Native	British-English
17	Students' attitudes	Native	British-English
18	Banksy	Native	British-English
19	Politeness changes	Native	British-English
20	Changes in the world	Native	British-English
Total		- 20 native speakers - 0 non-native speakers	- 20 British-English

As illustrated in the table, all audio fragments solely contained native English varieties, of which the majority were standard British English. It has to be mentioned that some fragments included varieties other than RP British English, such as Scottish and Irish, but these accents were inauthentic.

The topics covered in the audio fragments seem to be very practical-based. Many of the topics corresponded with educational degrees and other more sophisticated topics of discussion.

Textbook 3: KERN Engels, published by Boom. (bovenbouw Havo/VWO)

Textbook 3 is an English teaching method which is still being developed and has not officially been published yet. Its website points out that this method makes it possible for pupils to immediately apply their English language skills to real-life situations. It focusses on providing

basic language skills, but also on communicative skills necessary in realistic settings (Boom, 2019). Due to the fact that this textbook has not been completed yet, only a limited number of audio fragments was available for the analysis. The following table (*Table 3*) illustrates the analysis of the fragments that were accessible:

Table 3 – Audio fragments in Textbook 3

Fragment	Topic	Native / Non-native speaker	Variety
1	Ordering pizza	Native & Non-native	Undefined & Dutch-English
2	Differences between the US and UK & Divorces	Native & Non-native	Undefined & Dutch-English
3	Finland	Non-native	Finnish-English (Artificial)
4	Hobbies	Non-native	Dutch-English
5	Making plans	Native	Undefined
6	Jamie Oliver: Potato or Tomato?	Native	British & American English
7	Harry Potter	Native	British English
Total		-5 Native speakers -4 Non-native speakers	-3 Dutch-English -2 British English -1 American English -1 Finnish English -2 Undefined native English varieties

The data in this table show that non-native English varieties are very well represented in this method, as the number of NNS (4) is almost the same as the number of NS (5). Especially Dutch-English is relatively frequently present in the audio materials of this textbook. Interestingly, the audio fragments are designed specifically for this teaching method, meaning that the developers of this textbook have intentionally chosen to make Dutch-English play a significant role in their audio material. This is also visible in the textbook's videos in which vocabulary lists are pronounced by a Dutch-English speaker. Similarly, the grammar instruction videos are recorded by a speaker of Dutch-English. The textbook does include instruction videos on, for example, the pronunciation of the English 'th' sound. There is also an option to hear texts read out loud by a native speaker of standard British English.

The audio material uses both practical-based topics, such as ordering food, as well as topics that seem to correspond with the real life interests of secondary school pupils, such as hobbies and Harry Potter.

Textbook 4: Complete Cambridge Advanced English, published by Cambridge University Press, 2012 (CAE participants)

Textbook 4 is an internationally used teaching method which, on its website, emphasises the fact that its exams are accepted as proof of proficiency in many different countries and institutions. They do also mention that they believe learning English is not only about exams, as it also gives pupils the opportunity to take part in an international community full of new experiences (Cambridge English, 2019). The following table (*Table 4*) shows the data collected from an analysis of this textbook's audio fragments:

Table 4 – Audio fragments in Textbook 4

Fragment	Topics	Native / Non-native speaker	Variety
1	Prejudices	Native	British English
2	Health problems	Native	British English
3	Books	Native	British English
4	Celebrity culture	Native	British English
5	Self-education	Native	British English
6	Eco friendly buildings	Native	British English
7	Culture shocks	Native	British English
8	Friends	Native	British English
9	Gaelic	Native	British English & Australian English (inauthentic)
10	Story about a truck damaging the street	Native	British English
11	Story about an escaped orangutan	Native	British English
12	Story about a street artist	Native	British English
13	Photographs	Non-native	Undefined
14	Jobs	Native	British English
15	Woman saved from a sinking boat	Native	British English
16	Book plots	Native	British English

17	Professional dancing	Native	British English
18	Television jobs	Native	British English
19	Marathons	Native	British English
20	Studying at university	Native	British English
Total		- 19 Native speakers - 1 Non-native speaker	- 19 British English - 1 Australian English - 1 Undefined non-native variety

The data show that this teaching method almost exclusively exposes its learners to native English varieties and specifically British English. There is one instance in which Australian English was introduced, but this was scripted and inauthentic, which resulted in it not truly resembling an Australian English variety. There was one fragment in which a non-native speaker could be heard, but it was not mentioned where they were from and it was difficult to determine their linguistic background. It was striking that on one occasion the very specifically British word 'lorry' was used.

The topics covered in the fragments very practical in everyday life. It is quite likely that pupils will encounter situations in which they will tell stories or talk about the topics included in the audio material.

In conclusion, the majority of the textbooks included in this analysis almost exclusively uses SE, particularly standard British English, in their listening exercises. Two out of four textbooks used audio fragments which were very obviously scripted and inauthentic, whereas only one textbook used truly authentic audio material. The topics of the majority of the audio fragments seemed mainly practical-based.

4.3.2 Language Testing Analysis

50% of the pupils' final grade in English at the end of secondary school consists of the language skills speaking, listening, and writing. Schools are allowed to design these exams themselves, but many decide to have listening exams provided by the external organisation CITO. The following table (*Table 5*) illustrates the analysis of a sample of one of these listening exams:

Table 5 – Audio fragments in listening exam

Fragment	Topic	Native / Non-native Speaker	Variety
1	Business men	Native	British-English
2	Protesting	Native	British-English
3	Truffles	Native & Non-Native	British-English & Italian-English
4	Football player	Native	British-English
5	Space	Native	British-English
6	Lecture	Native	British-English
7	Experiment	Native	American-English
8	Cars	Native	American-English

These data show that all but one speaker were native English speakers, of which the vast majority produced British-English. This means that this listening exam mainly tests whether pupils are able to comprehend speech from L1 speakers. Additionally, some of the audio fragments were clearly scripted for the purpose of testing listening skills, as the speech produced sounded very inauthentic. Some speakers spoke extremely slowly, making the fragment not realistic. There were also some video fragments, which were much more authentic, although they seemed outdated.

Especially the topic of fragment 6 stands out. This fragment was part of a university lecture on a historical topic. This corresponds closely with the fact that pupils are likely to follow lectures in English in their further education.

4.3.3 Classroom Observation

The class is mainly taught in English, although the teacher sometimes provides additional explanations in Dutch. When a pupil speaks Dutch, however, they are asked to repeat what they said in English. This means that pupils are constantly practising speaking and listening, even without exercises that are specifically aiming at these skills.

The class starts with a listening exercise, which consists of a video fragment of BBC World News in one minute. The first time the fragment is played the pupils only have to listen, while the second and third time it is played they have to answer questions.

The next component of the class is a speaking exercise. The pupils form pairs and are asked to summarise one of the news items they have just watched in the video fragment. Every pair speaks at the same time, while the teacher walks around and listens without commenting on anything that is being said. After everyone has finished their exercise, however, the teacher provides some overall comments. He mentions that it 'irritates' him when someone produces structures such as 'the man which', instead of 'the man who'.

The last element of class consists of grammar. The teacher explains that all the explicit rules of the topic that is being covered can be found in the textbook. He then mentions how these rules are mainly applied to written language and that many speakers, especially nowadays, do not follow these rules in spoken language. He does state that pupils are expected to follow the rules, especially in exams, otherwise they will not get a full score. Regarding this topic, the teacher also mentions how the textbook they are using is older, as it still uses 'her/his', while 'in the present we would use 'their''.

4.3.4 Teacher Interviews

Interviews with three English language teachers who are employed at the same secondary school (Interviewee 1, Interviewee 2, and Interviewee 3)

Part A: Teaching methods used at this school (Interviewee 1)

Interviewee 1 explains that all English teachers at this school are part of the English language commission. They decide which methods will be used and, therefore, what will be covered in class. This is mainly possible because they design most of their tests themselves as well. The only exceptions are listening tests and the national final exams, which are designed and delivered by the external organisation CITO. There are national rules of what should be tested in secondary school exams, namely writing, listening and speaking. These elements should be tested in internal school exams and together constitute 50% of the pupils' final grades. The

national final exams cover the element of reading, which counts for the other 50% of the pupils' final grades.

It is explained by Interviewee 1 that one of the main decisions when choosing a teaching method is whether textbooks should be completely in English or contain some additional Dutch explanations, especially in terms of grammar instruction. The downsides of using textbooks that are completely in English are that it will be harder for weaker pupils to understand the classes and that these methods usually correspond less well with the exams that are designed and provided by CITO, as CITO generally bases their exams on what is covered in textbooks that are designed and published in the Netherlands.

Despite the difficulties that come with renewing teaching methods, Interviewee 1 states that this is still done every five to six years. The main reason for this is that publishers no longer support the older editions of textbooks, so schools and teachers are forced to adopt a new method. Usually, the only aspects that are truly new are the topics of texts and audio fragments in reading and listening exercises. However, as Interviewee 1 argues, it is still common and useful to use sources such as news websites or online video platforms to keep material as modern as possible.

Speaking exams have very specific rules. Interviewee 1 explains that pupils need to do several exercises, such as reading out loud, talking about a topic they have prepared, and spontaneous discussion. The elements that are graded are fluency, pronunciation, and grammar. However, pronunciation counts much less towards the final grade. Each aspect can receive two scores on a scale of 1 to 5, except pronunciation, which can get only one score on a scale of 1 to 5. According to the rules, the main indicator of the number of points a pupil will receive for pronunciation is whether they can be understood.

In short, teachers at this particular school are able to decide for themselves quite freely which ELT methods they want to use and to what extent they want to incorporate the English language as medium of instruction. However, they are dependent on national rules of language testing and external organisations such as exam designers and textbook publishers.

Part B: Opinions about the representation of the shifting role of the English language in ELT (Interviewee 1, 2 & 3)

When asked whether the increasingly important role of English in the Netherlands, for example in higher education, is represented in ELT classrooms, Interviewee 1 thinks this is indirectly the case. The school offers Cambridge English courses, which he believes contributes to preparing pupils for these higher educational settings. He thinks that the fact that there are more candidates in these courses shows that pupils are aware of the fact that they need to be more prepared regarding their English proficiency. Additionally, textbooks are becoming more difficult over time, which is another indicator that a higher English proficiency is aimed for now than in the past. Interviewee 2 agrees that pupils are aware of the high expectations higher educational institutions have of their English proficiency. However, she adds that there seems to be a mismatch between the skills pupils learn at secondary school and the placement exams they need to pass in order to be admitted to certain degrees at university. She thinks it is problematic that the English proficiency of pupils graduating from secondary school is not always high enough to enter university, while finishing secondary school should be enough to be admitted to higher education. She points out that the main goal should be that the teaching objectives of schools level should correspond with what is needed in further educational contexts. This matter needs to be investigated, because if it is necessary to have a higher level of English at higher education, schools need to change something in their teaching objectives. Interviewee 3 believes that the inclusion of English language skills that are actually useful in the real world will highly motivate pupils. She explains that, ideally, there should be time and space in classes to cover skills such as writing a CV in English or doing a job interview in English. However, she adds, right now there is not enough time to cover these kinds of topics alongside what needs to be covered in order to prepare pupils for tests and exams. In short, pupils may indirectly be prepared for more formal contexts in which English is used, but there is no space in the curriculum to prepare them explicitly. This seems to result in a mismatch between the skills pupils acquire at secondary schools and the skills pupils need in higher education.

In terms of preparing pupils for the increasing use of ELF, Interviewee 1 believes that they will be prepared well enough for contexts of ELF communication by having learned SE. If pupils can understand SE, they will have the skills necessary to understand non-native speakers as well. Interviewee 2 completely agrees with this viewpoint, as she thinks it is their

job as secondary school teachers to teach pupils basic English language skills. These skills should be enough to be able to gain practical experience with a more diverse range of speakers. This means that non-native speakers do not necessarily have to be included in ELT classes. Interviewee 1 adds that the method they use already contains many listening exercises in which non-native speakers are included. In fact, there is hardly any RP present in either the Cambridge English exercises or the external listening exams. Interviewee 1 thinks this is very important, as pupils should be exposed to non-standard English as well. Despite the inclusion of pronunciations other than RP, Interviewee 3 states that current methods are primarily focussed at native English speakers and that only ten to twenty percent of listening exercises truly contain non-native accents. There seems to be some division between the teachers regarding preparing pupils for contexts in which ELF is used. When it comes to production, it is agreed upon that pupils should be taught basic English skills, which will suffice in ELF communication. When it comes to listening, however, the teachers do not all agree. Interviewee 2 believes it is not necessary to expose pupils to non-standard and non-native accents. Interviewee 1 thinks exposure to non-standard English is important, although non-native English is not essential. Interviewee 3 states that listening exercises are currently only focussing on native English varieties while there should be some inclusion of non-native varieties as well.

When it comes to pronunciation in particular, pupils are allowed to choose for themselves how they want to sound, as long as they are understandable and consistent. However, as Interviewee 1 comments, he is 'delighted' when his pupils sound like a native speaker, as this is the ultimate teaching goal for him. When grading oral exams, pronunciation is less important to Interviewee 1 than all other aspects. He does believe that pronunciation is usually intertwined with all other elements. By this he means that when a pupil is very good at grammar, they usually have a good pronunciation as well. When it comes to using British or American English, individual schools decide which is the norm, but as long as pupils are consistent in their use, either one is accepted. Interviewee 2 agrees that consistency is most important, alongside overall communicative skills. However, she does state that she strives to teach her pupils to speak as accurately as possible. Interviewee 3 does not agree at all with native speaker norms being the ultimate goal. She explains that she would like to focus on communicative competence, but in order to do this she will need to have a different way of

giving feedback in class as well. Understanding and being understood should be most important and she would like to adjust her feedback according to this ideal. This, she believes, is the only way to prepare pupils for the increase of ELF. Therefore, she does not agree with the pronunciation rules she currently need to stick to when grading oral exams. She does think it is important to be able to use the English language in formal settings as well, but it is not realistic to ask pupils to do this in all school tests. When you want to do something official and formal in your native language, you spend a lot of time preparing and you ask friends to proofread your work. Asking pupils to write or speak in a very formal manner in a one or two-hour exam does not represent the real world. In short, interviewee 1 and 2 agree that, rather than pronunciation, communicative competence is the most important aspect of oral language proficiency, but they do show a strong preference for native speaker norms. Interviewee 3, however, does not seem to care about pronunciation at all, as long as pupils can make themselves understood. She strongly focuses on how realistic and useful the skills pupils are expected to illustrate in tests and exams are.

Interviewee 1 does not agree with letting go of native speaker norms in terms of correcting pronunciation. He argues that inaccurate speech is not accepted in formal settings, so pupils need to learn how to apply accurate speech. Therefore, he mentions, pupils will not be able to earn a full score in oral exams if they consistently cannot produce the standard English 'th' sound. Additionally, he believes that an important part of language proficiency is the ability to adjust one's speech depending on context. Therefore, pupils will eventually learn most when using English in the real world, but the English classes will provide a basic knowledge that will help them. Teaching all aspects of English would be too detailed for secondary schools and is not the main goal. However, Interviewee 1 does believe that the basic knowledge has become better ever since the school started providing Cambridge English classes. Interviewee 3 acknowledges that, of course, certain expectations need to remain, but these expectations could definitely be more realistic. It would be an idea to first focus on grammar teaching in the first years of secondary schools, but from the third year on, classes could shift more towards communicative competence by applying the grammar rules that have been taught in the first couple of years. However, they also add that one needs to remember that pupils at secondary school have many more subjects than English only, which might make it unrealistic to expect them to focus so much on gaining a high English language

proficiency on top of all their other subjects. It seems clear that the interviewees agree on the fact that basic English language skills should be taught to pupils through native speaker norms. However, there is disagreement on the matter whether these native speaker norms should be held on to throughout the full ELT track at secondary school. Interviewee 3 namely suggests that, after learning the basics, the focus should eventually be put on a more realistic and useful way of producing and perceiving English.

In conclusion, all of the three interviewed teachers agree that it is their job to, first and foremost, teach pupils basic English language skills. This means that the initial focus lies on producing and processing accurate SE. Interviewee 2 believes that this is the only purpose of ELT at secondary schools, but she does note that there is an exception if this does not lead to a proficiency level high enough to suffice in higher education. Interviewee 1 goes one step further by acknowledging that exposure to non-standard English is important as well, but they would still prefer SE production by their pupils. Interviewee 3 would like to take it even further, by eventually only focussing on practical English language skills and making communicative competence much more important than accuracy.

Interview with an English language teacher and teaching method developer

Interviewee 4 is employed at a different secondary school than the other interviewees and teaches VMBO pupils. Additionally, she works for a publisher, where she is in the process of developing a new teaching method.

Due to the fact that VMBO pupils are less likely to need a high English proficiency in their further education, Interviewee 4 does not believe preparing pupils for such a context should be a main focus. Her teaching method does include practical skills, as writing exercises are based on authentic writing products such as emails, and reading exercises cover many practical strategies such as scanning texts and paying attention to headings. The main reason why these elements are included, explains Interviewee 4, is to prepare pupils for exams.

Listening exercises in Interviewee 4's teaching model consist of online videos which cover a wide variety of speakers. The majority of the speakers are NSs, but it is explained that this is mainly due to practical reasons. It is important that accents in listening exercises are still understandable for pupils, which, in practice, means that choices are usually limited to

native speakers. However, she does attempt to include audio material which is diverse in NSs and, when possible, does include NNSs as well.

Interviewee 4 explains that the most innovative part of her teaching method is the way speaking skills are taught. The method pays quite a lot of attention to pupils' pronunciation, as they are encouraged to read out loud and they receive feedback on their pronunciation through an online programme. This programme uses standard American English as reference on which pupils receive feedback and corrections on their own pronunciation. Interviewee 4 does add to this that corrections are mainly based on whether pupils' pronunciations are understandable and that it is not aimed at making them sound completely American.

Interviewee 4 believes that communicative competence is the most important element in speaking exams. Fluency, range, accuracy and pronunciation are all considered, but accuracy is not nearly as important as overall communicative skills. Pronunciation does not count heavily towards the final grade, but this is mainly due to the fact that pupils in this teaching method tend to have a relatively good pronunciation, which would lead to unproportionally high overall grades. When pupils are not able to pronounce certain English sounds, they do not lose marks on this, but it is mentioned to them as a way of challenging them and encouraging them to sound as native as possible. Overall, the main goal is for pupils to be understandable for native English speakers, which is what is graded in speaking exams.

In short, the teaching method that Interviewee 4 is developing and which illustrates her perceptions regarding ELT shows a strong emphasis on communicative skills. Reading and writing exercises are designed with the objective of preparing pupils for their exams in mind. Pronunciation is still encouraged to be conform native speaker norms, but as long as one can be understood, foreign accents are accepted in both speaking exercises and oral exams.

4.3.5 Pupil Questionnaire

Pupils expectations of future use of English

When asked whether they think they will use the English language in reality, 80% of the respondents answered 'Yes, I already use it frequently' and the remaining 20% answered 'Yes, but not yet' (figure 1). This means that all pupils agree on the fact that English is something that is definitely used in real life, whether it be in the present or the future. When going into more detail by

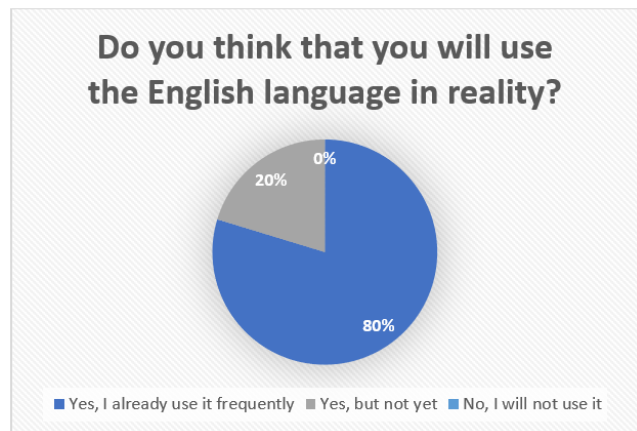


Figure 1 – Do you think you will use the English language in reality?

asking the pupils in which contexts they think they do or will use the English language, the majority (69.5%) selected all options that were given: in the Netherlands with foreigners, in English-speaking countries, in non-English speaking countries, in further education, and online (figure 2).

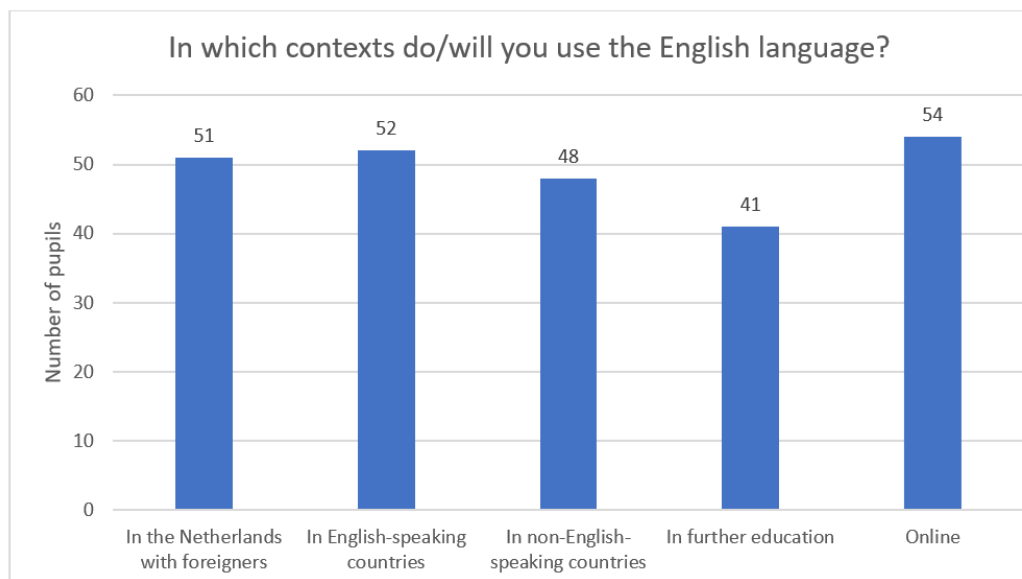


Figure 2 – In which contexts do/will you use the English language?

The high number of votes for contexts involving other non-native speakers, such as 'In the Netherlands with foreigners' (51) and 'In non-English-speaking countries' (48) illustrate that pupils expect to not only be using English with NS, but in ELF settings as well. In fact, 66% of the respondents expect to be communicating in English most frequently with other NNS, while

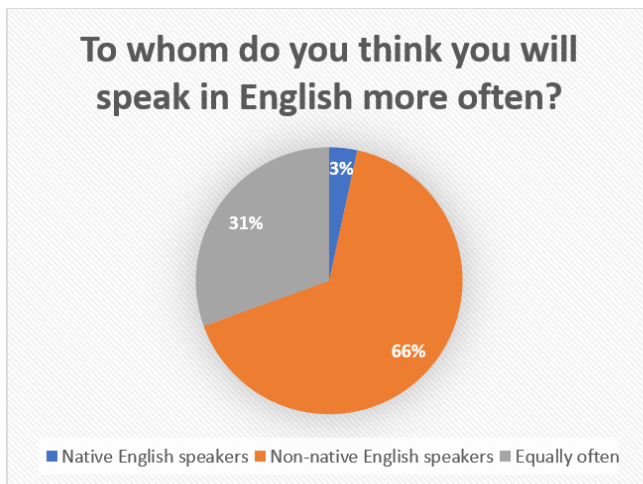


Figure 3 – To whom do you think you will speak in English more often?

only 3% believe they will encounter more communicative contexts with native English speakers (figure 3). The context that springs out, however, is ‘further education’, which was selected by fewer pupils than the other options: 41 out of 59 (69,5%). This is still a majority, but 10% less than the second-to-last most frequently selected option,

which is ‘In non-English-speaking countries’ with 79,3%.

Pupils’ opinions about specific ELT topics

In terms of language perception, the vast majority of pupils (90%) think it is important to practise understanding different varieties of English. This group is divided into pupils pointing out that this is already covered in class (22%), pupils thinking it is only important to cover native English accents (14%), and pupils thinking it is important to cover both native and non-native English accents (54%) (Figure 4).

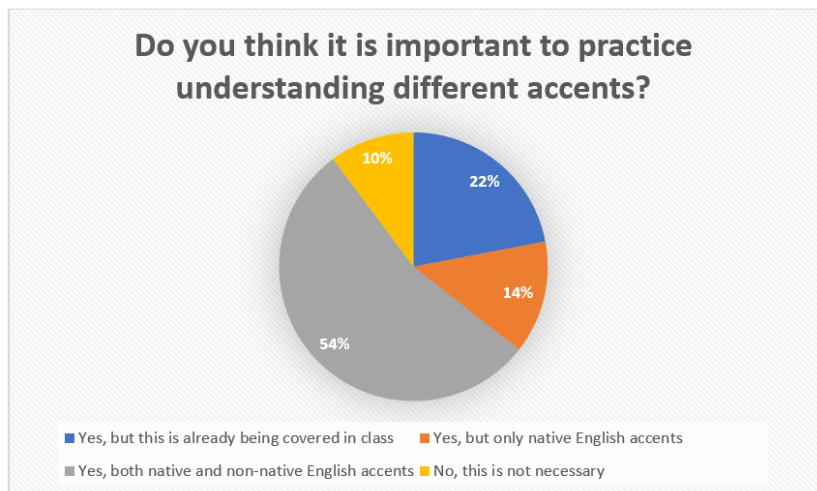


Figure 4 – Do you think it is important to practice understanding different accents?

When being asked whether various elements of language learning are covered sufficiently in their English classes, the majority of pupils responded with ‘yes’ to most features (Figure 5). The two main topics that some think should be covered more often are pronunciation and writing. An overall majority of 31 pupils (52.5%) indicate that writing needs to be covered more thoroughly and 26 pupils (44.1%) have this view on pronunciation.

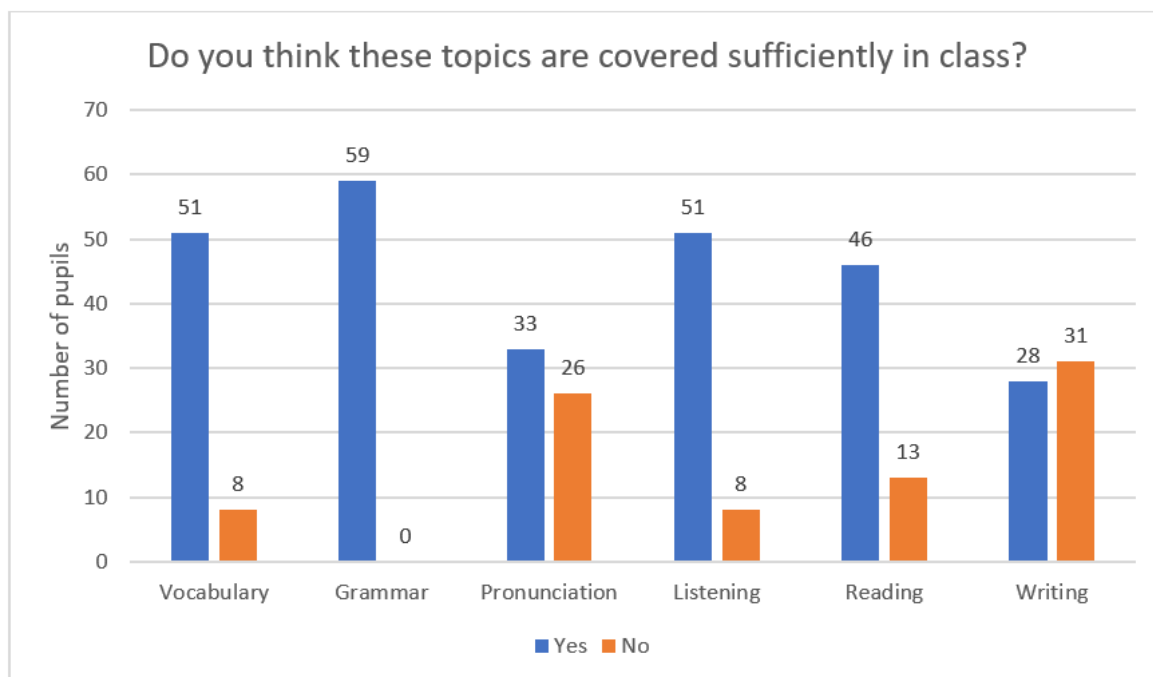


Figure 5 – Do you think these topics are covered sufficiently in class?

The data of pupils' opinions about language production generated by means of multi item scales are less straightforward. Overall, 44.8% of the responses implied that pupils think formal accuracy is more important than communicative competence, with 29.9% of the responses indicating the opposite and 25.3% being neutral. However, the individual statements that were combined in these overall results received a wide range of diverse responses. Therefore, the responses to each statement will be stated in the following table (Table 6) and thoroughly discussed in the discussion section below.

Table 6 – Results of the individual statements in the multi item scale

	Indicating importance of formal accuracy		
	Indicating importance of communicative competence		
Statement	Percentage (strongly) disagreeing	Percentage neutral	Percentage (strongly) agreeing
I feel bad when speaking grammatically incorrect	3.4	13.5	83.1

I feel bad when people can tell from my pronunciation that I am not a native speaker	44.1	22	33.9
It is more important to be understood than to speak perfectly correct English	3.4	32.2	64.4
I try to sound like a native speaker	27.1	30.5	42.4
During speaking exercises, I pay more attention to my grammar than my pronunciation	47.5	23.7	28.8
It annoys me when someone speaks English with a mild Dutch accent	62.7	20.4	16.9
It annoys me when someone speaks English with a strong Dutch accent	13.6	16.9	69.5
Sounding fluent is more important than being grammatically correct	61.0	5.1	33.9
British and/or American English are my point of reference for my own use of English	3.4	8.5	88.1

The data in this table show that five out of nine statements received a majority of responses indicating that formal accuracy is most important. However, there are also four statements of which the responses imply that pupils think communicative competence is more important. Therefore, the overall result of the majority of responses implying that formal accuracy is thought to be more important than communicative competence cannot undoubtedly be accepted.

Pupils' opinion about the representation of English in ELT

On a scale of 1 to 10, pupils rate the extent to which their current English classes represent the English language in a realistic way at an average of 6.98. When being asked whether their English classes prepare them well for the way they will use the English language in their further education, they give an average score of 7.22. Finally, the score they give for the extent to

which their English classes prepare them well for the way they will use the English language in general is slightly higher at an average of 7.44.

4.4 Discussion

Textbook Analysis

The description of textbook 1 on its website sounded promising in terms of the extent to which the method prepares pupils for the way English is used in formal settings, as they learn how to use English in educational contexts in which discussion and critical thinking is essential. On the contrary, the audio material did not correspond well with the increase of ELF worldwide, as pupils were not exposed to many non-native speakers. The use of authentic videos from news platforms, however, does correspond with the increasing chances of pupils having to communicate in English about issues that are significant in the world right now. Therefore, textbook 1 contributes to some extent to preparing pupils for the increase of ELF and discussion in English in higher education by means of topic choice, but not through exposure to NNSs. The same conclusion can be drawn from the audio material in textbook 2, which did not include many NNSs either, although the topics discussed were, again, practical. Additionally, the topics covered in textbook 2 seemed to prepare pupils for potential higher educational settings, as many listening exercises were about subjects that could be studied at university. It should be noted, however, that the lack of authenticity of the audio material in textbook 2 makes it a much weaker representation of real-life English than textbook 1.

Textbook 3 emphasised communicative skills on its website, which corresponds well with the increase of ELF. The inclusion of various foreign accents in audio and video material seemed to encourage the acceptance of non-native varieties, especially since new vocabulary is pronounced by NNSs as well. All data suggested that this textbook is very aware of the fact that ELF is increasing and that native-speaker norms are no longer self-evident. At the same time, instruction videos on topics such as the SE 'th' sound illustrate that the method is still clearly aimed at teaching pupils to speak according to native-speaker norms, even though it does encourage an acceptance of non-native accents.

Textbook 4 gives the impression that it is mainly focussed on results and recognition of proficiency rather than communicative skills. This is also visible in the fact that the method almost exclusively exposes its learners to native English varieties. The data imply that this

textbook does not prepare pupils for the increase of ELF, although it is noteworthy that the topics covered in audio material are things pupils are likely to encounter in real life.

Overall, the data of the textbook analysis imply that the majority of textbooks do not ultimately prepare pupils for the global increase of ELF, due to a lack of exposure to non-standard English varieties. However, the reasoning behind this lack of non-standard varieties could be that SE is generally easier for pupils to understand and, thus, may facilitate the learning process of EFL. Nevertheless, pupils are prepared for real-life situations, but mainly through the use of specific practical topics in listening exercises. These topics are sometimes relevant in further education and other formal settings as well.

Language Testing Analysis

The analysis of the listening exam implied that pupils are not tested on their listening comprehension skills of non-native English varieties and, in some cases, not even on authentic native English speech. Therefore, the testing method does not seem to correspond well with the global increase of ELF. The absence of ELF speakers in listening exams is problematic, as textbooks and teaching models cannot put a stronger emphasis on more variation in listening exercises if pupils are being tested on their comprehension of NSs of SE instead.

Classroom Observations

The use of a BBC video in the listening exercise seems to be a very standard British source, but this is not necessarily the case. The BBC has six presenters at BBC World News, who have strikingly diverse linguistic backgrounds. Most presenters are originally from Inner Circle countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada, but at least one presenter is from the Outer Circle country India (BBC, 2019). This variation implies that pupils in this class are at least somewhat exposed to non-standard English pronunciation through these video fragments.

The speaking exercise seems to strongly correspond with the goal of communicative competence, as the task is to produce speech that the other pupil understands. The overall comment at the end about a specific structure being 'irritating', however, implies that formal accuracy is still desired, even though the example provided would not lead to misunderstandings in communication.

The fact that pupils need to learn explicit grammar rules that are not always applied in real life solely to get a good mark in exams implies that there is a gap between language testing and the real use of language. However, it is mentioned that these explicit rules are significant in written language. Therefore, these rules and the way they are tested do correspond with potential future use of English in contexts such as higher education.

In short, pupils are constantly encouraged to perceive and produce English. However, there seems to be a subtle underlying focus on encouraging pupils to accurately produce standard varieties of English themselves.

Interestingly, when comparing these observations with the opinions stated by Interviewee 1, who was the teacher of this class, it is clear that his teaching methods strongly correspond with his personal beliefs. For example, he acknowledged the importance of exposing pupils to non-standard, but not necessarily NNS, English, which is visible in the BBC World News fragment. Similarly, he stated that pupils cannot get a full mark when they consistently make the same mistake in speaking exams, which is something he enforces in his class by means of exemplifying such errors that personally bother him. These matching data indicate that teachers at this school are able to, to a certain extent, follow their own principles when teaching.

Teacher Interviews

At first sight, it seems like the ELT teachers at this school are able to quite freely decide for themselves which teaching methods and language models they want to use. However, it soon became clear that this freedom is severely limited by their dependence on textbook publishers and exam designers. It was mentioned that quite frequently the adjustment of teaching methods is mainly caused by what seem commercial intentions from publishers, who simply refuse to support older versions and, thereby, force schools to purchase newer editions. This is a clear example of teachers not always being able to follow their own ideals in ELT, as they are limited by financial issues. Teachers also seemed to be restricted by the way the English proficiency of pupils is tested. The relatively large proportion of reading skills in the final exams of secondary schools compared to other language skills seems to correspond with the importance of English at higher education, as this usually contains a large amount of reading. On the contrary, the fact that speaking is only one out of three parts which, together,

constitute 50% of the final grade implies that the emphasis is not on productive communicative skills in ELF settings at all. Despite the small percentage of speaking skills in pupils' final English grade, the way speaking skills are supposed to be tested at this school does seem to correspond with the importance of communicative competence. There is still a strong focus on grammatical accuracy, but the fact that pronunciation is less important than fluency illustrates that foreign accents are condoned. These data show that, on a national level, the formal use of English seems to be emphasised, while at this particular school the increase of ELF is also represented. However, the choices teachers want to make regarding teaching methods and language models are partially restricted by external parties.

When asking the teachers about their personal perceptions, however, they do not mention this limiting effect that other parties involved in ELT seem to have on their teaching. The only restriction they mention to experience is the lack of space in the curriculum to directly prepare pupils for language skills they may need for placement tests for university and for further education itself.

Overall, all teachers agreed that pupils should be taught how to produce formally accurate English. This means that, in terms of teaching language production, they prefer formal accuracy over communicative competence. However, when testing pupils' actual production skills, for example in speaking exams, they indicate that communicative competence is most important. This contradiction implies that SE is used as the preferred language model, but that it is acknowledged that SE is not crucial in communication in English. Interviewee 1 and 2 strongly indicated that they consider the SE model the ideal teaching objective, but interviewee 3 seemed to mainly consider this standard model as most practical reference in teaching basic English skills. Regardless of the reasoning behind using SE as language model, this teaching method prepares pupils for future use of English in formal contexts. Additionally, SE is considered an efficient tool for communication in ELF contexts. Therefore, native-speaker norms in language production are argued to prepare pupils for both ELF and more formal settings.

Although the use of SE as language model may prepare pupils for language production in ELF settings, this is not necessarily the case when it comes to perception. This could be the reason why there seems to be much more disagreement among the teachers when being

asked whether pupils should be exposed to non-standard and non-native varieties of English in listening exercises. Interviewee 2's exclusive focus on NS production of SE indicates a strong preference for native speaker norms. Interviewee 1 agreed that the exposure to NS varieties sufficed, but he did acknowledge relevance of non-standard NS varieties compared to solely focussing on SE. This statement implies that he thinks it is important to make pupils aware of the fact that the majority of English speakers do not speak SE and that they should be exposed to different varieties. However, Interviewee 3 was the only one thinking it is important to also include non-native varieties of English. This disagreement implies that the increase of ELF and the growing chances of pupils having to communicate with NNSs seem to not always be represented in ELT. However, it should be noted that the use of SE in audio material does simplify the exercises, as it is generally considered to be easier to understand than non-standard English. Therefore, the lack of exposure to NNS varieties may also be due to the fact that pupils are, first and foremost, learning basic English skills and being prepared to pass exams.

Overall, the interviews give the impression that the teachers use SE as the norm in their teaching, as this is often considered to prepare pupils sufficiently for many real-life situations in which the English language is used. The allowance of divergence from the norm in language testing contexts combined with the focus on fluency enforces this implication, as this also corresponds with the communicative competence that is needed in today's world. However, the interviewees do have different perceptions on the extent to which this divergence should be allowed and incorporated in teaching materials.

Interviewee 4 and her teaching method seemed to strive for effective communication and, thereby, giving pupils space to diverge from native-speaker norms. This appears to illustrate a focus on preparing pupils for ELF contexts, but the reading and writing exercises contradict this implication. The interviewee mentioned that the practical tasks in writing and reading exercises are mainly chosen in order to prepare pupils for exams, but they simultaneously seem to prepare them for more formal uses of English. This means that this method is balancing between formal accuracy useful for formal settings on the one hand, and communicative competence for ELF settings on the other. The interviewee herself, however, does not necessarily think it is important to prepare her pupils in particular for formal contexts of use of the English language. The emphasis on effective communication instead is visible in

the way her method grades oral exams. Pupils do not lose marks on mispronunciations, but only receive feedback in order to encourage and challenge them to improve. Similarly to opinions states by the other interviewees, this illustrates that native-speaker norms are still the ultimate objective, but that divergence from the norm is allowed.

Pupil Questionnaire

Pupils expressed that they expect to communicate most frequently with NNS, which corresponds with the global increase of ELF. The fact that pupils indicated that they think it is important to practise understanding non-standard and non-native English accents also matches this development. The use of English in further education received the least number of votes when asking these pupils in which context they expected to use the English language. This result is striking, as it does not correspond with the growing official status of English in the Netherlands. Even though English is becoming increasingly important in formal contexts such as education, many pupils do not seem to have matching expectations regarding this matter. Pupils did state that the elements of ELT they would like to be covered more thoroughly are writing and pronunciation. Interestingly, these are two topics that seem to mainly have to do with the increasing use of English in formal contexts. Formal settings such as education usually require good writing skills and the desire to practise pronunciation suggests that pupils would like to have the accurate and standard pronunciation of English that is often considered the norm in these formal settings as well. These results could imply a mismatch between the current curriculum and the use of English in the real world, but it could also indicate a strong awareness among pupils of their practical needs in terms of future use of English. In other words, pupils express that they would like to practise understanding non-standard varieties of English and they do not think enough attention is being paid to practicing their own pronunciation and writing skills. This implies that they are aware of the two main developments of the English language, although this is contradictive with their low expectancy of using English in further education. Nevertheless, their ratings of the extent to which current ELT classes represent the way English is used in the real world and the extent to which it prepares them for the use of English in both formal as well as general settings are quite positive. This suggests that the changes they would like to see in ELT methods are not crucial to the point that the current methods are considered insufficient.

The data regarding pupils' opinions about the most important aspect of L2 learning sometimes lean towards formal accuracy while the responses to other statements emphasise communicative competence. The results of the individual statements illustrate that pupils believe grammatical competence is very important, as they do not feel comfortable making grammatical errors. On the contrary, they are not bothered as much by having a non-standard pronunciation, although they do state that they try to sound native-like. These data imply that they believe it is important to speak grammatically correct and that they try to have a pronunciation conform native-speaker norms, emphasising a focus on formal accuracy, but, at the same time, they do express that non-standard pronunciation is less bothersome than non-standard grammar. It seems like foreign accents are accepted, but that one should strive to speak according to SE norms. This corresponds with the data illustrating that someone speaking with a mild Dutch accent is much more accepted than someone speaking with a strong Dutch accent. Overall, the responses to this multi item scale reveal surprising, and sometimes contradicting, pupils' opinions about language use. On the one hand, it seems like they accept some divergence from native speaker norms if this enhances the communication, but at the same time they think grammatical accuracy is very important as well. The tension between these opinions corresponds with the fact that non-native varieties of English are increasing at the same time as the use of English in formal and official settings.

In conclusion, the research conducted in this case study resulted in valuable data regarding both the way English is currently taught as well as future possibilities of ELT based on the opinions of various parties involved.

At the moment, the global increase of ELF does not seem to be represented very thoroughly in ELT classes. In terms of language perception, pupils are not frequently exposed to non-standard English varieties in listening exercises, as the majority of textbooks do not regularly include these. This lack of ELF in listening exercises corresponds with an absence of non-native varieties of English in listening exams. Teachers illustrated a disagreement regarding the inclusion of non-standard and non-native varieties of English, but pupils unanimously expressed the wish to practise understanding varieties other than SE. This means that pupils and some teachers would like a better representation of non-standard and non-native varieties of English in ELT, but that this practical wish is not taken up on by the majority of external parties such as publishers and exam designers.

When it comes to language production, the representation of ELF is more complex. On the one hand, classroom observations showed that pupils were not corrected for having an accented pronunciation and interviews with teachers revealed that communicative competence is the main skill tested in oral exams. On the other hand, however, teachers explained that it is their job to teach pupils basic English language skills conform native speaker norms and some teachers mentioned how they strive to teach them to sound as native-like as possible. This tension regarding the English language production of pupils shows that even though foreign accents are semi-accepted, they are clearly encouraged to produce English conform native speaker norms. This matches the pupils' opinions, as they expressed a desire to produce formally accurate English, although being understood remains most important.

The increasing use of English in formal settings seems to be better represented, as textbooks attempt to prepare pupils by means of the topics covered in exercises. These topics tend to be quite practical and based on contexts pupils are likely to encounter, although the vast majority of textbook materials are not authentic at all. Teachers believe it is important to prepare pupils not only for their final exams, but also for their future education. Therefore, it was mentioned, the curriculum should be adjusted if it turns out that pupils are not sufficiently prepared by the time they finish secondary school. These results indicate that there is an attempt to prepare pupils for the official settings in which they may encounter the English language, but there still seems to be a mismatch between what is practised at secondary school and what is really expected in higher education. The pupils themselves did not seem to focus much on the use of English in their further education. This is interesting, as, on the one hand, pupils focussed much more on the importance of including non-standard English, while this belief is not necessarily shared by textbook developers and language teachers. On the other hand, pupils do not focus much on the increase of formal contexts in which the English language is used, while textbook developers and language teachers seem much more concerned about this. This could indicate that the main mismatch within ELT is not necessarily between language models and the use of English in real life, but, rather, between the perceptions of pupils and other participants in ELT regarding their perceptions of the way English is used in real life. Nonetheless, regarding the scale from focus on formal accuracy to communicative competence, this particular case study seems to take both sides into consideration, but, overall, appears to be located more on the side of formal accuracy.

Chapter 5 – Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

As discussed in chapter 3, most previous studies on the topic of representing the use of English in realistic contexts in ELT concluded that formal accuracy is much more emphasised than communicative competence. Although the case study conducted in this thesis found that both formal accuracy and communicative competence are represented in ELT, its findings did correspond with the argument that the increase of ELF seems to be considered less important than the use of English in formal contexts. As stated in the introduction of this thesis, there are three elements of ELT that seem feasible to adjust in order to better represent the increase of ELF and the growing official role of English in EFL countries: the teaching methods themselves including their language models, the contents of textbooks, and the way language skills are tested. The recommendations discussed in this chapter will be aimed at these three distinctive elements of ELT and drawn from the findings of previous research as well as this particular study.

5.2 Teaching Methods and Language Models

The analysis in this study revealed that current language models used in ELT usually are standard British and/or American English. Language teachers seem to have most influence on this decision, as they were proven to be quite free in deciding which model should be the norm. Several previous studies (e.g. Suzuki, 2011; Young & Walsh, 2010; Ates et al., 2015) concluded that teachers need to be made aware of the significance of non-standard varieties of English in the real world in order for them to consider including these varieties in their classes. However, these same studies also found that even when teachers are convinced of the importance of non-standard English, they do not necessarily include it in their classes. This reluctance can be due to practical reasons, such as not enough time and space, or to personal beliefs regarding the superiority of SE over non-standard English. These findings were also visible in the analysis of this study, as two of the interviewees expressed that SE is the form of English that is ultimately strived for, while the third interviewee stated there was simply not enough time to cover much more than what is necessary for exams. It seems feasible to stick to SE as the norm, as this prepares learners for the increasing number of formal contexts in which they are likely to use the English language. Additionally, a high proficiency in SE should

be sufficient in order to make oneself understood in ELF communication as well. Although sticking to native-speaker norms does not seem to cause any major difficulties in terms of language production, disregarding non-native and non-standard varieties of English appears to be problematic in language perception. Students are more likely to encounter English produced by NNSs, therefore it is recommended that they are also exposed to non-standard varieties. Similarly, feedback in classrooms on the spoken English produced by students could be less focussed on them speaking according to native-speaker norms. These recommendations would match students' opinions expressed through the questionnaire, as these illustrated that they would like to practise understanding different varieties of English. The main difficulty with this recommendation will probably be convincing the language teachers, as some of them clearly stated that students should strive to produce a native-like variety of English and that exposing students exclusively to SE suffices.

5.3 Textbook Content

The increasing use of English in more formal settings and the formal accuracy that is desired in these contexts is well represented in all textbooks included in this study. All textbooks emphasised formal accuracy and used SE as reference point. Therefore, the main recommendation for realising a more realistic representation of the way English is used in the real world would be to use textbooks that have a stronger focus on the inclusion of ELF communication than current textbooks have.

Vettorel (2018) argued that the majority of ELT textbooks do not incorporate characteristic elements of ELF communication. The findings of the textbook analysis of this thesis correspond with this claim, as the vast majority of textbooks did not expose students to the NNSs who are a major part of ELF communication. However, the textbook that has not been published yet did include non-standard and non-native varieties of English. This implies that there might be a shift visible in the extent to which students are exposed to non-standard English. Jayanti & Nohrami (2014) stated that teachers in Indonesia have such a strong preference for native-speaker norms that they prefer to exclusively use textbooks that are developed in English-speaking countries. A textbook published in the UK, namely the Cambridge Advanced English textbook, was analysed in the analysis of this case study. Indeed, the use of this book and its listening material matches the perceived importance of accuracy according to native-speaker norms, as hardly any non-standard English was included. Two of

the textbooks designed in the Netherlands, however, did include non-standard varieties, even though one did so more than the other. Based on these results, a better representation of the increase of ELF could be accomplished by means of selecting more modern textbooks which are designed and published in the country in which the teaching is taking place. The textbook analysis and the interview with the textbook designer revealed that there are modern textbooks being developed in the Netherlands which, indeed, include NNSs in audio material. Therefore, on a practical level, this recommendation is not problematic. However, teachers would need to approve these new types of teaching material.

5.4 Language Testing

Matsuda (2003) argued that the assessment of students' language proficiency should not be based on whether their speech conforms to native-speaker norms, but, rather, on communicative competence. Assessing language skills by means of this belief would match the increase of ELF well, but would not correspond with the growing official and formal use of English. Therefore, a compromise between assessing accuracy and communicative competence seems recommendable. The way oral exams are assessed at the school of this study seems to, indeed, maintain such a compromise. On the one hand, accurate pronunciation weighs less heavily than fluency, while, on the other hand, grammar is a significant element of the assessment. This way, the NNS communication that is used in ELF settings is allowed in terms of pronunciation, while, at the same time, the formal accuracy necessary in formal contexts is not disregarded. This seems like an appropriate balance for assessing language production.

The testing of receptive skills, however, does not seem as appropriate. The analysis showed that the listening exam solely tested the ability to understand SE produced by native speakers. Students are more likely to encounter NNSs and, therefore, it would be much more useful to be able to understand NNSs. Thus, testing this skill of understanding NNSs would create a more realistic representation of the skills students need in real-life. However, this recommendation of including NNSs in listening exams may be more appropriate for older pupils who have a higher proficiency level of English than true beginners, as the use of NNSs does simplify the task of listening.

In conclusion, the main recommendations regarding developments in ELT that could lead to a better representation of realistic contexts of use of the English language concern all three levels of ELT mentioned above. Teaching methods could mainly be changed with regards to the type of feedback pupils receive on their spoken English and pupils could be exposed to more non-standard English. This exposure to non-standard varieties correlates with the recommendation made for textbooks, as their listening exercises could provide this. Additionally, more recently published textbooks and well as textbooks published in a non-English speaking country could provide a better representation of the global increase of ELF. Finally, testing of language production should remain a compromise between allowing divergence from SE in the domain of pronunciation on the one hand and the maintenance of formal accuracy on the other. Testing language perception, however, could be changed by means of, again, including more NNSs. The majority of pupils participating in this study seemed willing to incorporate these kinds of developments in ELT, but not all language teachers appeared to be as eager. Therefore, more agreement between language teachers and theoretical researchers is needed in order to integrate any of the recommendations in real ELT settings.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion

The main developments in the contexts of use of the English language that are currently taking place are the global increase of ELF communication and the growing official role of the English language in traditional EFL countries. These changes have led to learners of English as an L2 needing to master communicative competence, which is argued to outweigh the importance of formal accuracy in ELF settings, while this accuracy should be applied in more formal contexts. The tension between both of these crucial linguistic skills is problematic for ELT, as it has been proven to be very complex to represent communicative competence and formal accuracy at the same time. Learners of English need to be prepared for informal ELF communication, in which fluency is allowed to come at the cost of accuracy, but, at the same time, these students need to acquire formal accuracy for other contexts of use they are likely to encounter. This means that textbooks, language tests, teaching methods, and language teachers need to decide where they want to be located on the scale between communicative competence and formal accuracy. Additionally, students need to agree with the position these parties decide to take. Previous research has mainly found that current ELT methods primarily focus on formal accuracy and that communicative competence is neglected. The purpose of the case study conducted in this thesis was to determine whether this underrepresentation of the communicative competence necessary in ELF communication is also present in the English classes at a Dutch secondary school. This was done by attempting to locate the viewpoint of all major parties involved in this ELT setting on the scale from emphasising communicative competence to formal accuracy. It became clear that both elements are being represented, but that all parties leaned more towards formal accuracy than communicative competence. The pupils appeared to notice this emphasis on formal accuracy, but, even though they expressed the wish to include more communicative features in their classes, they did rate the current teaching method sufficient in preparing them for their future use of the English language. Naturally, this positive rating could be due to the pupils not having a clear image of how the English language is used in the world, but further research would need to be conducted on this topic by means of, for example, more longitudinal studies on the perceptions of pupils on how realistic their English classes at secondary school are/were. Based on the results of this particular case study, however, it can be concluded that, despite a slight underrepresentation of the skills required in ELF communication, the ELT methods at

this Dutch secondary school have a well-balanced emphasis on both communicative competence as well as formal accuracy.

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Appendix 1: Teacher Interview Questions

Interview voor Docenten Engels of Middelbare Scholen

Deel A: Lesmethode vanuit de school

1. Wat wordt er vanuit de school precies verwacht dat er behandeld wordt in de lessen?
 - Hoe en door wie worden deze verwachtingen vastgesteld
 - Is er ruimte voor persoonlijke in- en aanvullingen?
 - Specifiek als het gaat om uitspraak/communicatie vaardigheden
2. Worden deze verwachtingen regelmatig aangepast of zijn deze al langere tijd hetzelfde?
 - Hoe lang zijn lesboeken ongeveer in gebruik voor deze vernieuwd worden?
 - Wat zijn in het verleden redenen geweest voor aanpassingen?
 - Hoe gaat dit in zijn werk?
 - Zou u deze werkwijze graag anders zien?
3. Wat wordt er verwacht met betrekking tot de Engelse uitspraak van scholieren?
 - Wordt deze het liefst bijgesteld zodat het zo veel mogelijk lijkt op het standaard Britse accent?
 - Hoe wordt dit getoetst en hoe worden punten bij deze toetsen verdeeld?

Deel B: Mening over en verwachten van het reflecteren van ELF en het gebruik van Engels in formele contexten in de Engelse les

4. Tegenwoordig speelt de Engelse taal een grotere rol binnen Nederland, vooral in het onderwijs. Veel vervolgopleidingen zijn dan ook in het Engels. Speelt de manier waarop Engelse les wordt gegeven hier (genoeg) op in?
5. Een andere ontwikkeling is dat er tegenwoordig steeds meer communicatie plaatsvindt in het Engels door mensen die Engels niet als moedertaal hebben (ELF). Denkt u dat scholieren voldoende worden voorbereid op dit soort situaties binnen de Engelse lessen die vaak standard Brits of Amerikaans Engels als uitgangspunt hebben?
6. Vindt u dat de Engelse lessen op middelbare scholen inspelen op de groei van ELF door bijvoorbeeld meer luisteropdrachten te gebruiken die zijn ingesproken door mensen die Engels als L2 hebben?
 - Is het de taak van Engels docenten op middelbare scholen om scholieren deze varianten van de Engelse taal te leren begrijpen, of is hun hoofdtaak om het standard Engels correct aan te leren?

7. Hoe zit dit precies als het gaat om het beoordelen van mondelingen en schriftelijk werk? Hierbij wordt vaak gekeken naar accuracy, fluency, and range. Welk van deze vindt u het zwaarst wegen in beoordelingen van mondelingen?
-Wordt bij het beoordelen van accuracy standaard Engels als richtlijn gehouden?
Verschilt dit ten opzichte van bijvoorbeeld grammatica en uitspraak?

8. Het is op dit moment waarschijnlijk niet realistisch om standard Engels als uitgangspunt helemaal te laten vervallen, vooral als het om grammatica gaat. Wel zijn er stemmen die graag willen dat methodes veranderen waardoor bijvoorbeeld de feedback die scholieren krijgen verandert. Hierbij zou bijvoorbeeld uitspraak niet per sé meer worden gecorrigeerd aan de hand van standaard Engels. Wat vindt u van dit idee?

Appendix 2: Pupil Questionnaire

Enquête voor Scholieren over Engels op de Middelbare School

1. Denk je dat je de Engelse taal in de praktijk nodig gaat hebben/gaat gebruiken?
 - a. Ja, ik gebruik het al regelmatig
 - b. Ja, maar pas in de toekomst
 - c. Nee, ik ga het (bijna) nooit echt gebruiken

2. Zo ja, in welke situaties gebruik je de Engelse taal of ga je het gebruiken? Er zijn meerdere antwoorden mogelijk.
 - a. In Nederland met buitenlandse mensen
 - b. In Engelstalige landen
 - c. In niet-Engelstalige landen
 - d. Op mijn vervolgopleiding
 - e. Online

3. Denk je dat je vaker in een situatie gaat komen waarbij je Engels moet spreken met iemand uit een Engelstalig land of met iemand die Engels ook als tweede taal heeft?
 - a) Vaker met iemand uit een Engelstalig land
 - b) Vaker met iemand uit een niet-Engelstalig land
 - c) Even vaak

4. In hoeverre ben je het eens met de volgende stellingen?

	Helemaal oneens	Oneens	Neutraal	Eens	Helemaal eens
- Ik vind het vervelend om grammaticale fouten te maken	—	—	—	—	—
- Ik vind het vervelend als mensen aan mijn Engelse uitspraak kunnen horen dat het niet mijn moedertaal is	—	—	—	—	—
- Ik vind het belangrijker om begrepen te worden dan om perfect Engels te spreken	—	—	—	—	—
- Ik probeer te klinken als iemand uit een Engelstalig land	—	—	—	—	—
- Bij spreekopdrachten let ik meer op mijn grammatica dan op mijn uitspraak	—	—	—	—	—
- Het stoort mij als iemand Engels spreekt met een licht Nederlands accent	—	—	—	—	—
- Het stoort mij als iemand Engels spreekt met een zwaar Nederlands accent	—	—	—	—	—
- Vloeiend klinken is belangrijker dan grammaticaal correct spreken	—	—	—	—	—
- Brits en/of Amerikaans Engels zijn een voorbeeld voor mijn eigen Engelse taalgebruik	—	—	—	—	—

5. Zet de volgende personen op volgorde van hoeveel moeite je zou hebben om ze te begrijpen in een gesprek in het Engels. 1 is het makkelijkst te begrijpen, 6 is het moeilijkst te begrijpen.

Spreker:

Moeilijkheidsgraad:

- iemand met een typisch Brits accent en goede grammatica _____
- iemand met een typisch Brits accent en slechte grammatica _____
- iemand met een sterk buitenlands accent en goede grammatica _____
- iemand met een sterk buitenlands accent en slechte grammatica _____
- iemand met een sterk Nederlands accent en goede grammatica _____
- iemand met een sterk Nederlands accent en slechte grammatica _____

6. Vind je het belangrijk om te oefenen met het begrijpen van verschillende accenten?

- a) Ja, maar dit wordt al gedaan
- b) Ja, maar alleen accenten uit Engelstalige landen
- c) Ja, zowel accenten uit Engelstalige landen als buitenlandse accenten
- d) Nee, dit is niet nodig

7. Hoe vaak worden de volgende onderwerpen behandeld in jullie Engelse les en vind je dit voldoende?

Onderwerp	Behandeld	Genoeg? (ja/nee)
• Woordenschat	(bijna) altijd – regelmatig – nooit	_____
• Grammatica	(bijna) altijd – regelmatig – nooit	_____
• Uitspraak	(bijna) altijd – regelmatig – nooit	_____
• Luisteropdrachten	(bijna) altijd – regelmatig – nooit	_____
• Leesopdrachten	(bijna) altijd – regelmatig – nooit	_____
• Schrijfopdrachten	(bijna) altijd – regelmatig – nooit	_____

8. In hoeverre heb je het gevoel dat de Engelse les een realistisch beeld geeft van hoe jij de Engelse taal waarschijnlijk gaat tegenkomen? 1 is helemaal niet, 10 is helemaal wel.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10

9. In hoeverre vind jij dat de Engelse les jou goed voorbereidt op hoe jij de Engelse taal gaat gebruiken/nodig gaat hebben tijdens je vervolgopleiding? 1 is helemaal niet, 10 is helemaal wel.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10

10. In hoeverre vind jij dat de Engelse les jou goed voorbereidt op hoe jij de Engelse taal over het algemeen gaat gebruiken/nodig gaat hebben in de toekomst? 1 is helemaal niet, 10 is helemaal wel.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10

11. Zijn er onderwerpen die jij echt mist in de Engelse les en die jij graag zou willen behandelen? Zo ja, welke?
