

**ATTITUDES TO ENGLISH WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO
BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN ENGLISH**

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

South Africa's new democratic constitution, which was adopted on the 8th of May 1996, introduced a number of sweeping changes. With its emphasis on human rights and democracy, the new constitution aimed to provide equality to all South Africans. Languages were not precluded from this new sentiment. All eleven of South Africa's languages were officially recognized. The move towards linguistic equality was a positive one in the sense that it made possible the recognition and acceptance of hitherto marginalized languages. However, this move also precipitated a number of problems. All eleven languages may be granted equal status constitutionally, but in practice languages are seldom, if ever, of equal status. More often than not, practicality and other additional socio-political factors dictate that some languages will be preferred over others.

Practically speaking, not all South Africans can be expected to be equally fluent in all eleven languages. It is also a very cumbersome task to use all eleven languages in education and business. One cannot be expected to correspond in all eleven languages simultaneously. Practicality thus dictates the need for a linking language or *lingua franca*.

Furthermore, languages have always been, to some extent, a socio-political battleground in this country. Language has always been an important ideological tool in this country. During the apartheid era, the propagation of Afrikaans (and to a certain extent English), at the expense of the indigenous languages, was seen as an attempt to further marginalize the black majority. In this respect, language cannot be regarded as an objective or neutral entity. Hence, the attempts to actively promote the previously marginalized black languages as a means of redressing the socio-political power imbalances of the past. To a greater or lesser extent, language in South Africa has always been a power tool, where those in power have promoted their languages at the expense of the languages of the disempowered.

It is within this socio-political context that people develop attitudes towards a language and/or its varieties. Because of the fact that language is inextricably linked to the person using it within a specific social context, language attitudes may be viewed as social indicators, highlighting current community thoughts and beliefs, both about individuals and about social or ethnic groups to which these individuals belong (Giles & Ryan, 1982; Schmied, 1991; Smit, 1996). Hence, when one starts considering attitudes towards a specific language, or its varieties, one must necessarily consider the political, social and economic contexts within which these attitudes occur.

According to Schmied (1991: 164-165) positive or negative evaluations of a language may be determined by impressions of linguistic difficulty or simplicity, ease or difficulty of learning, as well as the degree of importance or status it enjoys in a particular community. According to Edwards (1982: 21), however, positive and negative evaluations of a language are motivated primarily by the status and prestige enjoyed by the speakers of the language. He says:

... evaluation of linguistic varieties do not reflect either linguistic or aesthetic quality per se but rather are expressions of social convention and preference, which, in turn, reflect an awareness of the status and prestige accorded to the speakers of these varieties.

In post-colonial societies (like South Africa) the issue of language attitudes and determining the prestige variety becomes problematic. Presently, South Africa is attempting to establish its own endonormative standard, one which takes into account the unique features of all South African people. In the past, the exonormative British standard English was considered as the only acceptable form of English and hence, the prestige variety. In the current multicultural and multilingual context, however, this is no longer the case. Van der Walt and Van Rooy (2002: 114) argue that South African English finds itself in the liberation phase where the norm shifts to the indigenised varieties of English, but a lot of confusion still reigns [because] in a new English or indigenised situation one cannot speak of standardization in the traditional sense of the word. The situation is fluctuating with real-time changes occurring and the end result is

still unknown.

According to Mesthrie (1999) a present-day profile of the languages of South Africa would show a hierarchy with English dominant in commerce, higher education, industry and now in government.

However, English in South Africa is not a uniform language. It has a significant number of varieties. The socio-political changes that have taken place since 1994 have focused much attention on Black South African English (henceforth referred to as BSAE). Blacks have taken up majority positions in the political, economic and social sectors. BSAE is becoming a prevalent variety of English and, for this reason there is growing interest in the nature of its distinctive accent, its development and people's attitudes towards it. There is, in fact, still some uncertainty surrounding the labeling of this particular accent as BSAE. Van Rooy (2000: ii) identifies the problem as two-fold:

- 'South African English' hides the connection between BSAE and other forms of English in Africa – BSAE does have connections and similarities with other forms of African English but he believes it more fruitful to regard it first and foremost in its own unique South African context.
- 'Black' reinforces the ethnic or racial naming practices that have been such a common practice in South Africa.

Although the term 'black' has had negative racial connotations in the past, it is not my intention to use the term 'Black South African English' in a derogatory manner. In light of this I incorporate Van Rooy's (2000: ii-iii) view. He states that:

What we intend the term 'Black' to include... is Black South Africans in the sense of the native Africans who speak a Bantu language as first language, and who received their English language education in a township school from a BSAE speaking teacher... The very specific definition of Black is employed here to articulate a linguistic reality, and not a new interpretation of socio-political history. It overlaps largely with ethnicity, but is not intended to be a

purely racial or ethnic label, but a social one.

My study concerns itself with the perceptions of and attitudes towards BSAE in the workplace. More specifically, my study looks at the nature of the relationship between the variety of English spoken and the candidate's success in the job interview context. It explores the possibility of negative social stigmas attached to BSAE varieties and the possible implications these may have in the South African workplace. This study will also look at how the attitudes of professionals in the Human Resources industry differ from the attitudes of students (who have no training in Human Resources) towards BSAE.

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

English is, at present, afforded significant status in this country as the studies by Lanham (1985), De Kadt (1993), De Klerk and Bosch (1993, 1995), Lazenby (1996), De Klerk (1997), Conradie (1999), and Van der Schyf and Wissing (2000) indicate. English is seemingly associated with quality education, upward social mobility and economic success.

Be that as it may, a number of non-standard varieties of English have emerged, of which BSAE is one. These non-standard varieties are consequently compared to the Standard which is essentially an ideology prescribing how things should be done in the 'right' way and is imposed from above by a society whose rules are largely arbitrary (Milroy & Milroy, 1992: 14).

However, according to Verhoeef and Smit (2000), BSAE is established as "a socially relevant, non-standard, basically ethnolinguistic, variety of English... it has its own grammatical structures, pragmatic uses and sociolinguistic functions... and is an interlanguage emerging from the educational context". In this sense, BSAE cannot be completely separated from its socio-political context. Faced with the onslaught of both colonialism and apartheid, blacks were forced to learn English under less than adequate circumstances, giving rise to a variety of English which, even though it deviates from the standard, is nonetheless an important marker of racial and personal identity.

Furthermore, owing to the often second-rate educational facilities, Branford (1996: 43) mentions that there is a range of command of English among blacks. At one end of the scale are those completely fluent speakers and writers for whom English has become a 'second first language', and in sharp contrast are those with little English or none including many of the victims of the collapse of black education in the 1980s. BSAE is clearly not a uniform entity, owing to the different degrees of education and exposure to mother-tongue speakers. De Klerk (1999: 313) mentions that due to this varying competence, speakers of BSAE may be placed in different stages on a learner continuum. In this respect, acrolectal BSAE closely resembles white South African English, whereas the mesolectal and the basilectal are seen to deviate significantly from the standard.

In light of this, one must necessarily consider which English is regarded in a positive way. Titlestad (1996) and Wright (1996) posed the following succinct question: If English is indeed the language that empowers, which English ultimately empowers? A study done by Lanham (1985) indicates a trend that seems to favour standard English, or more specifically Respectable SAE, as compared to that of BSAE. Standard English is "the prestige variety and is given respect within the society as a whole... it articulates a set of social values and is associated with 'correct' social behaviour" (Milroy & Milroy, 1992: 67). This impacts the role and status of BSAE in South Africa. As a non-standard variety, BSAE is prone to social stigmatization and low prestige. There are a number of possible reasons for these negative evaluations. Titlestad (1996) and Honey (1997) claim that non-standard varieties of English are somehow linguistically inferior, impede communication and do not give access to socio-economic advantages. However, if all languages are regarded as linguistically equal (Trudgill, 1994) then the stigmatization of non-standard varieties of English becomes a matter of bias directed at certain social and racial groups.

A number of studies have been done that indicate these kinds of negative evaluations of BSAE. Gough (1996) characterises BSAE to be the language of social solidarity embodying identity whereas standard English remains the language of social mobility and international communication. Verhoef and Smit (2000) also indicate the perceived low out-group status of BSAE regardless of its important role in empowering groups.

Although these negative perceptions exist there seems to be a shift toward more positive evaluations of BSAE. De Klerk and Gough (2002) recognize it as a variety in its own right, one which is growing in status and prestige. Wade (1995) also argues that BSAE will become increasingly acceptable, and even suggests the possibility of restandardisation. Van Rooyen's (2000) study, which tests the attitudes of English, Afrikaans, and Sotho L1-speakers to varieties of BSAE also shows a shift towards more positive evaluations of BSAE, especially among Sotho-speakers. Van Rooyen says that "Sotho pupils show an obvious preference for BSAE and in general their scores were higher than those of both the English and the Afrikaans pupils... showing that BSAE is gaining in in-group status and that its speakers are no longer ashamed of being associated with it" (2000: 85). De Klerk (1999) also claims that in light of the recent power shifts that have taken place in this country, this re-evaluation seems credible. The growing demographic status of its speakers combined with the ideology of democracy has given rise to a context in which BSAE is afforded more prestige and recognition.

It is important to note that not all BSAE varieties are regarded equally positively. Acrolect BSAE is consistently rated more positively by both white and black students (Gottschalk & Van Rooy, 2001; Coetzee-Van Rooy & Van Rooy, 2005). Acrolect BSAE is given the highest status because it resembles Respectable SAE and quite possibly might be the English of the African elite. It maintains enough of the black identity but remains intelligible enough for everyone to understand. Mesolect BSAE has received average ratings in the past (Gottschalk & Van Rooy, 2001 Van Rooyen, 2000). This is regarded as the English of the black middle class and the majority of black speakers in South Africa use this variety. Basilect BSAE is not acceptable because it deviates too much from Respectable SAE, so much so that it starts affecting intelligibility.

Previous negative evaluations of BSAE (especially of the mesolectal and basilectal varieties) may be related to South Africa's previous discriminatory system of apartheid. With its carefully constructed legal framework, the apartheid system ensured the marginalisation of blacks, especially in the economic sector. Blacks were severely under-represented in the workforce, specifically in higher-level positions and they lacked the necessary education, skill and training to qualify for higher-level positions. For a more

detailed analysis of the progressive marginalisation of South Africa's black labour force refer to Van der Horst (1981) and Lombard (1981). Furthermore, the effects of South Africa's discriminatory practices are discussed in more detail by Schlemmer (1973), Barker (1992) and Finnemore (1999).

Just as South Africa's previous discriminatory practices may have contributed to the stigmatization of BSAE, so South Africa's new democratic order may have contributed to the shift towards a more positive evaluation of BSAE. Recent shifts in political power have given rise to a number of socio-economic changes, which in turn, have secured the rise of a black middle class. Affirmative action measures have made the labour market more representative of South Africa's diverse population. The promotion of equality and the prohibition of discrimination have also allowed for a shift of power in the workplace, giving more black South Africans the opportunity to obtain management positions and allowing more BSAE-speaking people into the workforce.

The Constitution and Bill of Rights, the Labour Relations Act of 1995, the Employment Equity Act of 1998, as well as the promotion of Equality and prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act of 2000 are all important with regard to changing the shape of South Africa's contemporary labour market. De Waal et al (2000), Albertyn et al (2000), The Constitution (1996), Du Toit et al (1998), Tinarelli (2000) and Rautenbach (1999) discuss South Africa's new legal dispensation and its effects on the labour force in more detail.

Given the adoption of the principles of democracy and equality, it seems that South Africa finally wants to tap into its diverse talents to broaden and extend its economic capability beyond that which it has been afforded by homogenous white minority input. Human Resources has a powerful role to play in this regard. The Commonwealth Expert Group (1991: 7) makes the following statement:

The welcome abolition of legislative apartheid in South Africa underlines how much remains to be done and how enormous are the consequences of more than forty years of apartheid and much longer history of white minority rule. Nowhere is the task greater than in the area of human resources development. Apartheid

has skewed the South African economy, South African society and South African mental attitudes, creating a country of unparalleled and crippling inequality... the true challenge of human resources development in South Africa is to assist the process of political change, redress the inequalities and poverty bequeathed by the apartheid state and contribute to transforming those mental stereotypes which foster division and discord within South African society.

Clearly, affirmative action may have changed the face of the South African workforce but, given South Africa's discriminatory past, it is likely that negative stereotypes and stigmas still exist. According to Singh (1996: 56) affirmative action is not sufficient to redress all the inequalities of the past. In addition, Chick (2002: 258) mentions that there is a negative cycle of socially created discrimination in South Africa which has left many people ignorant of the cultural backgrounds and communicative conventions of culturally different others and thus susceptible to miscommunication. Furthermore, repeated miscommunication generates and reinforces negative stereotypes that help maintain the social barriers and inequities. Although the laws have changed and direct discrimination is no longer permissible, there is still a good chance that covert (or indirect) forms of discrimination exist.

Language, or speaking a particular variety of a language, may lead to miscommunication and may even evoke some of the negative stereotypes that were propagated during apartheid. Previous studies (Cooper, 1989; Gough, 1996, & Verhoef & Smit, 2000) show that BSAE is stigmatized and regarded in a more negative light than is standard English. Standard English is the variety spoken by the educated and the upwardly mobile. It may thus be the case that speaking with a BSAE accent in a job interview, may, indirectly disadvantage the speaker because it is not a 'prestigious' accent.

Although Human Resources departments attempt to ensure the objectivity of the employment interview by formulating a comprehensive job analysis, using targeted selection and formulating structured interview questions (Goodale, 1982; Rae, 1988; Field & Gatewood, 1989; Campion & Richard, 1989; Smith & Robertson, 1993 and Rosenburg, 2000), a degree of subjectivity remains and bias may still creep into the

interview process. Both Rosenberg (2000), Smith and Robertson (1993) and Campion and Richard (1989) agree that selection interviews are extremely prone to prejudiced judgements and are not reliable indicators of future on-the-job performance.

Despite this country's progressive labour legislation, bias may still play a role in the employment interview, albeit in an indirect and unintentional way. Linguistic discrimination may be regarded as an indirect form of bias. Language plays an extremely important part in the employment interview because the exchange of information that takes place is done so using mostly spoken language. In this regard, Roberts et al (1992: 366) say that language continues to be one of the least visible, least measurable and least understood aspects of discrimination. Language is never a neutral medium of communication. Rather, language plays an important role in the maintenance of power. Fairclough (2001) agrees that there is a connection between language use and unequal relations of power. Thornborrow (2002) also says that power is often determined by the institutional status and this power is then reflected in the language practices. Language is used by people with power to sustain their power consciously and unconsciously and therefore plays a significant, if invisible, role in how discrimination operates.

Traditionally, BSAE is not seen as a 'correct' variety of English (Titlestad, 1996). For more formal situation, standard English is regarded as more appropriate. An adequate command of English is directly related to socio-economic mobility. De Kadt (1993) identifies English as a work-skill. Wright (1996: 159) states that socio-economic opportunities are opening up, the pull of the developed economy is strong, and competition for jobs fierce. In these changing circumstances, the attractions of non-standard English decline dramatically... the dominant reality world-wide, is that standard English is the empowering language of the modern world, while the indigenous languages carry the communal heritage. Gill (1999) also looks at the status of non-standard varieties of English (in the Malaysian workplace). She comes to the conclusion that in formal situations some varieties, in this case the acrolect, are more acceptable than other varieties that differ more substantially from standard English.

There is a strong possibility that BSAE (as a non-standard variety) is regarded as 'inferior' to the standard variety, as is clear from attitude research among white respondents (Smit, 1996; Gottschalk & Van Rooy, 2001, and Van Rooyen, 2000). By implication, its speakers may also be regarded as 'inferior'. Socio-cultural knowledge and attitudes may surface explicitly in the meaning attached to particular uses of language, which may, in turn, help elicit certain stereotypes. This may be one of the reasons why the speakers of non-standard English are sometimes regarded as uneducated or even uncivilized.

In this respect one must consider the changing role and status of BSAE in the workplace and its place in securing the social and economic mobility of its speakers. According to Ndebele (1991: 116):

... the functional acquisition of English, in a capitalist society... can reinforce the instrumentalisation of people as units of labour. So it is conceivable that the acquisition of English, precisely because the language has been reduced to being a mere working tool, can actually add to the alienation of the workforce.

One is left with the question of whether English, and especially BSAE as a variety of English, is actually a tool that empowers (as some believe it does) or is it one that results in the alienation of its speakers due to their apparent inability to speak the language 'correctly'? For Titlestad the latter statement holds true. According to him "Anti-elitism gets us nowhere: those who can, would learn Standard English for the advantages it brings and the rest would be left behind. Standard English for all is the answer" (1996: 169). However, under the current circumstances there is little opportunity for blacks to gain the competence needed to maintain the standard as it is advocated by Titlestad. In light of this the standard language becomes "the variety of the economically and politically empowered community, the Standard language marginalizes the other varieties (leading to their stigmatization), and the Standard language acts as an educational, economic and social barrier to the users of non-Standard varieties" (Webb, 1996: 182).

Following from this the following research questions may be formulated:

- What is the status of BSAE in the workplace?
- Does BSAE act as a barrier to employment?

1.3. AIMS

- To determine the attitudes of Human Resources professionals and students towards BSAE in the workplace and to determine if there are differences in their respective evaluations.
- To determine whether or not Mesolect BSAE and Basilect BSAE are stigmatized and hence may act as a barrier to employment.

1.4. BASIC HYPOTHESIS

Mesolect and Basilect BSAE are barriers to employment. Acrolect BSAE is not a barrier to employment.

1.5. METHOD OF RESEARCH

1.5.1. Literature study

Literature relating to attitude theory and language attitude theory is reviewed.

Chapter 2 provides theoretical background information about the nature of attitudes in general and language attitudes specifically. Any attempt to study language attitudes must be firmly grounded in established attitude theory. Baker (1992: 1) reiterates this view:

The first deficiency [in language attitude study] is the relationship between general attitude theory and attitude research on the one hand, and research specifically on language attitudes on the other hand. The latter seems rarely to have been informed by the former. When reviewing attitude and language research... it became apparent that only a small number of researchers and authors, demonstrated an awareness of attitude theory.

1.5.2. Empirical study

My study aims to test for possible sources of discrimination in the employment interview, based on accent. The methodology is loosely based on the matched-guise technique in that it plays snippets of interview dialogue to respondents. However, whereas the true matched-guise technique makes use of the same content for each speaker, this study used different versions of the same content. Even though every effort was made to keep the quality of content equal for each speaker, the possible influence of content was controlled by having the passages rated separately and then correlating these ratings with the speaker ratings so as to determine the relative contribution of accent and content to the final speaker rating. Due to the substantial revisions to the matched-guise technique, the methodology in this study can be typified as an indirect assessment technique of attitudes, and will be referred to as the staged interview method.

Twenty Human Resources professionals were asked to rate nine speakers representing the different accents. These professionals all had interview experience and had received some training in the field of conducting interviews. An additional twenty Human Resources professionals were asked to rate the content only, without hearing the speakers. These professionals also had experience and training in employment interviewing.

Subsequently twenty students were asked to rate the same nine speakers. The students, in contrast to the professionals, did not have any experience in or knowledge of conducting employment interviews. An additional twenty students were asked to rate the content only, without hearing the speakers. These students also did not have any experience or training in employment interviewing. The ratings of the professionals and the students were then compared.

Previous research on attitudes to BSAE used mostly students (Gottschalk & Van Rooy, 2001; Van Rooyen, 2000; Nortje, 1995 and Cooper, 1989) and did not situate itself in real-life situations. In this instance, it becomes problematic to generalize the findings of these previous studies to a variety of real-life situations. This study situates itself in a real-life context by making use of professionals who conduct employment interviews.

Furthermore, the design of the research is such that it aims to replicate a typical employment interview situation. Both professionals and students were included to cover for invalid generalizations.

In Chapter 3 the empirical research of this study is presented. The design of the test, and the employability and personality questionnaires, is explained. Chapter 3 also includes a description of the test population, instruments used in the data collection, as well as the practical execution of the test.

1.5.3. Analysis

The results of the empirical research described in Chapter 3 are discussed in Chapter 4. The statistics rendered by the analysis are presented in various tables that indicate the differences in perception towards BSAE among the four different language groups and possible explanations are offered for these differences.

1.5.4. Conclusion

In Chapter 5 the conclusion of this study is presented, along with the recommendations for further study and research to find answers to unresolved issues mentioned in the present study.

CHAPTER 2

A THEORY OF LANGUAGE ATTITUDES

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines attitude theory and then applies this theory to the study of language attitudes. Attitudes are learned through experience and have three basic components, namely cognitive, affective and behavioural. Each component is explained in detail. Following this, the tenuous relationship between attitude and behaviour is examined in more detail by referring to a variety of attitude-behaviour models developed within the field of social psychology. Upon applying attitude theory to language attitude study it is noted that language is a special kind of attitude object because of its social dimension. The primary function of language is an interactive one. For this reason, attitudes towards language (or its varieties) are often not determined by linguistic factors but rather by social ones. The implication of this social evaluation of language is examined in detail, by noting the influence of cognitive schemas and stereotypes on language attitudes.

Furthermore, it is made evident that language acts as a power tool in the hands of the 'social elite'. It follows that the propagation and implementation of the Standard is a tool used by the 'social elite' to undermine and subjugate minority groups. For this reason, this chapter looks at the history of the Standard and problems involved in establishing and implementing the standard in detail.

Finally, debates about standard English are explained within the South African context. Although English is generally regarded as the *lingua franca* in South Africa, the majority of the people in South Africa are second language speakers of English, which, in turn, gives rise to a number of English varieties. It is against this background that this chapter examines which English is the most acceptable variety and which English should be accepted as the standard. Two viewpoints form the cornerstone of this debate:

- Those who advocate the use of an exonormative standard, namely standard British English.
- Those who advocate the use of an endonormative standard, namely one that adheres loosely to standard British English while integrating a unique South African identity.

2.2. DEFINING ATTITUDES

The term ‘attitude’ is one in common usage and yet its precise nature is difficult to pin down. Despite the fact that attitudes have been central in much of the research done in social psychology since the early twentieth century, there has always been difficulty involved in coming up with a suitable and comprehensive definition of the term ‘attitude’. Due to this fact, it has often been viewed as more of a ‘hypothetical construct’ (Baker, 1992: 12) than as a concrete, directly observable and tangible entity. Rokeach (1989: 110) addresses the problem of finding a suitable definition as follows:

Despite the central position of attitudes in social psychology, the concept has been plagued with ambiguity... it [is] difficult to grasp precisely how [definitions] are conceptually similar to or different from one another... it is difficult to assess what differences these variations in conceptual definitions make. *Many definitions of attitude seem more or less interchangeable insofar as attitude measurement and hypothesis-testing are concerned* (my emphasis).

Since the advent of attitude study in the 1930s a number of relevant definitions have been proposed. As mentioned by Rokeach the majority of definitions that have been postulated over the years are largely interchangeable as far as the conceptual aspects of attitude are concerned. One can discern a number of important and salient features from these definitions that provide us with some insight into the formation, nature and significance of attitudes as such. The key features of attitudes may be summarised as follows:

- Attitudes are learned through our interaction with the world around us.
- Attitudes consist of a number of key components:
 - a) Cognitive.
 - b) Affective.
 - c) Behavioural.
- Attitudes are multicomponential and multidimensional.

2.2.1. Attitudes are learned through our interaction with the world around us

Freedman et al (1970: 114) state that attitude formation begins primarily as a learning process. An attitude is formed through the experiences we have with the world around us. Baron and Byrne (1997: 114) identify a number of ways in which attitudes may be formed. According to them, attitudes are learnt through social conditioning and social modelling. Social conditioning primarily involves processes of rewards and punishment where behaviour that is considered acceptable is rewarded and behaviour that is considered unacceptable is punished. Social modelling, on the other hand, occurs when people learn behaviour by observing the behaviour of others (Louw & Edwards, 1995: 493).

Theron (2003: 168) incorporates the above-mentioned aspects of attitude acquisition, stating that attitudes develop, i.e. conditioning and modelling may take place, through the following:

- Interaction between parent and child.
- Social, cultural and educational influences.
- Mass media.
- Personal experiences.
- Socialisation in the work situation.

Social conditioning and modelling may take place within a macro- and micro-environment. When looking at the aspects of attitude acquisition mentioned by Theron (2003), we may distinguish between both macro- and micro-environmental influences.

Macro-environmental influences include social, cultural and educational influences, the mass media as well as socialisation in the workplace. Micro-environmental influences, on the other hand, would include interaction between parent and child as well as personal experiences.

For the purposes of this study it is best to concentrate primarily on the possible macro-environmental influences of the formation of language attitudes, as it is extremely difficult to pinpoint the micro-environmental influences in the formation of the language attitudes of any given respondent.

If the political, economic and social context (macro-environment) is one that actively discriminates against a particular group then it is possible that the attitudes that develop in this context will be negative towards that particular group. Within the context of this study, possible macro-environmental influences impacting on the linguistic attitudes of the respondents may be as follows:

- Changes in government, education, the workplace and society in general.
- Legal changes, particularly those relating to the workplace.
- Changes in the workplace in the sense that blacks are far more representative in the workforce today.
- Mass media and the exposure it gives of different races, cultures, languages and the consequent racial tolerance it proposes.

2.2.2. Attitudes consist of a number of key components

All attitudes have a cognitive, affective and behavioural component. It seems that as far as defining attitudes are concerned, most researchers and scholars would agree that an attitude consists of these three core components. Baker (1992: 12) describes an attitude explicitly as consisting of three major components: the cognitive (thoughts and beliefs), the affective (feelings) and behaviour (a readiness for action). Eagley and Chaiken (1993: 16) also concur that “attitudes are manifested in cognitive, affective, and behavioural processes”. Rokeach (1989), Freedman et al (1970) and Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) all include these three components in their definitions of attitude as well.

Both the cognitive and the affective components of attitude are clearly internal and mentalist in nature, whereas the behavioural component may be viewed as the overt, external manifestation of the two aforementioned components (Smit, 1996). The cognitive and affective dimensions of attitude will be discussed first, followed by the behavioural aspect.

2.2.2.1. The cognitive component

The cognitive component includes all the knowledge we have about the world in the form of thoughts, opinions and inferences. This knowledge is not stored in a haphazard way, but is rather structured into coherent wholes in the form of schemas and stereotypes (Sears et al, 1988). Whenever we are confronted with a new situation, we do not try to understand it from scratch but rely on what we already know about similar situations to make sense of the present situation. In this regard, we rely quite heavily on our schemas and stereotypes when trying to evaluate any given situation. According to Sears et al (1988: 60) when people perceive others they try to cut corners and save effort. They do not try to perceive and remember all possible bits of information but rather only do what is necessary to get a clear impression of what is going on.

In short, our information processing system inserts incoming information into structural slots called cognitive schemas. These schemas help us to organise our information. Ungerer (2003: 127) refers to schemas as “A mental structure that can be used to organise information... schemas are plans or procedures for classifying people, events or objects”. In addition, Sears et al (1988: 67) refer to schemas as an organised structure of cognitions, including:

- Some knowledge about the object.
- Some relationships among the various cognitions about it.
- Some specific examples.

It can thus be said that cognitive schemas do not only consist of bits and pieces of haphazard information, rather they seem to consist of information structures that are often linked to form a coherent whole:

- When processing incoming information we try to form a whole, putting all the bits and pieces into a coherent whole so that they make sense to us.
- Perceivers tend to pay special attention to the most salient features rather than giving equal attention to everything.
- We organise our perceptual field by grouping stimuli. Each separate stimulus is part of a category or group (Sears et al, 1988: 61).

Accent may indeed be a salient feature (or trigger) that people pay special attention to when they hear a person speak. In this way, when an accent is heard, it is identified and then categorised as an accent of a person belonging to a certain group of people.

The term 'schema' may also be broadened to encompass the term 'stereotype'. Sears et al (1988: 61) mention that stereotypes are schemas relating directly to groups of people:

Schemas focusing on groups are called stereotypes where the person attributes specific traits to a particular group of people and it involves having a particular schema for the personality and behaviour of members of a group.

(Sears et al, 1988: 67)

In this regard, stereotypes may be seen as schemas which focus on different groups of people, for example, racial, ethnic, social or cultural groups. When stereotyping we (sometimes inadvertently) attribute certain characteristics to an individual based solely on his/her membership of a particular group.

Generally, then, our perceptions and evaluations of situations and the people in them do not occur in an objective manner. Our perceptions and evaluations of the world around us are always subjective in the sense that they are influenced by all our previous knowledge and experiences. Given that this knowledge and experience is stored in the

form of schemas and stereotypes it stands to reason that we rely quite heavily on these to evaluate any given situation.

Accents that are less than intelligible, or simply different, may evoke negative stereotypes. These stereotypes are then not necessarily based on linguistic features but rather on the mere fact of difference or the realisation of belonging to a different group. Inter alia, the negative rating of accent may be grounded in stereotypes of race rather than linguistic features.

2.2.2.2. The affective component

Cargile et al (1994: 217) identify this component as all sympathetic nervous system activity associated with the attitude object. Emotions, feelings and moods are all associated with the affective component. According to Rokeach (1989: 121) attitudes lead to a preferential response of either approach or avoidance. It follows that an attitude may elicit either a good or bad, positive or negative response. Sears et al (1988: 158) also recognise the affective component as more simplistic than the cognitive component. The cognitive component is more complex in the sense that we have many bits of information about the attitude object as well as a number of thoughts about it. The affective is regarded as more simplistic because it involves only the evaluation of the attitude object in terms of good/bad or like/dislike. Thus we take our cognitions about the attitude object, and based on these we conclude whether or not we like or dislike the attitude object. In other words, individuals learn the characteristics of something and then associate these characteristics with either a positive or negative feelings (Sears et al, 1988: 161).

This study concentrates primarily on the affective component, as it merely aims to establish whether attitudes to BSAE are positive or negative. In fact, all previous research into language attitudes is primarily of an affective nature because it seeks to determine preferences for particular accents as opposed to establishing any definitive links between the attitude and the nature of the cognitive schemas and stereotypes that might contribute to the formation of the attitude.

2.2.2.3. The behavioural component

Finally, the behavioural component concerns itself with the overt action that results from the interaction between the cognitive and affective components. In this case, it is important to remember that a particular attitude does not lead directly to a particular action. Attitude does not necessarily equal behaviour. There are a number of mediating factors. The link between attitude and behaviour is a very complex issue and for this reason is addressed in more detail in section 2.3.

2.2.3. Attitudes are multicomponential and multidimensional

These three components do not exist, or manifest themselves, in isolation. In fact, they are clearly interrelated, each having an effect on the other, influencing the particular nature and manifestation of the attitude concerned. It may thus be assumed that all elements of an attitude are interrelated and that each has some effect on the total attitude and on other separate elements (Freedman et al, 1970: 251).

This leads us to the third important characteristic of the construct 'attitude', namely its interrelatedness in terms of its component parts. Cargile et al (1994: 220) speak about the interrelatedness of the cognitive and affective components. According to them, schemas used in the cognitive processing of attitudes will be influenced by emotions, because emotions are a part of the information summoned by any given situation. Thus, emotions are stored away in the cognitive schema and they may reinforce evaluations already suggested by the schema. Eagley and Chaiken (1993: 666) also reinforce this view by stating that the different classes (cognitive, affective and behavioural by implication) of evaluative responses impinge on one another and exist in interactive, cooperative relation. This means that people reflect on the emotional experiences induced by an attitude object and thereby form beliefs (or cognitive schemas) about it, and they may then act on their beliefs (or cognitive schemas) and emotions.

2.2.4. A working definition of attitudes

Following from the above, attitudes may be defined as consisting of a number of interrelated component parts, namely cognitive, affective and behaviour. They are complex mental constructs that are formed and established through experience, allowing one to organise and evaluate information obtained from the encounters with the social world. Finally, attitudes exert a dynamic influence upon an individual's response to objects in any given situation.

2.3. THE PROBLEMATIC NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR

Although attitudes are derived from behaviour (and behaviour is regarded as a component of attitudes), attitudes do not necessarily equal behaviour. There are a number of factors that mediate between attitude and behaviour.

The views presented by Rokeach (1989) and Baron and Byrne (1997) are largely behaviouristic in their approach, implying that attitude is merely the response to a particular environmental stimulus. There seems to be little room for active mental intervention on the part of the person. This behaviourist approach (first adopted by Skinner) can be summarised as follows:

Humans, like any other organisms, produce behaviour and are controlled by the outcome of their behaviour in that the environment determines what behaviour will be acquired and repeated... Since behaviour is controlled by environmental factors, it can be manipulated by manipulating the environment (Meyer et al, 1997: 280).

As mentioned before this gives human beings little or no freedom of choice and necessarily equates them with animals. This approach does not leave any room for an individual's capacity to interpret and think about the environment. This approach assumes that attitude equals behaviour and does not allow for any mediating factors between the two.

As opposed to the environmental determinism proposed by the behaviourist approach, the social cognitive learning approach acknowledges that an individual can influence his/her own behaviour and development. One of the most important mediating factors they identify is **reflection**:

People do not just produce behaviour but also consciously perceive and think about the results of their behaviour. Thinking is therefore decidedly an important factor, and the individual not only reacts to stimuli, but interprets them and makes hypotheses about the results of various possible behaviours in a specific situation (Meyer et al, 1997: 338).

So a particular stimulus can elicit a certain attitude but the process is more complex than may have been originally thought because a person has the ability to reflect on the stimulus and consider the possible consequences of his/her behaviour.

Attitudes do not lead directly to behaviour. There are a number of intervening factors. Attitude and behaviour do not exist in the purely behaviourist sense of stimulus being equal to a controlled response. Every person has the ability to mediate (think and evaluate) between his/her attitude and response. Human beings are not robots. They have the ability to think, analyse and interpret their reality. Attitudes seem to have been conceived as the direct cause of behaviour in the past. Contemporary understanding has led to the rejection of this viewpoint. There is an indirect link between attitude and behaviour and a number of intervening variables that play a role.

Due to the fact that behaviour forms an integral part of attitudes, it is important to analyse the relationship between the two in more detail.

From the above-mentioned definition one may conclude that although attitudes are largely covert, they are overtly object-directed. Given that attitudes are not behaviour per se, they cannot be directly observed. We can only infer attitudes from responses.

The relationship between attitude and behaviour is far from simple and direct. Rather, it is largely indirect and hence it becomes, at times, problematic. Seemingly, actual behaviour may (under certain circumstances) be incongruent with the expressed attitudes. For this reason, the exploration of the attitude-behaviour relation has been a principle focus of recent attitude research. Much focus falls on delineating the circumstances under which attitudes exert a causal impact on behaviour.

Identifying the factors that mediate between attitude and behaviour is important to this study as well. Within the context of a job interview, the professional respondents may be influenced by the pressure to resist the temptation of stereotypes, to choose the best person for the job, regardless of their own personal attitudes. In addition they may also be under pressure to adhere to labour laws that strictly prohibit discrimination of any kind. All of these factors may mediate between the respondent's attitude and his/her actual behaviour (response/rating). The student respondents, on the other hand, do not have these particular mediating factors. The students had no formal background in human resources or personnel selection.

Given that attitudes do not directly influence behaviour, it must be concluded that attitudes are often not sufficient predictors of behaviour as there are many other factors and sources of influence (besides that of attitude) that co-determine one's behaviour in any particular situation. Responses clearly do not occur in a vacuum. Responses and attitudes are always elicited within the context of some social situation about which we have attitudes too. Actions are thus determined by additional personal and situational factors and not necessarily by the attitude alone. According to Freedman et al. (1970: 385-6):

... attitudes always produce pressure to behave consistently with them, but external pressures and extraneous considerations can cause people to behave inconsistently with their attitudes. Any attitude or change in attitude tends to produce behaviour that corresponds with it. However, this correspondence often does not appear because of other factors involved in the situation.

In an employment interview situation the actions of the interviewers may be influenced by a number of other factors besides attitude. These may include legal and social pressures to eliminate bias, especially racial bias. This may, in turn, impact their evaluations of a BSAE speaker so much so that even though their attitudes towards the BSAE accent is negative, their negative attitudes will not be revealed in their evaluations of the speaker because they fear being labelled racist.

A number of theories have been proposed, each of which attempt to address the nature of the interaction between attitude and behaviour so as to identify possible additional variables that could influence behaviour.

Baron and Byrne (1997) propose an 'Attitude-to-Behaviour' model. According to them:

- Some events activate an attitude; the attitude once activated, influences our perceptions of the attitude object.
- At the same time our knowledge about what is appropriate in a given situation (social norms) are also activated.
- Together, the attitude and the schema about what is appropriate in a given social situation, are expected to shape our definition of the event and this definition, in turn, influences our behaviour. The above-mentioned factors therefore work together to create a response, which is then interpreted as behaviour.

When applying the 'Attitude-to-Behaviour' model to the interview context one could assume that hearing a specific accent will activate an attitude, which in turn, leads to an evaluation of that accent as well as the person speaking with that specific accent. However, because the selection interview occurs in a context where discrimination is not allowed, it becomes a context in which norms advocate the objective evaluation of the suitability of each candidate. The situation is one that requires professionalism and objective responses, rather than subjective, personal responses. This will then shape the interviewers' final response to the extent that, even though he/she may harbour certain

linguistic prejudices, these will not necessarily be evident in the resulting behaviour due to the social and legal restraints imposed by the interview context.

Baron and Byrne (1997) depict a clear relation between the event, the attitude that it triggers and the social norms that need to be considered in the particular situation in which the event occurs. In essence, the 'Attitude-to-Behaviour' model considers aspects of the attitude itself, namely its origin, strength and specificity, as well as additional situational and social norms as the important interacting factors that mediate between attitude and behaviour.

The 'Two-Attitude' model postulated by Rokeach (1989) is very similar to the model proposed by Baron and Byrne (1997). It also examines the relationship between the event or object which triggers a particular attitude and the situation within which the event occurs. Rokeach states that a person's social behaviour is always mediated by at least two types of attitudes – one activated by the object, the other activated by the situation. Behaviour towards a social object within a social situation will therefore be a function of the relative importance of the two activated attitudes, namely the attitude towards the object (Ao) and the attitude towards the situation (As). Behaviour is thus the result of the interaction between the attitude object, a person's attitude towards this object, and the person's definition of the situation in which the attitude object is encountered.

Wicker (1973) also makes mention of the important influence that situational factors have on the expression of attitudes. Wicker, in fact, refers to these as 'situational thresholds'. He says:

In the actual or considered presence of certain people there are always normative prescriptions of proper behaviour. In everyday situations the respondent may have to justify his/her actions or be influenced by group pressures. Thus social norms and role requirements may contribute to the inconsistency (1973: 192).

This need for justifying one's behaviour certainly plays an important part in the interview context. The selection of one candidate and the rejection of other candidates have to be motivated carefully. The interviewer must thus be able to show clearly that a specific candidate was chosen due to the fact that his/her skills, abilities and knowledge are the best match for the requirements of the position.

Although Wicker highlights the importance of situational factors and social norms in determining behaviour, he also takes note of a number of personal factors that may influence the attitude-behaviour relation. These include other attitudes that the person may hold, competing motives, verbal, intellectual and social abilities, as well as activity levels.

Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) 'Theory of Reasoned Action' is perhaps the most extensive in that it attempts to account for all the personal and situational factors that may play a role in the attitude-behaviour relation, while also seeking to highlight the specific manner in which these factors interact. Essentially, their model distinguishes between the following mediating factors:

- **External variables:** include demographic variables, attitudes towards the targets (individuals, groups or institutions) and personality traits (introversion/extraversion, authoritarianism, dominance) of the individual, which, in turn, exert an impact on the individual's attitude towards his/her behaviour as well as his/her subjective norms.
- **Attitude toward the behaviour:** includes the individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behaviour. This ties up with the respondents' work ethic. How positively or negatively would they feel for acting on a negative attitude/stereotype?
- **Subjective norms:** these include a person's perception of the social pressures put on him/her to perform or not perform the behaviour in question and his/her motivation to comply with these norms.
- **Intention:** all the above-mentioned factors influence the intentions of the individual. The attitudinal, personal and normative components should always

predict the intention because their ability to predict the behaviour will depend on the strength of the behaviour-intention relation.

Suffice to say that Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) model proposes that a number of external variables influence the person's attitude toward the behaviour as well as his/her subjective norms, which, in turn, influences the person's intention, which may or may not be translated into behaviour.

It follows that, given the potential influence of additional personal, situational and socially normative variables, any study that attempts to derive attitudes from certain behaviours, must necessarily take note of, and control for, certain variables (in addition to those of attitude alone) that may influence the behaviours. It must thus be sure that it is, in fact, attitude alone that leads to a given response.

Keeping some variables constant during the data collection increases the chance that the differences in the response were due to differences in attitude. However, it is extremely difficult to control all the variables that could possibly influence the final response. The variables that were controlled for in this study are explained in more detail in Chapter 4.

2.4. LANGUAGE ATTITUDES

Language attitudes entail attitudes specifically directed toward a particular language and/or varieties of a particular language. Smit (1996) defines language attitudes as any cognitive, affective or behavioural index of evaluative reactions toward different language varieties of their speakers. Based on this, language attitudes have exactly the same components and functions of attitudes as identified by Lambert et al (1960), Freedman et al (1970), Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), Rokeach (1989), Baker (1992), Eagley and Chaiken (1993) and Cargile et al (1994)

Fasold (1984) draws an important distinction between attitudes in general and language attitudes in particular. He says that language attitudes are distinguished from other attitudes because of the intrinsic nature of the attitude object: language. Fasold (1984) indicates that language does not operate in isolation because it is a means of social interaction between people, and in so being, it adopts certain social connotations evoked

by speakers and the social or ethnic groups to which they belong. In this way language attitudes are broadened to include attitudes towards speakers of a particular language or dialect. Language attitudes thus become indicative of broader social sentiments that encompass the status of speakers of a dialect and the social group to which they belong.

Language, or the particular variety spoken, cannot be separated from the speaker. Rather, it is located within the speaker and plays an important part in determining the formation of his/her unique social identity, as well as in our perception of another's social identity. Smit (1996: 178) states that central to language attitudes is the individual as social being and that it is along the dimension of social identity that a person will associate with a number of groups (ingroups) and dissociate with other groups (outgroups).

Although Schmied (1991: 164) agrees that positive or negative evaluations of language are often based on the positive or negative social status of its speakers, he nevertheless mentions that evaluations may also be based on the impressions of linguistic difficulty or simplicity, or else ease or difficulty of learning. Giles and Ryan (1982: 21) state that languages may be evaluated along three different dimensions, namely the linguistic, aesthetic and social. Like Schmied (1991) they also admit that language attitudes may be socially motivated. In other words, languages may be evaluated along a social dimension, which means that positive or negative attitudes to a language or its varieties are determined by the negative or positive social status of the group that speaks it.

However, they also state that evaluations of language may be based on linguistic as well as aesthetic features associated with that language. The aesthetic dimension concerns itself with the perceived beauty of the language. Linguistically, evaluations may occur along the dimensions of perceived complexity and sophistication, the ability to express complex terms as well as the extent of the vocabulary.

There are those that argue for the intrinsic linguistic superiority of some varieties. Basil Bernstein (1990) distinguishes between the linguistic properties of standard and non-standard English. He equates the standard with elaborated codes and the non-standard

with restricted codes. Elaborated codes encompass more linguistic complexity and the ability to convey more abstract concepts than restricted codes.

Bernstein goes on to relate these two respective codes with academic performance. According to him, the elaborated code gives its speakers a distinct intellectual advantage. He says that education is the official State agency for the location and general distribution of elaborated codes and their modalities of reproduction, which selectively create, position and evaluate official pedagogic subjects (1990: 111).

Interestingly he associates the perceived linguistic 'superiority' of the elaborated code with the middle class whereas the restricted code is associated with the working class. Mastering the elaborated code will thus grant access to social mobility because language and class are related. Non-standard codes are associated with the working classes, whereas standard codes are associated with the middle and upper classes (1990: 112).

Alternatively, Labov argues against Bernstein's assumptions in saying that all varieties perform the same function and purpose, and thus are linguistically equal. He says that working class dialects are also complex, structured systems and are therefore not 'restricted' in Bernstein's sense of the word (Bernstein, 1990: 114).

Even though non-standard varieties may be regarded as linguistically sound varieties in their own right, it is still unlikely that they are judged on linguistic merit alone. According to Edwards (1982) it is unlikely that languages reflect intrinsic linguistic or aesthetic inferiority or superiority. If all languages are linguistically equal then judgements of the quality and prestige of language varieties are dependent on knowledge of the social connotations that they possess for those familiar with them. In other words, the judgement of whether a language is 'good' or 'bad' is largely determined by who speaks the 'good' variety.

Therefore, the inherent-value hypothesis, which assumes that each language or its variety has its own inherent value and is thus of equal status, is largely inappropriate. In this sense:

... evaluation of linguistic varieties do not reflect either linguistic or aesthetic quality per se but rather are expressions of social convention and preference, which, in turn, reflect on awareness of the status and prestige accorded to the speakers of these varieties. (Edwards, 1982: 30)

If it is assumed that all languages and their varieties are linguistically equal, each fulfilling their own inherent functions (as do both Labov & Trudgill), it follows that any inequality associated with a particular language or its varieties is necessarily socially conditioned and not based on any inherent dysfunction or inequality associated with the language itself. Judgements often reflect perceived value, based on usefulness, economic advantage, marketability, and perceived size of vocabulary. In this instance, language may no longer be regarded as a neutral, objective entity of communication. Rather, within this context of language attitude study, language becomes a powerful social force that does much more than convey intended referential information.

Due to the fact that linguistic acceptability is socially conditioned, language becomes an instrument of social power as it is the people themselves who determine what is acceptable and appropriate. Ultimately, this type of value judgement results in, and allows for, social, cultural and racial hierarchies. According to Smit (1996: 175) we only form attitudes towards language because it reflects and embodies societal structures on various levels, from the national to the interpersonal ones. It is thus that, in most multilingual societies, the differential power of particular social groups is reflected in language variation and in the attitudes towards these varieties. Language variety is thus an index of social hierarchy (Lippi-Green, 1998 and Gill, 1999).

Suffice to say that language is an element affecting the perception of the person as a whole and the group to which he/she belongs. Our views of others – their supposed capabilities, beliefs and attributes – are determined, in part by inferences we make from the language features they adopt (Cargile et al, 1994: 211). These language features may include things like grammar, vocabulary and accent. However, when it comes to evaluating spoken varieties, Gottschalk and Van Rooy (2001) found that accent plays a much more important role than grammar when it comes to evaluating a particular language variety.

From this one may deduce that accent is of primary importance when it comes to determining language attitudes. Seemingly, the accent with which the person speaks becomes representative of the person's social or ethnic group, in the sense that it signals the social or ethnic group he/she belongs to. Language attitudes towards a specific person's accent are thus an indication of the attitudes towards the social or ethnic group to which the person speaking with that particular accent belongs. Gottschalk and Van Rooy (2001) show that there is some correlation between racial attitude and accent rating, but more so for the white rather than the black participants. Coetzee-Van Rooy and Van Rooy (2005) who worked with black participants only, show the non-usefulness of the assumption that there is a direct correlation between racial attitude and accent rating.

Language, or more specifically accent, acts as a cue, activating and eliciting certain social categories and related stereotypes. Ryan (1973: 61) state that in a situation:

- Speech types serve as social identifiers.
- These elicit stereotypes held by ourselves and others.
- We tend to behave in accordance with these stereotypes.
- Thus, we translate our attitudes into a social reality.

Upon hearing an accent (the accent being a form of incoming information), a person seeks to make sense of the accent by recalling existing information about the accent and the group of people speaking with this accent. This existing information is stored in the form of cognitive schemas and stereotypes. Accent, as an attitude object, would thus elicit the cognitive element of the attitude. Following this a person would then (based on his/her existing information) react positively or negatively to the speaker who speaks with that accent. In this way the accent (attitude object) would elicit an affective response. Finally, the person hearing the accent may or may not decide to react to the accent (attitude object) by behaving in a positive or negative way.

This impacts strongly on the individual and the social groups with which he/she may identify. In this sense, language attitudes play an important role on a macro-social level

in terms of public policy and institutional support. Language attitudes are also playing an increasingly important role on a micro-social level, specifically when one examines the complex and subtle ways in which language sometimes (through the routines of everyday interaction) reflects, creates and sustains our multiple group identities. According to Lambert et al (1960):

... evaluational reactions to a spoken language should be similar to those prompted by interaction with individuals who are perceived as members of the group that uses it, but because the use of the language is one aspect of behaviour common to a variety of individuals, hearing the language is likely to arouse mainly generalised or stereotypic characteristics of the group.

It is clear that language or a particular accent may act as a cue, eliciting certain stereotypes, and with this certain social categories that demarcate the identity of a specific social group and the individuals belonging to that group. According to Baron and Byrne (1997: 207):

People generally divide the social world into two categories – *us* and *them*... they view other persons as belonging either to their own group (usually termed the ingroup) or to another group (usually termed the outgroup). Such distinctions are based on many dimensions, including race, religion, gender, age, ethnic background, occupation and income.

Evidently, social categories (and by implication cognitive schemas) are an essential and necessary part of everyday functioning in the sense that they assist information processing. Mental frameworks are an important component of these schemas. They contain information relevant to specific situations and the people in them. Once established, they help us interpret these situations and what is happening in them. It follows, then, that schemas and their accompanying social categories impact on the selection, storage and retrieval of information, helping us to establish mental frameworks suggesting that certain traits and behaviours go together and that individuals who have them are of a certain type and belong to a certain group.

The notion of stereotyping takes this process one step further in that stereotypes are schemas that focus on an entire group of people, not recognising degrees of individuality and difference within that particular group. They describe the truly prototypical member of such categories – the ‘pattern’ to which we compare new persons as we meet them, in order to determine if they do or do not fit the category (Baron & Byrne, 1997: 77). Stereotypes are thus beliefs to the effect that all members of specific social groups share certain traits or characteristics. There is a great deal of simplification and over-generalisation involved in stereotyping.

Although stereotypes are considered to be an important aspect of everyday functioning in terms of adequate information processing, they may also serve an extremely destructive function in the broader dynamics of propagating the social power of particular groups at the expense of other groups. Language attitudes may consequently come to reflect the power dynamics and social status between groups within a political and ideological framework. By stereotyping in accordance with accent, one necessarily starts categorising, distinguishing in the process between one’s own in-group and the other’s out-group. Clearly, the members of the out-group will be evaluated less positively, which inevitably results in prejudice directed at the out-group. Baron and Byrne (1997: 195) define prejudice as an attitude (usually negative) towards members of some group (usually the out-group), based solely on their membership of that group. Prejudice may thus be seen as a unique kind of attitude as it indicates negative evaluations and feelings, cognitive frameworks (stereotypes) and negative behaviour in the form of active discrimination.

In terms of language attitudes, or more specifically, linguistic prejudice, the dominant group will choose to legitimate its own language at the expense of those whom they deem as outsiders. This group will promote its patterns of language use as the model required for social advancement, at the expense of the language used by the minority group members, which is consequently viewed as a lower prestige variety, or accent, effectively reducing their opportunities for success in society as a whole. Edwards (1982: 26) shows that the speech patterns of regional speakers, minority ethnic group members and lower-

class populations evoke unfavourable reactions, at least in terms of status and prestige, from judges who may or may not be standard speakers themselves.

Before moving on to the nature of language attitudes in South Africa it is important to look closer at the nature of the standard and standard English because they are at the centre of the debate surrounding language attitudes in South Africa.

2.5. THE STANDARD

Prestige and status is usually conditioned in accordance with what is considered to be the 'standard'. Milroy and Milroy (1992: 14) define the standard as an ideology prescribing how things should be done in the 'right' way... it is imposed from above by a society whose rules are necessarily arbitrary. In this case, the standard is not necessarily linguistically or aesthetically superior but, rather, it is considered to be socially superior because it is imposed by a group that is socially powerful and superior. Enforced and maintained by this dominant group, the standard is afforded a great deal of respect within society as a whole and is consequently often associated with 'good' or 'correct' social behaviour, education and socio-economic mobility. Approached from this angle, the standard is less a matter of 'good' linguistic practice and more a matter of articulating a set of social values as embedded in linguistic practice.

Milroy and Milroy (1992: 27) summarise the process of standardisation as follows:

- The need for uniformity is felt by influential portions of society.
- A variety is then selected as the standard.
- This variety is then accepted by influential people and then diffused geographically and socially by various means.
- The standard is then maintained by various means.

A network of mechanisms is clearly put in place to ensure that a language remains fixed within the boundaries established by the standard. Accepted by influential people, the standard is maintained in a number of covert and overt ways. Milroy and Milroy (1992) indicate that there is informal pressure, in the form of peer groups, as well as formal pressure, exerted through public channels in the form of government policies, education

and broadcast systems. In short, a dialect is selected and then accepted for common usage. Subsequently, the more it is used, the more important that dialect becomes, and the more important it becomes the more it is used.

2.5.1. The history of standard English

The notion of a standardised English first emerged in the 15th century and reached its heyday in the prescriptivist 18th and 19th centuries. Written forms of English were the first to be standardised. The standardisation of written forms of English also prompted attempts to establish a standard accent, from approximately the 16th century onwards (Baugh & Cable, 1993 and Bailey, 1992).

A national British standard began emerging as early as the 15th century. During the 1420s English replaced Latin as the language of central government and by the 1450s English had achieved a fair degree of regularisation, most notably in spelling. The introduction of Caxton's printing press in 1476 acted as a vehicle for the spread of this new form of standard English. By the mid-16th century there was an identifiable standard English (Baugh & Cable, 1993).

During the 18th and 19th centuries attempts to standardise English were tackled with renewed vigour. This may have been due to the gradual rise in status of English in the eighteenth century. According to Parakrama (1995: 14) the more the English nation extended the boundaries of its empire, the more the English language was praised as a superior language and subjected to extensive study. Given the spread of the English empire in the eighteenth century, it became necessary to consolidate the language in terms of the promotion of uniformity and the progressive elaboration of vocabulary and grammar. It is thus that within the climate of authoritarianism and prescription that the official codification and standardisation of English was carried out. This age was, in effect, one that valued system and regulation as well as stability and order (Baugh & Cable, 1993: 250). Honey (1997: 79) describes the sentiment as one that valued correctness and propriety above all else.

Not surprisingly, the eighteenth century was the age of prescriptive grammarians. Swift's "Proposal for correcting, improving and ascertaining the English tongue" (1712) made it clear that he regarded the basic problem to be the fact of variation and change in language: in his complaint he was reflecting the need of a developing nation to have a relatively fixed standard language for the practical purposes of clear communication over long distances and periods of time (Milroy & Milroy, 1992: 34). Dr Johnson's dictionary (1755) and Bishop Lowth and Lindley Murray's grammar books also assisted in the formal written codification of the English language. Consequently, the standard, being a written codification, was particularly suitable for implementation in education and the print media. Wright (1993: 6) notes that:

The inception of state-funded primary education in the latter third of the nineteenth-century introduced the stabilising force of universal education and, in cooperation with the proliferation of the print media in the twentieth-century, education has been the dominant force in lifting the language standard from its ties to any particular speech community, and entrenching it as an international system whose norms are defined primarily by usage in printed text.

An increasing number of the British population was exposed to a written standard and an increasing number made use of this written standard. Be that as it may, the majority of the population continued to speak their distinctive dialects. So even though there was a fair amount of continuity as far as written English was concerned, there was still a great deal of variety as far as spoken English was concerned.

Attempts to standardise pronunciation were much slower but by the first half of the 16th century there was already a clear idea that there was a correct way of pronouncing English and that these forms had become a criterion of good birth and education (Honey, 1997: 73). Evidently, the dialect of southern British English was deemed as the 'correct' dialect. Daniel Jones and H.C. Wyld were instrumental in helping to establish this standard British accent. Jones associated this standard accent with the educated classes in the south of England (Bailey, 1992: 5). Wyld, on the other hand, did not equate the

standard accent with education. Unlike Jones, Wyld only required wealth and social position as a criterion for determining the nature of standard spoken English.

The standard spoken English, as identified by the likes of Wyld and Jones, was only spoken by a small minority of the British population. The majority of the British population made use of standard written English but continued to speak in their own dialect, although there were a number of forces driving out dialect forms in the 19th century, i.e. the spread of education, urbanisation, geographic mobility and the press. Honey (1997: 103) states that:

RP was much more widely diffused by 1934 than it had ever been in the 19th century. Not only had it extensively penetrated the education system – now educating children up to older ages – at all levels, but working-class children had heard it on the lips of clergy as well as teachers, and even more widely, on the BBC, which from its foundation in 1922 took over from the public school system the role as the main agency for the diffusion of RP - and now into every home in every land.

Although RP may be more accessible than it was in the late 18th and 19th centuries it is still only spoken by only 3-5% of the population and England still has quite a number of different dialect sections (Trudgill, 1994: 7).

2.5.2. Problems involved with the standard

Although the standard is presented as the so-called ideal, there are a number of problematic issues as far as standardisation is concerned, both in Britain (where the majority of the population are mother-tongue speakers of English) as well as in multilingual and multicultural societies (where English is a second language for the majority of its speakers).

Firstly, the standard attempts to confine language to only one correct form, not allowing for any variation or innovation. Lippi-Green (1998: 10) states that all language changes over time, in terms of lexicon, sound structures, tone, rhythm, the way sentences are put

together, the social markings of variants, and the meanings assigned to words. Gill (1999: 216) also says that standardisation does not take into account the nature of language itself. Language cannot be approached as a fixed commodity. It is a means of communication that reflects cultures, expressions and emotions of various speech communities. When considering these constant changes in the forms and functions of language one must remain aware of the fact that varieties will inevitably emerge, both in spoken and written forms. Francis (1974: 29) states that linguistic change and variation are, in fact, a natural human tendency to innovate this change, to alter old uses to fit new ones.

In effect, the standard seeks to stop these changes from happening, allowing for the suppression of the natural occurrence of varieties and variation.

Secondly, another important problem with the standard is the fact that it does not distinguish sufficiently between spoken and written language. More often than not the written standard is imposed on spoken language. There is a clear tendency to evaluate spoken usage on the model of written usage. Due to the fact that prescriptivists like to select one, and only one, variant from a set of equivalent uses and recommend that it is 'correct' (Milroy & Milroy, 1992: 24), the standard becomes conservative and oppressive both within written and spoken forms. Even though the standard is applied more conservatively to written forms than it is to spoken forms, there have been attempts to apply a uniform standard to accent as well, as is evident in establishing RP or BBC English as the norm for spoken English. However, Baugh and Cable (1993: 310) state that as far as spoken language is concerned it is too much to expect that the marked differences of pronunciation be reduced to one uniform mode. Trudgill (1994: 6) also says that standard English has nothing to do with pronunciation. Written and spoken forms of language lend themselves differently to standardisation (Lippi-Green, 1998: 19) because of the differences between written and spoken language.

Suffice to say that even in Britain (where the notion of standard English first came about) very few people actually speak the standard English dialect. So even though they may

make use of standard English grammar they still continue to speak their own unique regional dialect:

Most people who speak standard English do so with some form of regional pronunciation, so that you can tell where they come from much more by their accent than by their grammar or vocabulary. There is only a small minority of the population, perhaps 3 – 5 %, who speak standard English with the totally regionless accent we sometimes call the 'BBC' accent. (Trudgill, 1994: 7).

Based on this one could argue that the standard (especially the spoken standard) is often artificial, an abstraction that exists in the minds of those who advocate its use. Jeffery (1993: 15) also sees it as an idealised prototype. He says that there is no such thing as a *spoken* official standard anywhere, even in Britain; and that it would be impossible to enforce such a spoken standard. Even in Britain, where the standard form of English was first established and implemented, a number of non-standard varieties continue to exist. Attempts were made in the 1960s to accommodate these non-standard varieties by abandoning the teaching of prescriptivist grammar (Honey, 1997). However, amidst claims of declining standards, the late 1980s, saw a return to teaching standard English in schools along with grammar. The non-standard varieties remain, however and there is still a great deal of variation in the English spoken by the native English speakers in Britain.

Even the written standard is an abstraction, i.e. it is not one that is naturally used but taught in schools. Suzanne Romaine says that standard English (of the kind we write) is nobody's mother-tongue. We know that every single child to whom standard English is available needs to develop its use of the multiplex semantic resources and to do this by constant exposure to written forms, to educated speech, and to explicit teaching (in Honey, 1997: 52). Fromkin and Rodman (1993: 284), in referring to standard American English, address the dilemma as follows:

Standard American English is an idealisation. Nobody speaks this dialect; and if somebody did, we would not know it, because SAE is not defined precisely. Several years ago there was an entire conference devoted to one subject: a precise definition of SAE. This meeting did not succeed in satisfying everyone as to what SAE should be. It used to be the case that the language used by national broadcasters represented SAE, but today many of these people speak a regional dialect, or themselves 'violate' the English preferred by the purists.

This proves the point that even in countries where the majority of speakers are L1 speakers of English there is not a general consensus about what standard English is.

Fourthly, given that the standard is held up as the desired variety, i.e. the *only* 'correct' variety, non-standard forms are often stigmatised, along with those who speak non-standard forms of English. When looking at the standard from this angle, it becomes elitist, a power tool used to oppressing non-standard speakers, denying them access to greater social and economic mobility. Parakrama (1995: 7) states that:

Although some linguists did see the standard as a possible uniform mode of speech, other (the majority) saw it as a form with a particular value deriving from the social status of those who used it: the literate and the educated. This in turn created new ways of evaluating various forms of spoken discourse as it gave certain values to specific usage and devalued other usage.

Given its rigid structure and its enforcement by those occupying the higher levels of the social hierarchy, the standard often results in social class discrimination, effectively empowering some groups at the expense of others. Trudgill (1994: 6) says:

There is no doubt that non-standard dialect forms have less prestige than standard English... since the standard English dialect is spoken natively by British people who can be regarded as being at the 'top' of the social scale, in the sense that they have more money, influence, education and prestige than the people lower down the social scale.

Due to the fact that all other linguistic varieties are considered as having a lower status, it does not allow for social mobility. Standard English is associated with education and socio-economic status. It is the variety naturally used by most educated people who fill positions of social, financial, and professional influence in the community... Control of standard English does not, of course, guarantee professional, social, or financial success. But it is an almost indispensable attribute of those who attain such success (Francis, 1974: 246). Burchfield (1994: 17), while discussing the nature of standard English, reiterates this impression of standard English. He states that its use relates to social class and education, and is often considered (explicitly or implicitly) to match the average level of attainment of students who have finished secondary level schooling.

Clearly, standard English has come to be associated with education, and socio-economic status. Standard English, is, in many ways, class-based. Lippi-Green (1998: 55) says that perhaps it is necessary to choose one social group to serve as a model and that there is some rationale behind choosing the 'educated' as this group. However, she continues to mention that there is nothing objective about this practice. She puts this process down to the ordering of social groups in terms of who has the authority to determine how language is best used. From this point of view, standardisation is seen as one of the main instruments used by a structured society to enforce and maintain the ideologies of a certain power elite (which in most cases is the white upper-middle class).

2.5.3. The standard in South Africa

Within the multilingual South African context the notion of the standard is especially significant. Despite the fact that the South African government has recognised eleven official languages, English seems to be afforded the most significant status in this country. According to Mesthrie (2002) a present-day profile of the languages of South Africa would show a hierarchy, with English dominant in commerce, higher education, industry, and now in government. English is clearly associated with quality education, upward social mobility and economic success as the studies by De Kadt (1993), Conradie (1999), Lanham (1985), Lazenby (1996), De Klerk and Bosch (1993, 1995), De Klerk (1997), De Klerk (1999) and Van Der Schyf and Wissing (2000) indicate.

Be that as it may, English remains a second and third language for the majority of its speakers. The majority of the South African population speak one of the Southern Bantu languages as native language. No longer solely under the firm control of its native speakers, English has evolved and given rise to a number of non-standard varieties. Even among mother-tongue speakers of English there exist a number of different varieties, for example the differences between Extreme SAE and Respectable SAE. There is also a marked regional difference, for example when comparing speakers in Cape and Natal to speakers in Gauteng (Lanham & McDonald, 1979).

Thus, in a multicultural and multilingual society such as ours, the notion of the standard remains a contentious issue and ultimately one is left with the following salient question: Do we need the standard and, if so, which standard do we employ? Broadly speaking, there are two main positions with regard to this question.

Firstly, there are those that advocate the continued use of British standard English. Titlestad remains one of the chief proponents of this view. He believes that we cannot dispense with the standard. He believes that anti-elitism gets us nowhere and that those who can, would learn standard English for the advantages it brings and the rest would be left behind. "Standard English for all is the answer" (Titlestad, 1996: 169). Honey (1997) agrees with Titlestad. In his discussion about the role and function of standard English in Britain, he maintains that standard English is an important and valuable variety because of its multifunctional nature, its greater range of abstract meanings and vaster vocabulary. In effect, Honey (1997: 42) sees standard English as a 'ticket to freedom', not as an act of oppression. Standard English gives people access to a whole world of knowledge and to an assurance of greater authority in the dealings with the world outside their homes, in a way that is genuinely liberating.

In short, proponents of this view argue that standard English carries with it the prestige needed to succeed in educational, social and economic domains. This prestige is often linked to the apparent advantages it has when it comes to gaining access to information in an increasingly globalised world. Finally, advocates of standard English feel that non-standard varieties threaten intelligibility, both intranationally and internationally.

Secondly, there are those who advocate the establishment of a South African standard English which moves away from the exonormative British standard to incorporate more distinct endonormative South African English linguistic features. This would allow the English language to more adequately reflect the South African experience. Given that, for the majority of the population, English remains a second or third language, the implementation of the British standard becomes problematic. It is an exonormative standard which cannot fulfil the unique linguistic needs of the people in South Africa. According to Webb (1996: 182) under these circumstances the standard becomes the variety of the economically and politically empowered community, it marginalises the other varieties (leading to their stigmatisation), and acts as an educational, economic and social barrier to the users of non-standard varieties. Furthermore, De Klerk (1999: 321) also states that non-standard varieties are likely to remain and become even further entrenched because:

The means to teach the standard variety of English have deteriorated rapidly in the past five years and the country faces an unprecedented financial crisis, with fewer English-speaking teachers than ever before to provide an acceptable model to students in schools. Apart from those privileged few who can afford the luxury of private education, South African black students face the bleak prospect of unmotivated and poorly-trained teachers in cash-stripped schools.

Access to education has become easier and thus there are fewer qualified teachers in relation to the increase in the number of school pupils. With increased access to education there are many more semi-literate users of English.

Nevertheless, in 1992 the English Academy Conference suggested the implementation of standard British English in South Africa (Jeffery, 1993: 14). Clearly, this raised a number of public concerns which Wright (1993: 5) framed as follows: "How could the English Academy have come up with such a blatant piece of neo-imperialistic propaganda!". The implementation of the British standard in South Africa clearly entails a number of problems.

First, the British standard English, as advocated by Titlestad (1996) and Wright (1996), is not used by the majority of people in Britain. In fact, Britain has its own problems with the implementation of its standard English because of the fact that many non-standard varieties exist there, especially as far as accent is concerned. Baugh and Cable (1993: 310) say that every county has its own peculiarities, and sometimes as many as three dialectal regions may be distinguished within the boundaries of a single shire. Furthermore, nobody really speaks with the RP accent. Although it is supposedly an accent associated with the upper and upper-middle classes, national leaders do not even articulate the standard (Bailey, 1992: 3). Honey (1989: 66) says that the Queen Mother and royal family all speak a variant of RP which is not the most widely admired or imitated accent – it is sometimes ridiculed and nowhere is it taught. Burchfield (1994: 17) adds that even radio and TV presenters speak with regional variations in accent. So even though RP is associated with broadcasting, upper classes and public school system – nobody actually seems to speak it. Kachru (1992: 51) concurs that RP does not necessarily represent 'educated English' because many educated people do not speak RP. So in a manner of speaking, British standard English (especially in terms of its pronunciation) remains a bit of an abstraction, even in Britain. This is also the case with America as mentioned by Fromkin and Rodman (1993).

Second, and perhaps more importantly, it is an exonormative variety which no longer suits the needs of a multilingual and multicultural country such as South Africa. Ndebele, (1987), Webb (1996), Wade (1997), Kachru (1992), Schmied (1991), and De Klerk (1999) agree that English has certain instrumental values for Africa which cannot be denied, but that the speech of Britain can no longer be considered the norm by which all others must be judged. The image and norms of the speech of southern England are clearly no longer suited to the South African situation. Schmied (1991: 173) says that it would be considered ridiculous to mimic an Englishman's accent and that although Africans generally admire an educated English, RP is frowned upon and considered distasteful and pedantic. He also agrees that a modern African society cannot reject English altogether but that it does not, for reasons of preserving identity, have to follow an imported, exonormative model. South African English must, in effect, serve its instrumental functions while also ensuring the preservation of a uniquely South African

identity. The acceptance of these South African variations of English can contribute significantly to the maintenance of the identities of the various groups. Language is – among other things – a flexible and constantly flexing social tool for the emblematic making of social allegiances. We use variation in language to construct ourselves as social beings, to signal who we are, and who we are not and who we cannot be (Lippi-Green, 1998: 63). Schmied (1991) also agrees with the fact that variation in language can be an effective tool for establishing social identities and showing group solidarity.

It is thus that a call for restandardisation has emerged recently which implies that:

South African English must be open to the possibility of becoming a new language. This may happen not only at the level of vocabulary... but also with regard to grammatical adjustments that may result from the proximity of English to indigenous African languages (Ndebele, 1987: 13).

Wade (1995) also speaks out in favour of restandardised English. According to him restandardised English would give people a greater sense of owning the language thus making it more empowering, while also promoting the learning process.

Both Kachru (1992) and Gill (1999) identify a number of stages in the development of non-native models of English. These may be summarised as follows:

- i) An exonormative stage where the British model is the only one that is considered acceptable. No recognition whatsoever is given to non-standard varieties during this stage.
- ii) A liberation stage where a number of varieties develop due to the extensive linguistic diffusion that takes place. The development of these varieties becomes more socio-linguistically acceptable but there is still some anxiety over standard English and the manner in which varieties have started to deviate from it.
- iii) Finally, recognition is given to the non-standard varieties and they are used more extensively in formal sectors, such as education and the workplace.

It is my contention that South Africa is in the second phase (the liberation phase). Although attitudes towards non-standard varieties of English are becoming more positive, there still seems to be a preference for Respectable SAE, which is, inter-alia, still the variety closest to standard English. Furthermore, non-standard varieties have not, as yet, been given any formal recognition as such. The education system in South Africa still makes use of standard British English grammar textbooks, although the vast majority of teachers are non-native speakers of English. Van der Walt and Van Rooy (2002) show that teachers' perception of the norm indicates that the teachers regard the norm as important, but they allow for the (partial) acceptance of some grammatical features of BSAE and in their application of the norm they are not always consistent. Van der Walt and Van Rooy (2002) go on to conclude that BSAE is in the process of expanding itself to a standard form, at least in practice.

Be that as it may, there is no formal codification of any of the non-standard varieties in South Africa. According to Randolph Quirk Black English as an alternative variety in anybody's education system, will require that the variety be codified in dictionaries and grammar textbooks (Honey, 1997). This is also Bamgbose's viewpoint (2000). A formal codification of Black English has as yet not been done, although there are descriptions of the phonological and grammatical characteristics of these non-standard varieties (Kachru, 1992).

Thus, despite the apparent advantages of a restandardised South Africa English, establishing our own standard also entails a number of problems. According to Jeffery (1993: 19) spoken English in South Africa comes in fifty-seven varieties. This means that, there is little, if any, homogeneity in non-native varieties of English and even mother-tongue varieties lack complete consistency. Due to the fact that there were distinct waves of British settlement, starting with the working-class Cape settlers in the 1820s and the more aristocratic Natal settlers in the 1850s there is a wide spectrum of mother-tongue English in South Africa today (Schmied, 1991: 38). Therefore, given the amount of varieties that exist in this country, it is clearly difficult to define South African English in any concrete manner.

In their attempt to establish a suitable definition and description of SAE, Lanham and Macdonald (1979) suggested the following classification:

- Conservative English that is an externally focused, very 'English' type, whose norms are dictated by the southern British received Standard.
- Respectable SAE that is a new local standard, which while sharing many of the features (including prestige) of Conservative English, is nevertheless recognisably local.
- Extreme SAE that is a cluster of local vernaculars, stigmatised by the above-mentioned categories and corrected in the schools, and very different in many (especially phonological) characters from both.

These terms have remained in widespread use, despite the clear judgemental nature of the terminology. According to Lass (2002: 110) exactly the same trichotomy was drawn here [in South Africa] by L.W. Lanham, but with different terminology: Type 1 is 'Conservative', and the unfortunate terms 'Respectable' and 'Extreme' are used for Types 2 and 3 respectively. The latter two are rather nasty creations.

Lanham and Macdonald focus on variation of English among mother-tongue speakers. In addition to these one must also consider the variations among second-language speakers of English, specifically the black speakers of English and the Indian speakers of English.

BSAE is not a uniform entity. There are varying degrees of proficiency. I follow Van Rooy (2000b), Van Rooy and Van Huyssteen (2000), Van Rooyen (2000) and Wissing (2002) in adopting Schmied's (1991: 46-52) three-way-classification of African Englishes into acrolect, mesolect and basilect in the description of BSAE. Schmied (1991: 47) in turn draws his framework from work by Platt, Weber and Ho (1984) and Kachru (1986) on Asian Englishes:

- The Acrolect closely resembles the standard. It has phonological features where slight variation is tolerated so long as it is intelligible and syntax where no deviation is tolerated.
- The Mesoelect deviates more significantly from the standard. Grammatical structures often become more distorted and the phonological system deviates more substantially from the standard.
- The Basilect is often Africanised to unintelligibility. This variety is characterised by extreme variation in phonology and grammar.

Indian South African English is also not a uniform entity. Mesthrie (2002: 343) divides the varieties of ISAE as follows:

- Acrolect ISAE is the variety closest to the colonial language.
- Mesoelect ISAE is the broad range of varieties between the two extremes.
- Basilect ISAE is the furthest removed from the colonial language and is typically used by older speakers with little education.

In light of this, we must ask the following: If we were to establish our own standard South African English which variety would we choose? Older studies conducted by Lanham (1985), Cooper (1989) and Smit (1996) De Klerk and Bosch (1993, 1995) and De Klerk (1997) indicate a trend that favours the implementation of Respectable SAE as the standard. However, due to the fact that the concept of what exactly the standard is in this country, studies by Coetzee-Van Rooy (2000) indicates that what is considered a standard English by blacks is often a second-language black English variety. It is thus not surprising that when the vast majority of English teachers in Africa are Africans who speak African English themselves that this African dialectal influence is becoming much more dominant (Schmied, 1991: 53) as the studies by Gottschalk and Van Rooy (2001), Van der Walt and Van Rooy (2002) and Coetzee-Van Rooy and Van Rooy (2005) show.

However, despite these problematic issues there is still a certain need for a standard in this country. Obviously, there are certain problems involved in abandoning the exonormative standard, especially when one considers the functional aspects of English

in terms of intra-national and international communication. In the face of abandoning the standard completely the risk of communication breakdown is high. Furthermore, we also risk the loss of certain advantages that English holds for South Africa, namely educational and commercial mobility, not to mention its possibilities as a *lingua franca* in South Africa.

Given the fact that the standard has long been associated with education and literacy, it would be credible to suggest an educated variety of SAE as the norm. Presently, Respectable SAE is regarded as the educated variety.

Ideally, the variety that is ultimately accepted must retain a unique South African identity while also fulfilling the purpose of effective communication. Thus, in order to fulfil this function SAE must still adhere to the standard in some ways. Jeffery (1993: 17) suggests using the standard (in this case the British standard) as a prototype. This would allow for some flexibility, especially in terms of lexis and accent, due to the fact that, unlike grammar and spelling, lexis and accent does not necessarily have an adverse effect on intelligibility. Coetzee-Van Rooy and Van Rooy (2005) and Gottschalk and Van Rooy (2001) show that Acrolect BSAE enjoys a high status among black Technikon students. One of the reasons for this is that this variety enjoys the highest degree of comprehensibility for all participants. Variations in accent, as long as they do not interfere with intelligibility, should become more acceptable. Suffice to say that:

Given the fact of the operation of a standard in language communities, therefore, linguists (and others) should work towards broadening the standard to include so-called uneducated usages (in speech and writing) in order to reduce language discrimination (Parakrama, 1995: 42).

An expanded view of language, one which takes into account both the linguistic and ethnic differences in this country, is thus recommended. The socio-political potential of English, or any of its varieties, must be considered. This suggests that the non-standard varieties of English in this country, of which BSAE is one, represent a specific social, racial and cultural identity. For this reason these varieties should rather be considered as

an alternative standard and not as inferior to the standard as prescribed by a privileged elite.

According to Schmied (1991) the institutionalisation of non-standard varieties has an attitudinal and linguistic component. For this reason, before we can decide on a new standard we need to study the attitudes towards these non-standard varieties in more detail and we need to get a more comprehensive linguistic description of these varieties.

2.6. CONCLUSION

This chapter examined the nature of attitude study in general and language attitude study specifically. Contentious issues surrounding standard English and the use of standard English in South Africa were also discussed in some detail.

It can be concluded that attitudes are of a complex nature. The precise nature of an attitude is difficult to pinpoint and when deriving attitude from behaviour it is difficult to control for all the personal and situational factors that mediate between the attitude and the resulting behaviour. Essentially, attitudes are learned (through the processes of social conditioning and social learning) in a micro- and macro-environment. In addition, attitudes consist of a cognitive, affective and behavioural component.

The cognitive component consists of knowledge about the attitude object in question. This knowledge about the attitude object is stored in the form of schemas and stereotypes that serve to streamline information processing. Unfortunately, these schemas and stereotypes often cause people to take 'shortcuts' when processing information about the attitude object, with the result that their evaluations of the attitude object are often in line with schemas and stereotypes that were created based on previous experiences. Thus, it may be concluded that schemas and stereotypes may result in a biased evaluation of an attitude object.

The affective component, on the other hand, is more simplistic than the cognitive component. It includes emotions related to the attitude object. The affective component includes the good/bad evaluation of the attitude object. Although this study examines the

workings of the cognitive component of attitude in some detail, the main focus is on the affective component, as it is the positive/negative evaluation of particular accents that is examined. However, aspects of the cognitive component may be referred to when offering possible explanations for the positive/negative evaluations of certain accents.

The behavioural component consists of the overt action that results from the interaction between the cognitive and affective components. In a certain sense it is one of the most important components of attitude because we use behaviour to measure an attitude. Be that as it may, behaviour is not always a reliable indicator of attitude because attitude does not necessarily equal behaviour. This chapter discussed a number of possible mediating factors by referring to three different models used within the field of social psychology. It was concluded that a number of personal and situational factors must be controlled for when deriving attitude from behaviour.

The application of attitude theory to language attitude study revealed that language is a special kind of attitude object because of its social nature. Language can never really be taken out of its social context and, for this reason attitudes towards language (or its varieties) are necessarily socially conditioned. Evaluations of language (or its varieties) are not based on linguistic features but on the socio-economic status of the speaker (or the social group to which he/she belongs). Accent is representative of a person's social/ethnic group. The accent signals the speaker's group identity. Upon hearing a particular accent stereotypes associated with certain groups may be elicited. From this it follows that language attitudes are often an indicator of hierarchies that exist within a society.

The Standard is the variety imposed by a group that is socially powerful and superior and is usually given a great deal of respect and status. Varieties that deviate from the Standard are often labelled as inferior and for this reason its speakers are afforded less status. However, the Standard remains a myth. For example, very few people actually speak standard English, even in countries where the majority of speakers are L1 speakers of English. In a country like South Africa (where the majority of people are L2 speakers of English) standard English is an abstraction with little practical value. Although there

are those that still advocate the use of standard British English in South Africa, certain non-standard varieties of English are coming to the fore. BSAE is one of those. Previously a stigmatised variety it has increased in status over the last few years, so much so that we can no longer afford to dismiss its potential worth to its speakers.

This chapter concludes by saying that South Africa has moved into a 'liberation phase' where certain non-standard varieties are becoming increasingly acceptable and can thus no longer be dismissed. In light of this the importance of additional research into the status of these non-standard varieties (especially in the workplace) is highlighted.

CHAPTER 3

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The discussion of the empirical investigation is mainly concerned with the research design and procedure. An indication is given of how it was proposed to attain the research aims with specific reference to the characteristics and selection of participants, the measuring instruments, data collection as well as the method of statistical data-processing.

This study concerns itself with the perceptions of and attitudes towards BSAE in the context of the selection interview. In this regard, the study looks at the nature of the relationship between the variety of English spoken and the candidate's success in the job interview. More specifically, it aims to establish the possibility of negative social stigmas attached to BSAE varieties and the possible implications these may have for employment practices. Although there have been positive shifts in the South African workplace, as is indicated by affirmative action procedures which allow more blacks access to employment, the possibility for covert discrimination based on accent still remains. As a non-standard variety, BSAE may be prone to stigmatisation and low-prestige. These evaluations are not based on linguistic evaluations, but on racially constructed stereotypes. It follows that accent becomes a linguistic marker that signifies a person's race, social standing and status. Thus, one must consider the changing role and status of BSAE in the workplace and its place in securing the social mobility of its speakers.

Whereas previous language attitude research (Van Rooyen, 2000; Gottschalk & Van Rooy, 2001 and Coetzee-Van Rooy & Van Rooy, 2005) made extensive use of students and school pupils, this study aims to assess the language attitudes of professionals in the Human Resources field and then compares these to the language attitudes of students who have no experience in the Human Resources field. It was felt that students and school pupils are not presently occupying positions in the job market and are thus not the ones directly involved in selecting people for employment. Furthermore, the typical

attitude studies in South Africa used students as a basis for analysis so this study serves as a basis on which to compare results with those of previous studies.

Furthermore, this study looks at the influence of passage content on the final rating of a speaker. Previous studies either used the same content for each speaker or used different content for each speaker without analysing the possible influence of content on the rating of the speaker. Given that this study aims to emulate a real-life interview as closely as possible, it was not viable to use the same content for each speaker. For this reason, this study seeks to not only determine the rating of each respective accent but also seeks to determine what proportion of the rating may be attributed to accent and which to content.

3.2. TEST POPULATION

3.2.1. Speakers on tape

The matched-guise technique, pioneered by Lambert et al (1960) was used as a basis. However, whereas the true matched-guise technique makes use of the same speaker for each variety, this study makes use of a different speaker for each variety. The primary motivation for this is to ensure the authenticity of the accent as it is presented to each respondent. More importantly, different versions of the same content were used for two reasons. Firstly, to emulate an actual interview situation as closely as possible, i.e. it would be unlikely to have each respondent say exactly the same thing in a real-life interview. Secondly, to control for the respondents' loss of concentration and boredom due to hearing the same passage repeated several times. For this reason, it is not credible to refer to the methodology as the matched-guise technique. Instead, the technique used in this study is referred to as the staged interview technique.

There were nine speakers whose voices were heard on the tapes. A number of different varieties of English were included: Acrolect, Mesolect and Basilect BSAE, Respectable SAE (WSAE), Afrikaans English and Extreme SAE. The focus was on BSAE, whereas the other varieties were included as varieties of comparison. The grammar of all the passages was that of standard English because Gottschalk and Van Rooy (2001) show that the influence of grammar on the rating of spoken English is marginal.

The speakers were selected based on the following criteria:

- Gender: to control for the possibility of gender discrimination influencing the responses, all speakers selected were male.
- Age: to control for voice quality all speakers selected were of approximately the same age, i.e. between 30 and 40. This age group is also regarded as the most appropriate for the position advertised.
- Home language: the selection of accents already determined which of the speakers were L1 and L2 speakers of English, whereas the L1 of the black speakers was not considered very relevant (Wissing, 2002; Van Rooy & Van Huyssteen, 2000).

3.2.2. Respondents

3.2.2.1. Professionals

There were forty respondents who acted as the 'interviewers'. Twenty participants evaluated the speakers on tape, whereas the other twenty participants evaluated the passages only without hearing the speaker on tape. The passages were rated to control for the possible influence of content due to the fact that different versions of the same content were used in the speaker passages. Although every effort was made to ensure that all the passages had approximately the same content, it was nevertheless decided to test for the possible influence of content by having the passages rated.

3.2.2.1.1. Professional respondents: sound-input

The participants who were selected for the sound input came from companies, industries and academic institutions within the Vaal Triangle area that included Vanderbijlpark, Vereeniging, Sasolburg and Meyerton. A combination of larger industries, branches of larger franchises, smaller companies and tertiary institutions were approached. Due to the fact that it proved extremely difficult to locate suitable participants by means of using random sampling, participants were rather selected in accordance with their availability. The following industries, companies and tertiary institutions were represented:

- Vaal University of Technology
- Woolworths
- Wildemedia
- Milky Paradise
- Edgars
- Natref
- ISCOR
- Suprachim
- Meyerton Toyota
- Randwater

Fifty percent of the participants were white, whereas the other fifty percent were black. The black group were divided equally into Mesolect and Acrolect BSAE-speaking groups. The white group were divided equally into Respectable SAE (WSAE) and Afrikaans-English. The participants for the sound input were stratified as follows:

Group 1

Respectable SAE (5)

Group 2

Afrikaans-English (5)

Group 3

Acrolect BSAE (5)

Group 4

Mesolect BSAE (5)

The main reason for this procedure was to ensure that comparative results were achieved across the social and cultural spectrum. Basilect BSAE was not represented in this case due to the fact that these speakers are generally confined to the lower socio-economic sector and there is little likelihood that these speakers are able to obtain personnel management positions as they often lack the educational qualifications. Schmied's (1991: 41) social definition excludes the Basilect speakers from such positions. He says that the type of English spoken by Africans depends largely on two factors:

- The length and degree of their formal education in English.
- The necessity and amount of English used in their occupations and in everyday life.

Furthermore, all the participants had experience in the Human Resources field and in conducting selection interviews so as to improve the credibility of this study. Smith and Robertson (1993), Rae (1988) and Goodale (1982) all mention the importance of training and experience in this respect. Smith and Robertson (1993: 201) say that the idea that experience alone can produce good interviewers or that most people are just 'naturally' good judges of others is not supported by research evidence. It seems that interview training that involves opportunities for practise, discussion and feedback can be effective in improving interview performance.

The participants were selected after a short interview whereupon it was decided if they were suitable for this study. The following questions were asked:

- How many interviews have you performed/attended?
- What kind of training have you received in selection interviews?

The main criteria for their suitability thus included training and experience. The participants had all undergone some measure of training in selection interviewing and had all conducted a minimum of five interviews either alone or in conjunction with an interview panel.

3.2.2.1.2. Professional respondents: passage rating

The twenty respondents chosen to rate the passage content were selected from the following companies, industries and institutions:

- Vaal University of Technology (formerly Vaal Triangle Technikon)
- African Cables
- Samancor
- Old Mutual
- Hyper Video
- Wiessenhof

They were also selected on the basis of availability, training and experience. In this regard, these respondents (like those that were used for the sound input) also had training in selection interviewing and had all conducted a minimum of five interviews either alone or in conjunction with an interview panel.

The respondents used for the passage rating were not stratified as were the respondents used for the sound input. It was felt that their demographic status would have no bearing on the rating of the passages. Their main purpose was to check the reliability of the research instrument used in this study.

3.2.2.2. Students

Forty students were selected to participate in this study. Twenty students evaluated the speakers on tape, whereas the other twenty evaluated the passages without hearing the speakers on tape. These students were selected from the North West University, Vaal Triangle campus (formerly Potchefstroom University) and the Vaal University of Technology (formerly Vaal Triangle Technikon). The students, as opposed to the professionals, had no knowledge or experience of selection interviewing.

The reason for including students in this study is twofold. Firstly, to compare the results of this study to previous studies which generally used students. Secondly, to check if

students' results can be generalised to the general population by comparing professionals and students with each other.

The students were chosen in accordance with their availability. The students who were selected were selected from the following departments:

- Travel & Tourism.
- Public Relations.
- Graphic Design.
- Photography.
- Psychology.

3.2.2.2.1. Student respondents: sound-input

The students selected for the sound input were stratified in the same way as the professionals who were selected for the sound input so as to obtain comparative results across the social and cultural spectrum. They were stratified as follows:

Group 1

Respectable SAE (5)

Group 2

Afrikaans-English (5)

Group 3

Acrolect BSAE (5)

Group 4

Mesolect BSAE (5)

3.2.2.2.2. Student respondents: passage rating

The students selected for the passage rating were not stratified because it was felt that their demographic status would have no bearing on their rating of the passages. Their main purpose was to check the reliability of the research instrument used in this study.

3.3. VARIABLES

The dependent variables are language attitudes and the likelihood of employment, whereas the independent variables are the variety of English spoken and the passages.

3.4. INSTRUMENTATION

3.4.1. Sound input recordings

Six different dialects of SAE were recorded as test passages. These were characterised as follows:

Respectable SAE: Lanham and Macdonald (1979) classify this as a new local standard, which while sharing many of the features of Conservative-English or RP, is nevertheless recognisably local. Trudgill and Hannah (1994), and Lass (2002) give a more detailed description of the WSAE accent.

Extreme-SAE: Lanham & Macdonald (1979) gives a more detailed description of this accent.

Afrikaans-English: Van Rooyen (2000) gives a more detailed description of this accent.

Acrolect BSAE: closely resembles standard English but differs in phonetics, semantics, discourse and content. The phonological system, the structures used and the overwhelming majority of the words are still the same, but the actual phonetic form of the words varies slightly (Schmied, 1991: 49). Van Rooy (2004) gives a detailed description of the Acrolect BSAE accent.

Mesolect BSAE: mergers of vowels change the whole phonological system and grammatical structures often become more distorted (Schmied, 1991: 49). Van Rooy (2004) gives a detailed description of the Mesolect BSAE accent.

Basilect BSAE: No one has, as yet, provided a detailed description of this variety. However, Schmied (1991) includes a discussion of this variety in African Englishes generally. Van Rooyen (2000) also includes a brief description of this variety.

The duration of each dialogue was approximately two minutes. Research (Goodale, 1982) shows that an interviewer forms an impression of the candidate in the first four minutes of the interview. Because of the fact that we used a total of nine speakers (the three distracters included), using an entire interview, which usually lasts between 20-30 minutes, would have caused loss of concentration on the part of the respondent.

Respondents were told that these were snippets of actual interviews.

The order of the speakers was randomised and three distracter passages were included.

The distracters were slightly weaker than the test passages in content. The reason for this is to not make it appear that all the passages were of the same standard, otherwise the respondents might be tempted to rate all the passages in exactly the same way. An additional reason for including the distracters was to assess whether or not the respondents picked up on the weaker content. The respondents heard the respective speakers in the following order:

- Speaker 1: Afrikaans-English (Distracter)
- Speaker 2: Mesolect BSAE (Test)
- Speaker 3: Respectable SAE/WSAE (Test)
- Speaker 4: Mesolect BSAE (Distracter)
- Speaker 5: Extreme-SAE (Test)
- Speaker 6: Acrolect BSAE (Test)
- Speaker 7: Respectable SAE (Distracter)
- Speaker 8: Afrikaans-English (Test)
- Speaker 9: Basilect BSAE (Test)

3.4.2. The passages

The content of the passages was constructed using the job description for a Cinema Manager (supplied by Ster Kinekor), a generic competency profile for a Junior Manager (supplied by Telkom), a targeted selection guide (supplied by Telkom) and actual interview transcripts in Rosenburg (2000):

i) *Actual interview transcripts in Rosenberg (2000).*

In aiming to assist managers to hire the most suitable person for a particular job, Rosenberg provides a number of possible answers provided in the selection interview, explaining which answers may of a higher standard than others and why. For the purpose of this study I made use of the following transcripts:

- *Concerning teamwork*: “I think that’s very important too... my boss used to say all the time that interdepartmental cooperation was job number one. I think I am a very good team player” (Rosenburg, 2000: 14).
- *Concerning conflict and organisation*: “... well, there are times when tempers get short because there’s more to do than one can possibly accomplish within the allotted time frame. It doesn’t have to be the case if everyone would just do their job and make a little effort at being organised. I’m a very organised person. I plan my work carefully so that every detail is handled in an orderly manner and each project is completed on time. It really bothers me when people’s lack of planning puts me under pressure” (Rosenburg, 2000: 14).
- *Concerning conflict*: “I didn’t want to make matters worse. If I made them angry, they could make things very difficult and unpleasant for me” (Rosenburg, 2000: 14).
- *Concerning career ambition*: “I want something more challenging, and your position sounds like something I would find both challenging and rewarding” (Rosenburg, 2000: 14).
- *Concerning management style*: “I’ve learned that it doesn’t take a lot of effort to be a difficult boss. This makes me a little sad. I’ve always wanted to be a manager who handles everything with patience understanding and respect” (Rosenburg, 2000: 52).
- *Concerning decision-making*: “I couldn’t make any decisions on my own. No matter how trivial the issue, everything had to be approved. Going through all those levels took up too much of my time, so I went around them. I’d like the authority to make decisions on those issues that affect my job” (Rosenburg, 2000: 111).
- *Concerning team-building and interpersonal relations*: “I am a real people person. It’s more than just having good human relations... I know that people

work better when their environment is friendly and caring... People need something more than a continuous insistence by management for productivity, results and output” (Rosenburg, 2000: 111).

- *Concerning work pressure*: “Although it was never an easy job, I felt I handled it well... It’s not easy handling so much responsibility, especially when you’re not prepared for it and you just feel that you are being dumped on” (Rosenburg, 2000: 159).
- *Concerning management style*: “I was careful to let her know that this was just a coaching session. I had no intention of firing her over this mistake, as terrible as it was. I just wanted to be certain something like this would never happen again” (Rosenburg, 2000: 159).
- *Concerning team-management*: “It all depends on the situation. Sometimes I like doing things myself, and sometimes enjoy delegating stuff to others. It just depends” (Rosenburg, 2000: 159).

Rosenburg (2000: 36-37) also mentions the characteristics that a successful candidate displays:

- Learning and growing.
 - Flexibility in workplace situations coupled with a strong sense of work and personal ethics.
 - An acknowledgement that relationship building and maintenance is crucial to job success. This includes good communication skills and taking the time to listen to and act on the concerns of others.
 - Motivation and taking initiative.
 - Realises that feedback is a gift and seeks it regularly.
- Realises that interdependence is important when it comes to decision-making.

ii) The job description for Cinema Manager from Ster Kinekor (see Appendix I).

The job description for Cinema Manager was cross-referenced with the generic competency profile for a Junior Manager (see Appendix II).

Based on this a number of core competencies were identified:

- Technical skills.
- Quality awareness.
- Problem-solving and decision-making.
- Conflict-management and interpersonal relations.
- Coaching and empowerment.
- Team management.
- Communication skills.

iii) Core competencies cross-referenced to targeted selection guide (see Appendix II)

The targeted selection guide provided a more precise definition of the core competencies identified and also provided possible questions that may be asked to test for them. The interview dialogue used in the passages thus loosely resembled 'answers' to the questions listed in the targeted selection guide. Due to the fact that the researcher wanted to leave some room for inferral on the part of the respondents, the interview dialogue was less structured and not presented in a question-and-answer format.

In order to ensure that the content did not influence the respondent in any manner, different versions of the same content were used. The structure of the interview dialogue in the passages was as follows:

Education: all speakers had management and/or financial diplomas.

Work experience: all speakers had a few years of supervising experience in entertainment and public relations related jobs.

Interpersonal relationships: all speakers are people-orientated.

Decision-making: all speakers are faced with difficult decisions at times.

Using **different** versions of similar content in the passages controlled for the respondents' possible loss of concentration and boredom due to hearing the same answer repeated several times. According to Rae (1988: 53) listening and concentration skills may be affected because once the interviewee has started talking the interviewer may react in a negative way to what is being said because of an immediate assumption that the material is uninteresting, or **it has been heard before**, or the interviewer feels he knows what the interviewee is going to say.

It is important to note that using the same passage content for all the speakers is a definite limitation in many of the previous studies that made use of the matched-guise technique. Using the same content for each speaker does not emulate real-life situations. Giles and Ryan (1982) say that how listener-judges respond to a stimulus speaker will undoubtedly be quite different from how they would respond to him/her under more naturalistic and personally involving conditions. Van der Walt (2000) suggests that the matched-guise technique presents snatches of decontextualised language in artificial settings to listeners who have no use for the information. Also, Garret et al (2003) question whether the use of such decontextualised language to elicit people's attitudes yields findings that can be extended to natural language use, where people are meaningfully and functionally doing things with language rather than just voicing utterances.

The traditional matched-guise technique not only makes use of the same content for each speaker but also ensures that the content is factually and culturally 'neutral' so as to prevent the nature of the content from influencing the ratings of the speakers. For example, De Klerk and Bosch (1995) used the topic of getting out of bed in the morning, Nortje (1995) used the topic of the weather and Cooper (1989) used content from African folktales. However, Garret et al (2003) question the viability of a culturally and factually 'neutral' content. According to them it is doubtful, given the ways in which readers and listeners interact with and interpret texts on the basis of pre-existing social schemata that any text can be regarded as factually neutral.

The methodological changes made to the matched-guise technique in this study stem directly from the above-mentioned limitations. Although the specific methodological approach used in this study is rather new, there have been a number of studies in which similar methodological changes have been made.

Garret et al (2003) mention studies by El Dash and Tucker (1975) and Huygens and Vaughan (1983) where they asked different speakers to speak spontaneously on an audiotape. The only way in which they controlled for content was by controlling the topic of speech. Gill (1999) also did not use the same content for each speaker when she measured attitudes towards different varieties of Malaysian English. She asked respondents to rate a number of presentations made by executives at a training programme.

Finally, Gottschalk and Van Rooy (2001) used different versions of the same content, i.e. concerning a number of different banks and the services each had on offer, when assessing the attitudes of high school pupils to varieties of South African English.

Because this study sought to emulate an actual interview as closely as possible it was not deemed appropriate to use the same content for each speaker. Even though every effort was made to keep the content of the passages the same by using different versions of the same content, it was nevertheless considered important to consider the influence of content on the eventual speaker rating. For this reason both the content and the speakers were rated separately by both professionals and students. The respective rating of the passages by both the professional and the student groups is now discussed in more detail in section 3.6.

3.4.3. Questionnaires

3.4.3.1. Group identification scale

In order to measure the racial attitudes of the respondents, the group identity questionnaire developed by Bornman (1995) was administered as a pre-test (see Appendix IV). The questionnaire is designed to measure the racial in-group/out-group identity of the respondents. As such the test measures respondents' attitudes towards specific population groups by measuring the extent to which they identify with their own population group and other population groups. As mentioned in Chapter 2, speech types serve as social identifiers which impacts strongly on the individual and the social groups with which he/she may identify. Language, or the particular variety spoken, plays an important part in determining the formation of a person's social identity, as well as in our perception of another's social identity. Due to the fact that language reflects, creates and sustains our multiple group identities, hearing an accent is likely to evoke generalised or stereotypic characteristics of a particular racial group. For this reason it was necessary to investigate the racial attitudes that the respondents had about a particular group. In short, this questionnaire helped to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between racial in-group and out-group identity and attitudes towards accent.

The test consisted of fifteen statements about people that are then applied to Black/African people and Whites/Westerners. For Blacks/Africans, responses about Whites/Westerners are interpreted as expressing attitudes towards the out-group and responses towards Blacks/Africans are interpreted as expressing attitudes towards the in-group. For Whites/Westerners, responses about Blacks/Africans are interpreted as expressing attitudes towards the out-group and responses about Whites/Westerners are interpreted as expressing attitudes towards the in-group. Respondents had to rate their opinions of the different groups on a scale of 1-5.

However, due to lack of variance in the data, this questionnaire was excluded from consideration.

3.4.3.2. Employability questionnaire

Targeted selection (see Appendix II) was used as a guideline to test the employability of the respective speakers and passages. As such, targeted selection is based on a specific job for which a detailed job description is compiled. A job description, or job analysis, is, essentially, a statement of the job to be done, in terms of the tasks that need to be performed (Smith and Robertson, 1993: 60). From this one may deduce which aims are to be fulfilled and the particular characteristics a person needs to fulfil these aims. Targeted selection, then, is designed to measure the personal and professional qualities needed to execute a job successfully.

The job of Cinema Manager for a Ster Kinekor complex was chosen. The main reason for this was because of the fact that communication forms an integral part of the job. A Cinema Manager must be able to communicate effectively with people across a variety of social and cultural spectrums.

The competencies tested for in the questionnaire were selected on the basis of the job description for a Cinema Manager (see Appendix I). The job description details the duties and responsibilities of the Cinema Manager, whereas the competencies described list the knowledge, skills and attitudes the Cinema Manager needs in order to perform his job adequately. These competencies were listed in the employability questionnaire (see Appendix IV). The employability questionnaire is loosely based on one used by Tullar (1989: 319).

3.4.3.3. Personality questionnaire

The standard personality traits response sheet designed by Gardner and Lambert (1972) was used as a basis (see Appendix IV). The personality test contained fourteen personality traits and a five-point scale, according to which each speaker had to be evaluated. The order of the presentation was randomised and later reinterpreted during statistical computations. The personality traits were grouped according to three categories, namely competence (education, intelligence), personal integrity (likeability and honesty) and social attractiveness (friendliness and politeness).

A number of changes were made to the questionnaire so as to make it more suitable for this study. In order to achieve some correlation with employability some personal traits deemed necessary for the job were included. These included the following:

- Honest/Dishonest
- Friendly/Unfriendly
- Reliable/Unreliable
- Pleasant/Unpleasant
- Fair/Unfair

Most likely occupations were omitted since we were testing for a specific job.

3.4.3.4. Interviews

Interviews were conducted with the respondents following the completion of the questionnaires. A less formal interview with open-ended questions helped to incorporate the respondents' perspectives into the ratings, thus helping to investigate any underlying opinions or feelings that the respondents may have had. With a questionnaire the researcher is ignorant of many of the factors influencing the choice of response to a question and an interview helps to assess the important factors influencing a particular response. Robson (1994: 233) suggests the following advantages of this type of multi-method approach:

They are flexible; they allow the interviewer to probe so that he may go into more depth if he chooses, or **clear up any misunderstandings**; they enable the interviewer to test the limits of the respondent's knowledge... and they allow the interviewer to make a truer assessment of what the respondent really believes... [interviews] can also result in unexpected or unanticipated answers which may suggest hitherto un-thought of relationships or hypotheses.

The interview was loosely structured and a number of open-ended questions were asked:

- How accurate do you think the selection interview is when it comes to selecting the right person for the right job?
- What recommendations would you make to eliminate any perceived subjectivity?
- What competencies, do you think, are needed by a Cinema Manager?
- What was your experience of the questionnaires?

The questions were asked with the following considerations in mind:

- To establish whether or not the respondents are aware of their own possible subjectivities and prejudices that they may bring into the job interview context.
- To establish what factors influence their choice of a particular candidate.
- To establish the validity and reliability of my questionnaires and interview dialogue.

The answers were recorded by hand. Key words and phrases were written down for each answer.

3.5. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

After finding suitable and willing participants after contacting a number of companies and tertiary institutions within the Vaal Triangle area, the researcher met with the potential participants. At this meeting the broad aims of the research project and the meaning of the instruments were discussed in detail. At this stage the researcher also offered payment for the participation in the study to compensate for any loss of income. The researcher also agreed to share the final results of the research project with them. Following this, an appointment was made with the respondents involved.

With the permission of the professional participants the test was conducted on their premises during normal office hours. It was felt that conducting the test in the work environment would contribute to its authenticity, while also ensuring an environment conducive to active listening. For the student respondents, the test was conducted in a classroom environment.

Respondents were assured that the test was completed anonymously and confidentially. An appeal was made to answer each question honestly and the importance of their contribution was impressed upon them. The instructions given concerning the ratings of the speakers were that they had to listen to the recordings of the speakers, after which they had to evaluate the speaker. They were told to rate each speaker's suitability during and immediately after each insert was played individually.

For the professional group, a CD was used to play the recordings on their computer. For the student group, a CD was used to play the recordings on a CD player.

The participants assessing only the passages were given the relevant questionnaires, i.e. the passages, the employability questionnaire and the personality questionnaire.

Respondents were assured that the questionnaires were completed anonymously and confidentially. An appeal was made to answer each question honestly and the importance of their contribution was impressed upon them. They were told that the passages represented interview dialogue and that the candidates were applying for the post of Cinema Manager. They were then asked to rate each candidate's passage in terms of his/her suitability for the position. After explaining the procedure to them participants were given permission to take the questionnaires home. The researcher then returned the next day to collect them. Due to the fact that many of the participants have very busy schedules it was felt that it would be more convenient for them to take the questionnaires home.

The test subjects completed their evaluation of the accents on tape and of the passages in a satisfactory fashion. One questionnaire had to be rejected from the group of professionals who evaluated the speakers on tape and one questionnaire had to be rejected from the professionals who evaluated the passages only. The respondents that were used for the passage ratings were not divided into language groups. The students were selected randomly and the professionals were selected on the basis of their training and experience.

The number of questionnaires for the four language groups for the sound input and passage rating categories are as follows:

Table 1: Number of questionnaires for each test: Students

	Passage Rating	Sound Input
Mother-Tongue English	5	5
Afrikaans-English	5	5
Acrolect BSAE	5	5
Mesolect BSAE	5	5
TOTAL	20	20

Table 2: Number of questionnaires for each test: Professionals

	Passage Rating	Sound Input
Mother-Tongue English	5	5
Afrikaans-English	5	5
Acrolect BSAE	5	5
Mesolect BSAE	4	4
TOTAL	19	19

The questionnaires were then sent to the Statistical Consultation Service of the North-West University to be analysed.

3.6. PASSAGE RATINGS

3.6.1. Professionals

Table 3 contains the results of the professional group's evaluation of all the questions on the questionnaire. For a more detailed discussion of the questionnaires used in this study please refer to section 3.4.3 in this chapter. The general category indicates their response to all the questions combined, whereas the responses to the questions relating to employment and personality traits are indicated in the employability and personality categories respectively.

Table 3: Professional respondents: Combined average response for content, with standard deviation in brackets

Passage number	General	Employability	Personality
P1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.35 (0.41)	3.25 (0.57)	3.45 (0.39)
P2: Test Meso BSAE	3.68 (0.38)	3.67 (0.43)	3.69 (0.43)
P3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.37 (0.54)	3.35 (0.63)	3.40 (0.51)
P4: Distr. Meso BSAE	2.91 (0.51)	2.61 (0.67)	3.23 (0.45)
P5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.88 (0.58)	3.87 (0.52)	3.89 (0.71)
P6: Test Acro BSAE	3.59 (0.44)	3.64 (0.40)	3.54 (0.58)
P7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.64 (0.29)	2.29 (0.44)	3.00 (0.32)
P8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.72 (0.53)	3.79 (0.62)	3.65 (0.51)
P9: Test Basi BSAE	3.82 (0.60)	3.91 (0.62)	3.72 (0.65)

P5, P8 and P9 were given high ratings. There is little difference between the ratings of these three passages, so the respondents liked all three of these passages equally. P2 and P6 were given lower ratings. There is little difference between the ratings of these two passages. P3 was given a relatively low rating compared to the other test passages. Of all the test passages it seems that P3 has the weakest quality of content.

There is a clear distinction between the rating of the test passages and the rating of the distracter passages. The distracter passages (P1, P4 and P7) all had significantly lower ratings than the test passages. The professional group thus took note of the weaker quality of content when rating these passages. It is important to note, however, that the rating given to P1 (distracter passage) is almost the same as the rating given to P3 (test passage). It follows that P3 (as a test passage) was relatively weak as far as the quality of its content is concerned.

3.6.2. Students

Table 4 contains the results of the student group's evaluation of all the questions on the questionnaire. The general category indicates their response to all the questions combined, whereas the responses to the questions relating to employment and personality traits are indicated in the employability and personality categories respectively.

Table 4: Student respondents: Combined average response for content, with standard deviation in brackets

Passage	General	Employability	Personality
P1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.42 (0.47)	3.20 (0.65)	3.66 (0.39)
P2: Test Meso BSAE	3.66 (0.44)	3.66 (0.58)	3.67 (0.33)
P3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.28 (0.69)	3.19 (0.89)	3.37 (0.53)
P4: Distr. Meso BSAE	3.06 (0.48)	2.89 (0.58)	3.24 (0.42)
P5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.91 (0.66)	4.05 (0.64)	3.75 (1.04)
P6: Test Acro BSAE	3.60 (0.58)	3.58 (0.70)	3.62 (0.54)
P7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.62 (0.51)	2.38 (0.59)	3.04 (0.84)
P8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.96 (0.65)	4.00 (0.78)	3.93 (0.61)
P9: Test Basi BSAE	4.11 (0.63)	4.17 (0.73)	4.05 (0.59)

Overall, the students give higher ratings to the passages as compared to the professionals. This is evident from the higher overall means obtained from the student group. P5, P8 and P9 were given a high rating. There is little difference between the ratings of P5 and P8 so the students rate these two passages on par as far as their quality of content is concerned. P9 is given a slightly higher mean than P5 and P8. It seems that the students liked the content of P9 very much. P2 and P6 were given lower ratings. They were given approximately the same rating. P3 was rated significantly lower than P5, P8 and P9. P3 was given a relatively low rating when compared to the ratings for the other test passages. Clearly, P3 is regarded as having a weaker quality content when compared to the other test passages.

The student group distinguish between the distracter and the test passages. The distracter passages (P4 and P7) were given significantly lower ratings than the test passages. Interestingly, the distracter P1 was given a higher rating than P3 (a test passage). The students felt that the quality of this distracter passage was higher than the quality of P3 (a test passage).

Generally speaking, the students rated the passages in a very similar way to which the professionals rated the passages.

3.7. ANALYSIS OF DATA

The descriptive statistics (mainly means and standard deviations) for all separate language groups within the response groups (professionals and students), as well as the combined results for the two response groups, are reported.

Confidence intervals are used to calculate the statistically significant differences between the means. This is a very strict test, and should the data prove to be different in these terms, it is evidence of attitudinal differences of great magnitude. McClave and Sincich (2000: 282) provide the following definition in this regard:

The confidence coefficient is the probability that an interval estimator encloses the population parameter – that is, the relative frequency with which the interval estimator encloses the population parameter when the estimator is used repeatedly a large number of times.

When the confidence intervals between two means have no values in common, then it can be said that the difference is statistically significant. The confidence interval is calculated using the following formula:

$$\bar{x} \pm 2\sigma_{\bar{x}} = \bar{x} \pm \frac{2\sigma}{\sqrt{n}}$$

The confidence intervals for the test speakers (for both the professional and the student groups) are included along with the means and standard deviations.

Correlations between the passage and speaker ratings are reported to determine the extent to which content and other factors contribute to these ratings. Furthermore, the other factors (besides content) should have accent as the principle component because the

possible influence of voice and gender were controlled by using male speakers of approximately the same age. McClave and Sincich (2000: 537) state that the Pearson product moment coefficient of correlation, r , is a measure of the strength of the *linear* relationship between two variables x and y . It is computed (for a sample of n measurements on x and y) as follows:

$$r = \frac{SS_{xy}}{\sqrt{SS_{xx}SS_{yy}}}$$

The combined results for both instruments are presented and the two instruments are compared to each other for the two separate response groups.

3.8. CONCLUSION

As opposed to previous language attitude research this study compares the language attitudes of professionals in the Human Resources field and then compares them to the language attitudes of students with no experience or training in the Human Resources field.

In addition this study also looks at the influence of passage content on the final rating of the speaker so as to control for the possible influence of content on the speaker rating. Essentially this was done by having the passage content rated so as to allow for the subsequent comparison and correlation of the passage ratings with the speaker ratings so as to determine the relative influence of each on the final speaker rating.

The content for the passages was constructed using the job description for a Cinema Manager, a generic competency profile for a Junior Manager, a targeted selection guide and actual interview transcripts.

Respectable SAE, Afrikaans English, Extreme SAE, Acrolect BSAE, Mesolect BSAE, and Basilect BSAE were the varieties included in this study. As opposed to the true matched-guise technique, a different speaker was used for each variety. The gender, age and home language of the speakers on tape were controlled.

The forty professional respondents were selected from companies, industries and educational institutions in the Vaal Triangle area. They were selected in accordance with their availability, training and experience. The sound-input group (20 participants) was stratified in accordance with their home language. They were divided into mother-tongue English, Afrikaans English, Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE groups. The group that assessed the passages only was not stratified because their main purpose was to check the reliability of the passages as a research instrument used in this study.

The forty student respondents were selected from the Vaal University of Technology (formerly Vaal Triangle Technikon) and the North-West University, Vaal Triangle campus (formerly Potchefstroom University). They were selected in accordance with their availability. The sound-input group (20 participants) was stratified in accordance with their home language. They were divided into mother-tongue English, Afrikaans English, Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE groups. The group that assessed the passages only was not stratified because their main purpose was to check the reliability of the passages as a research instrument used in this study.

The questionnaire used in this study consisted of two sections. The employability section aimed to test the perceived job competence of the candidate whereas the personality section aimed to test the perceived likeability of the candidate.

Finally, this chapter discussed and explained in detail the processes of data collection, which was followed by an explanation of the processes of data analysis.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1. Introduction

This chapter deals with the presentation of the data from the test and aims to answer the questions posed in Chapter 1, namely:

- What are the attitudes of personnel managers towards BSAE in the workplace?
- Do Mesolect and Basilect BSAE act as a barrier to employment?

After a few general observations, the results of the statistical analysis for the sound input and the passage ratings are tabulated and then discussed. The results for the general category will be discussed first, followed by the results for the employability and personality categories. The two categories are discussed separately because there was some difference in the way in which the respondents rated the speakers in the different categories. These differences have important methodological implications that will be discussed in section 4.2.4.

4.2. Interpretation of results

4.2.1. Results: Sound input

4.2.1.1. Professionals

Tables 5 and 6 contain the results of the four language groups' evaluation of all the questions on the questionnaire. The general category indicates their response to all the questions combined, whereas the responses to the questions relating to employment and personality traits are indicated in the employability and personality categories respectively.

Table 5: Combined average response of all four language groups: Professionals – sound input

Speakers	General	Employability	Personality
S1:Distr. Afr-Eng.	3.22 (0.43)	3.05 (0.59)	3.42 (0.33)
S2:Test Meso-BSAE	3.84 (0.48)	3.80 (0.50)	3.89 (0.51)
Confidence interval	3.62 – 4.06	3.57 – 4.03	3.66 – 4.12
S3:Test Resp.-Eng.	3.53 (0.58)	3.42 (0.64)	3.64 (0.57)
Confidence interval	3.26 – 3.80	3.13 – 3.71	3.38 – 3.90
S4:Distr. Meso-BSAE	2.68 (0.30)	2.13 (0.40)	3.26 (0.28)
S5:Test Extr-Eng.	3.56 (0.45)	3.53 (0.55)	3.60 (0.40)
Confidence interval	3.35 – 3.77	3.28 – 3.78	3.42 – 3.78
S6:Test Acro-BSAE	3.87 (0.46)	3.76 (0.48)	3.98 (0.51)
Confidence interval	3.66 – 4.08	3.54 – 3.98	3.75 – 4.21
S7:Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.51 (0.48)	1.97 (0.57)	3.08 (0.55)
S8:Test Afr-Eng.	3.97 (0.42)	3.91 (0.48)	4.03 (0.42)
Confidence interval	3.78 – 4.16	3.69 – 4.13	3.84 – 4.22
S9:Test Basi-BSAE	3.68 (0.59)	3.49 (0.70)	3.87 (0.53)
Confidence interval	3.41 – 3.95	3.17 – 3.81	3.63 – 4.11

There is an overall stricter rating in the employability category. The means for the personality section are higher than the means for the employability section. The respondents seem to be more lenient when judging the speakers on their perceived personality traits. Thus, they might like a speaker but would not necessarily employ him. The respondents seem to evaluate whether or not a particular speaker is suited to the job at hand but do not seem to penalise him on his personality if they perceive him to be less suitable for the job.

Overall the Afrikaans-English speaker, Acrolect BSAE speaker and Mesolect BSAE speaker were given a high rating. Surprisingly, the Respectable SAE speaker was given a low rating. There is a statistically significant difference between the rating for the Respectable SAE speaker and the rating for the Afrikaans English speaker. The

confidence interval for the Respectable SAE speaker is between 3.26 and 3.80, whereas the confidence interval for the Afrikaans English speaker is between 3.78 and 4.16. The two ranges only overlap by 0.02. Thus the Afrikaans English speaker is given a significantly higher rating than the Respectable SAE speaker. This clearly contrasts with the findings of previous studies that show that Respectable SAE is the preferred variety of English in South Africa. Most of the previous attitude research done in this country report that Respectable SAE is given consistently high ratings. This is clearly not the case here. However, while the difference is a significant one, it is probably mainly due to differences in content, and not to differences in the status of these two varieties, as will become clear in the subsequent analysis of the correlations.

Furthermore, accent does not seem to exert such a large influence on the overall rating of the test speakers. They are all rated more or less the same as is shown by the fact that the confidence intervals overlap. Thus with the exception of the Respectable SAE and Afrikaans English accents, there are no significant differences between the ratings of the other test speakers. This suggests no definite preference for any of the accents.

However, the respondents clearly distinguish between distracter and test speakers, rating the test speakers higher than the distracter speakers. The Afrikaans-English distracter was still rated higher than the other two distracters but an explanation of this will be given in terms of the content of this particular distracter.

Table 6: Average response of Afrikaans-English, Mother-Tongue English, Acrolect and Mesolect BSAE respondents: General category: Professionals – sound input

Speakers	M.T.-Eng	Afr-Eng	Acrolect	Mesolect
S1:Distr. Afr.-Eng.	2.89 (0.43)	2.93 (0.25)	3.60 (0.21)	3.47 (0.30)
S2:Test Meso BSAE	3.41 (0.43)	3.58 (0.18)	4.38 (0.36)	4.00 (0.21)
Confidence interval	3.21 – 3.61	3.50 – 3.66	4.21 – 4.55	3.91 – 4.09
S3:Test Resp.-Eng.	3.27 (0.53)	3.08 (0.49)	3.75 (0.51)	4.00 (0.40)
Confidence interval	3.03 – 3.51	2.86 – 3.30	3.52 – 3.98	3.82 – 4.18
S4:Distr. Meso-BSAE	2.39 (0.24)	2.93 (0.30)	2.82 (0.17)	2.56 (0.17)
S5:Test Extr-Eng.	3.10 (0.29)	3.40 (0.33)	4.08 (0.30)	3.66 (0.22)
Confidence interval	2.97 – 3.23	3.25 – 3.55	3.94 – 4.22	3.56 – 3.76
S6:Test Acro-BSAE	3.86 (0.58)	3.40 (0.25)	4.10 (0.42)	4.12 (0.16)
Confidence interval	3.59 – 4.13	3.29 – 3.51	3.91 – 4.29	4.05 – 4.19
S7:Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.09 (0.57)	2.49 (0.22)	2.57 (0.17)	2.88 (0.49)
S8:Test Afr.-Eng.	3.95 (0.42)	3.70 (0.41)	4.10 (0.52)	4.12 (0.27)
Confidence interval	3.76 – 4.14	3.51 – 3.89	3.86 – 4.34	4.00 – 4.24
S9:Test Basi-BSAE	3.63 (0.78)	3.43 (0.37)	3.76 (0.78)	3.94 (0.25)
Confidence interval	3.27 – 3.99	3.26 – 3.60	3.40 – 4.12	3.83 – 4.05

The Mother-Tongue English group:

The Afrikaans-English speaker, Acrolect BSAE speaker and Basilect BSAE speaker are given high ratings. There are no big differences in the means of these three speakers. They are all given more or less equal ratings as is shown by the overlapping values of the confidence intervals. The Respectable SAE speaker and the Extreme SAE speaker are given low ratings. The rating of the Respectable SAE speaker is significantly lower than both the Acrolect BSAE and the Afrikaans English speaker. The rating of the Extreme SAE speaker is significantly lower than the Acrolect BSAE, Afrikaans English and Basilect BSAE speakers. It seems that the mother-tongue English group also prefer the Acrolect BSAE variety over the Mesolect BSAE variety. The Mesolect BSAE speaker was rated significantly lower than the Acrolect BSAE speaker.

It is very surprising that Respectable SAE is given such a low rating. All previous studies have shown a marked preference for this variety by both its mother-tongue speakers and other language groups. In this case it seems that the mother-tongue speakers do not like their own variety of English. They much prefer Afrikaans-English and Acrolect BSAE over their own variety.

In addition the high rating given to the Basilect BSAE speaker is also strange because this variety of BSAE has been given a consistently low rating in previous attitude studies. Content may provide a possible explanation for this.

The Afrikaans-English group:

The Afrikaans-English speaker, the Mesolect BSAE speaker and the Basilect BSAE speaker were given high ratings. The Afrikaans English speaker is rated significantly higher than the Mesolect BSAE, Respectable SAE and Acrolect BSAE speakers. It is not so surprising that this group gives the highest rating to Afrikaans-English because this is the accent that this group would be expected to identify with. It is, however, surprising to such a high rating of the Basilect BSAE speaker. Previous research has shown a consistently low rating for this accent. An explanation of the high rating given to Basilect BSAE will be offered in terms of the content of the passage for this speaker. The Respectable SAE speaker, the Acrolect BSAE speaker and the Extreme SAE speaker were given low ratings. Both the Mesolect BSAE and the Acrolect BSAE speakers were rated significantly higher than the Respectable English speaker.

In this case the ratings of the Afrikaans-English group differ from the ratings of the mother-tongue English group in that the mother-tongue English group gave a higher rating to the Acrolect BSAE speaker than the Afrikaans-English group.

The Acrolect-BSAE group:

They give a high rating to the Mesolect-BSAE speaker, the Acrolect-BSAE speaker, the Afrikaans English speaker and the Extreme SAE speaker. The Basilect BSAE speaker and the Respectable SAE speaker are given a lower rating. The Mesolect BSAE speaker is given a significantly higher rating than the Respectable SAE, Extreme SAE and Basilect BSAE speakers.

It is surprising that the Acrolect BSAE group of respondents gave such a low rating to Respectable SAE. Even Basilect BSAE (which has been given consistently low ratings in previous studies) is given a marginally higher rating. Previous studies have shown that Acrolect BSAE speakers show a preference for the Respectable SAE accent but this is not the case here.

This group also makes very little distinction between the Afrikaans-English and Extreme SAE speakers. In fact, they give both speakers a higher rating than the mother-tongue English and Afrikaans-English groups.

The Mesolect-BSAE group:

This group gives a high rating to the Acrolect-BSAE speaker, the Afrikaans-English speaker, the Mesolect BSAE speaker and the Respectable SAE speaker. The Basilect BSAE speaker and the Extreme SAE speaker are given lower ratings. The Extreme SAE speaker was rated significantly lower than all the other test speakers.

Of all the groups who participated in this study the Mesolect BSAE group gives Respectable SAE the highest rating. The Mesolect BSAE group also give Basilect BSAE a higher rating than all the other language groups represented in this study.

In addition, it should be noted that the black respondents gave higher overall ratings to all the speakers as compared to the white respondents who gave lower overall ratings to all the speakers.

4.2.1.2. Students

Tables 7 and 8 contain the results of the four language groups' evaluation of all the questions on the questionnaire. The general category indicates their response to all the questions combined, whereas the responses to the questions relating to employment and personality traits are indicated in the employability and personality categories respectively.

Table 7: Combined average response of all four language groups: Students – sound input

Speakers	General	Employability	Personality
S1: Distr. Afr-Eng	3.64 (0.47)	3.61 (0.49)	3.68 (0.60)
S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.88 (0.58)	3.98 (0.53)	3.78 (0.76)
Confidence interval	3.62 – 4.14	3.74 – 4.22	3.44 – 4.12
S3: Test Resp.-Eng	3.73 (0.69)	3.73 (0.79)	3.72 (0.67)
Confidence interval	3.42 – 4.04	3.38 – 4.08	3.42 – 4.02
S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	2.84 (0.51)	2.61 (0.65)	3.10 (0.43)
S5: Test Extr-Eng	3.58 (0.65)	3.60 (0.70)	3.55 (0.64)
Confidence interval	3.29 – 3.87	3.29 – 3.91	3.26 – 3.84
S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.87 (0.43)	3.85 (0.50)	3.88 (0.46)
Confidence interval	3.68 – 4.06	3.63 – 4.07	3.67 – 4.09
S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng	2.90 (0.54)	2.67 (0.70)	3.15 (0.51)
S8: Test Afr-Eng	3.88 (0.47)	3.88 (0.59)	3.87 (0.46)
Confidence interval	3.67 – 4.09	3.62 – 4.14	3.66 – 4.08
S9: Test Basi BSAE	3.40 (0.55)	3.42 (0.64)	3.38 (0.51)
Confidence interval	3.15 – 3.65	3.13 – 3.71	3.15 – 3.61

It is worth noting that the student group did not always give higher ratings in the personality category, as was the case with the professional group. In some cases they gave a higher rating in the personality category, i.e. with the distracter Afrikaans English speaker, the distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker, the Acrolect BSAE speaker, and the distracter Respectable SAE speaker. They seem to be more lenient when it comes to the

personality rating of the distracter speakers only. The majority of the test speakers were given a slightly lower rating in the personality category. This differs from the professional group who consistently gave higher ratings in the personality category.

The students gave a high rating to the Afrikaans English speaker, the Mesolect BSAE speaker, the Acrolect BSAE speaker and the Respectable SAE speaker. The ratings for these speakers are for all intents and purposes equal.

The Extreme SAE speaker and the Basilect BSAE speaker were given lower ratings. These two speakers were, in fact, rated lower than the distracter Afrikaans English speaker. The Basilect BSAE speaker was rated significantly lower than the Mesolect BSAE, Acrolect BSAE and the Afrikaans English speakers.

The students also seem to distinguish between the distracter and test speakers, giving higher ratings to the test passages, with the exception of the Afrikaans English distracter which was given a higher rating than even the Extreme SAE and Basilect BSAE test speakers.

Table 8: Average response of Afrikaans-English, Mother-Tongue English, Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE respondents: General category: Students – sound input

Speakers	M-T Eng	Afr-Eng	Acrolect	Mesolect
S1: Distr. Afr-Eng.	3.64 (0.33)	3.84 (0.49)	3.37 (0.70)	3.73 (0.25)
S2: Test Meso BSAE	4.04 (0.56)	3.81 (0.38)	3.79 (0.76)	3.87 (0.72)
Confidence interval	3.79 – 4.29	3.64 – 3.98	3.45 – 4.13	3.55 – 4.19
S3: Test Resp-Eng.	3.59 (0.42)	3.81 (0.65)	3.56 (0.81)	3.94 (0.94)
Confidence interval	3.40 – 3.78	3.52 – 4.10	3.20 – 3.92	3.52 – 4.36
S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	2.73 (0.55)	2.97 (0.49)	2.67 (0.38)	3.01 (0.65)
S5: Test Extr-Eng.	3.77 (0.75)	3.70 (0.68)	3.62 (0.78)	3.21 (0.34)
Confidence interval	3.44 – 4.10	3.40 – 4.00	3.27 – 3.97	3.06 – 3.36
S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.77 (0.73)	3.93 (0.39)	3.81 (0.30)	3.95 (0.28)
Confidence interval	3.44 – 4.10	3.76 – 4.10	3.68 – 3.94	3.82 – 4.08

S7: Distr. Resp-Eng.	2.70 (0.32)	3.12 (0.38)	2.58 (0.70)	3.19 (0.56)
S8: Test Afr-Eng.	3.92 (0.30)	4.21 (0.37)	3.81 (0.42)	3.56 (0.63)
Confidence interval	3.79 – 4.05	4.04 – 4.38	3.62 – 4.00	3.28 – 3.84
S9: Test Basi BSAE	3.18 (0.58)	3.40 (0.45)	3.50 (0.73)	3.52 (0.51)
Confidence interval	2.92 – 3.44	3.20 – 3.60	3.17 – 3.83	3.29 – 3.75

The Mother-Tongue English group:

They show a strong preference for the Mesolect BSAE speaker. The Mesolect BSAE speaker is rated significantly higher than the Respectable SAE and the Basilect BSAE speakers. The Afrikaans English speaker, the Acrolect BSAE speaker and the Extreme SAE speaker were also given relatively high ratings.

This group gave a relatively low rating to their own accent, i.e. Respectable SAE. The Afrikaans English speaker was rated significantly higher than the Respectable SAE speaker. The distracter Afrikaans English speaker was, in fact, given a slightly higher rating than the test Respectable SAE speaker.

The Basilect BSAE speaker was also given a low rating. The Mesolect BSAE, Respectable SAE, Extreme SAE, Acrolect BSAE and Afrikaans English speaker were all rated significantly higher than the Basilect BSAE speaker.

The distracter Afrikaans English speaker was given a slightly better rating than the distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker and the distracter Respectable SAE speaker. Both the Mesolect BSAE and the Respectable SAE distracters were rated lower than the test speakers.

The Afrikaans English group:

The Afrikaans English speaker was given a high rating. The Afrikaans English speaker was rated significantly higher than the Mesolect BSAE, Extreme SAE and Basilect BSAE speakers. The Acrolect BSAE speaker also received a favourable rating. Surprisingly, the distracter Afrikaans English speaker was given a relatively positive rating as compared to the previous three groups. In addition, the Afrikaans English group

gave a relatively higher rating to the Respectable SAE speaker as compared to the mother-tongue English group.

The Extreme SAE speaker and the Basilect BSAE speaker are both given low ratings. The Basilect BSAE speaker was rated significantly lower than the Afrikaans English speaker.

The Acrolect BSAE group:

This group gives high ratings to the Acrolect BSAE speaker and the Afrikaans English speaker. The Mesolect BSAE speaker and the Extreme SAE speaker are also given relatively high ratings. The Basilect BSAE speaker was given a low rating.

It is interesting to note that there are very little differences in this group's rating of the various speakers. All their ratings are very similar and there are very little differences between the respective ratings of the speakers. There are no significant differences between the ratings of the test speakers.

Mesolect BSAE group:

The Mesolect BSAE group gives high ratings to the Acrolect BSAE speaker, the Respectable SAE speaker and the Mesolect BSAE speaker. The Acrolect BSAE speaker is rated significantly higher than the Extreme SAE, Afrikaans English and Basilect BSAE speakers. There are no big differences in their rating of these three speakers. They seem to like all of them equally well.

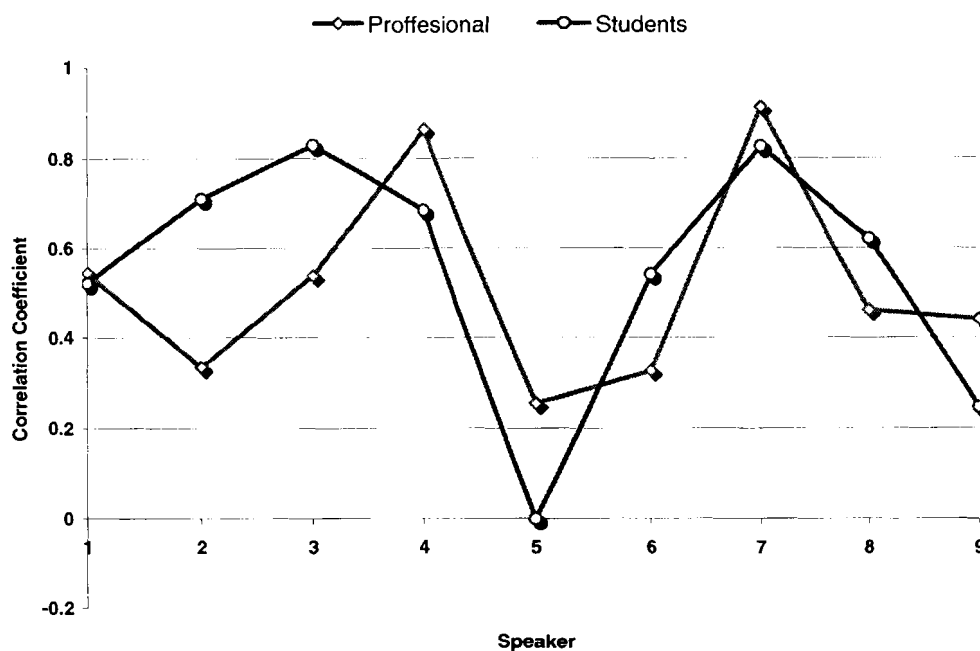
The Extreme SAE speaker, the Basilect BSAE speaker and the Afrikaans English speaker were given relatively low ratings. The Extreme SAE speaker was given a significantly lower rating than the Mesolect BSAE, Respectable English and Acrolect BSAE speakers.

4.2.2. Results: Correlation of passage rating and sound input rating – all language groups combined

Graph 1 indicates the relative contribution of content versus the other possible factors (including accent) for the student and professional groups for all language groups combined. A correlation co-efficient of greater than 0.5 is an indication that content contributed more to the final rating of the speaker than accent (and other factors). A correlation co-efficient of less than 0.5 is an indication that other factors (including accent) contributed more to the final rating of the speaker than content.

Thus, the following section highlights the relative contribution of content versus other factors to the final rating of each speaker. Other factors that could influence ratings (besides content) include appearance, gender, accent, tone, pitch and general voice quality. However, due to the fact that all other factors (with the exception of accent) were controlled, accent is expected to be the single most significant one. Appearance as an influencing factor was controlled because the respondents did not see the speakers. Gender was controlled because all the speakers heard were male. Tone, pitch and general voice quality were controlled by selecting speakers of a similar age. Hesitations on the part of the speakers were also controlled by re-recording the dialogue of each speaker until obvious hesitations were eliminated. By controlling for all other possible influencing factors it is a good expectation that accent is the dominant factor. Due to the fact that different versions of the same content was used for the passages it is important to consider the possible influence of passage content in relation to accent on the final speaker rating.

Graph 1: All groups combined: Professionals and students:



4.2.2.1. Professionals

Table 9 includes a summary of the passage rating, sound input rating and correlation co-efficient for the professionals – all groups combined.

Table 9: Passage rating, sound input rating and correlation score for professionals

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound inout rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P1/S1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.35 (0.41)	3.22 (0.43)	0.57
P2/S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.68 (0.38)	3.84 (0.48)	0.36
P3/S3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.37 (0.54)	3.53 (0.58)	0.57
P4/S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	2.91 (0.51)	2.68 (0.30)	0.83
P5/S5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.88 (0.58)	3.56 (0.45)	0.24
P6/S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.59 (0.44)	3.87 (0.46)	0.36

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound in/out rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P7/S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.64 (0.29)	2.51 (0.48)	0.9
P8/S8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.72 (0.53)	3.97 (0.42)	0.42
P9/S9: Test Basi BSAE	3.82 (0.60)	3.68 (0.59)	0.41

The Acrolect BSAE speaker (S6):

Content contributes to less than half of the final rating of this speaker (a correlation co-efficient value of about 0.3). Accent, in this case, has a positive impact on the rating of the Acrolect BSAE speaker because the speaker was given a higher rating than the corresponding passage. The Acrolect BSAE speaker had a mean of 3.87 and the corresponding passage had a mean of 3.59. It appears that the professional group likes this accent and thus it would benefit the speaker in an employment interview.

The Mesolect BSAE speaker (S2):

The rating of the Mesolect BSAE speaker may also be attributed more to accent than to content (a correlation co-efficient of about 0.4). Accent makes a marginally smaller contribution to the rating of this speaker than it did for the Acrolect BSAE speaker. However, as with the Acrolect BSAE speaker, accent also has a positive impact on the rating of the Mesolect BSAE speaker. The Mesolect BSAE speaker had a mean of 3.84 and the corresponding passage had a mean of 3.68. The professional group shows a preference for the Mesolect BSAE accent.

The Basilect BSAE speaker (S9):

Accent plays a slightly bigger role in the rating of this speaker. This speaker has a correlation co-efficient of between 0.4 and 0.5, which means that accent only contributes marginally more to the final rating than content does. The rating is largely due to the influence of both content and accent, but content still accounts for slightly less than fifty percent of the rating of the speaker. Thus, the accent does still influence this speaker's chances of employment success. In this respect, accent has a negative impact on the Basilect BSAE speaker's chances of employment. The speaker had a lower mean (3.68) than the corresponding passage (3.82). The professional group does not like this accent

and one may conclude that Basilect BSAE will disadvantage a candidate in an employment interview.

The Respectable SAE speaker (S3):

The low rating of the Respectable SAE speaker may be attributed to the low quality of content because content contributes marginally more than accent to the final rating. Although, content makes a bigger contribution (a correlation co-efficient of between 0.5 and 0.6) it is still important to note that accent cannot be completely discounted when analyzing the final rating of this speaker. In this respect, it is noteworthy that the Respectable SAE speaker (3.53) was given a higher rating than the corresponding passage (3.37). The accent still gives the speaker a marginal lift even though the content was of a low quality. Relatively poor content thus slightly marks the professional group's liking of this accent.

The Extreme SAE speaker (S5):

The rating of the Extreme SAE speaker may be attributed mostly to accent (a correlation co-efficient of just over 0.2). Accent, in this case, has very a negative impact on the overall rating of the speaker. When comparing the mean for the speaker with the mean for the corresponding passage, the speaker rating is lower (3.56) than the passage rating (3.88). Accent has a definite negative influence on the rating of the speaker. Because it is most likely that accent is the major contributing factor to the final speaker rating, one can assume that the Extreme SAE accent is not liked by the professional group. It follows that and Extreme SAE speaker is disadvantaged by his/her accent in an employment interview.

The Afrikaans English speaker (S8):

Accent made a slightly bigger contribution to the final rating of this speaker (a correlation co-efficient of between 0.4 and 0.5). However, accent only contributes slightly more than half to the final rating, so the influence of content cannot be completely discounted. The professional group seems to show a preference for the Afrikaans English accent. The speaker had a higher mean (3.97) than the corresponding passage (3.72). Although, accent plays less of a role in the rating of this speaker than it did with the Extreme SAE

speaker, it may still be concluded that the professionals were positively influenced by this accent because accent still accounts for more than half of the final rating. It is important to note that accent played a much bigger part in the rating of the Extreme SAE speaker than it did with the Afrikaans English speaker because this indicates that the professional group distinguishes between these two accents. This contradicts Cooper's (1989) findings that these two accents are regarded in a similar light.

The distracter speakers:

Content contributes the most to the rating of the distracter Respectable SAE (S7) and the distracter Mesolect BSAE (S4) speakers. The Respectable SAE distracter had a correlation co-efficient of about 0.9 whereas the Mesolect BSAE distracter had a correlation co-efficient of between 0.8 and 0.9. Content is thus a big factor in the rating given to the Respectable SAE and Mesolect BSAE speakers. The low rating given to these two speakers may be attributed largely to the low quality of content. The distracter Respectable SAE speaker had a mean of 2.51 whereas the corresponding passage had a mean of 2.64. The distracter Mesolect speaker had a mean of 2.68 whereas the corresponding passage had a mean of 2.91.

It follows that really bad quality content cannot be redeemed by accent. Bad quality content will count against the speaker, no matter with which accent he/she speaks.

Although the professionals seem to like the Mesolect BSAE and Respectable SAE accents (as can be seen from their ratings of the test speakers) this does not make a difference with the corresponding distracter speakers. Even though the professionals show a preference for these two accents, the weak content of the distracters nullifies this preference. Thus, accent (even if it is liked) will not count in your favour if the quality of your content is bad. If *what* you say is of a poor quality then *how* it is said will not make a difference. However, if *what* (content) you say is of a good quality then *how* you say it (accent) may come into play and eventually count in your favour or against you.

In addition, weaker content seems to stand out. The weaker the content the more attention is paid to it. The weakest distracters, i.e. Respectable SAE and Mesolect BSAE, both scored high on the content side of the correlations. This indicates that weak content seems to make an impression on the professional respondents.

Content plays a much lesser role in the rating of the Afrikaans-English distracter (S1). This speaker had a correlation co-efficient of between 0.5 and 0.6, which is very similar to the correlation co-efficient for the Respectable SAE speaker. Content contributes only marginally more to the final rating of this speaker than accent. Content-wise the Afrikaans-English distracter had the highest quality content. Of all the distracter passages, the Afrikaans English distracter received the highest mean (3.35). This mean was very similar to the test Respectable SAE speaker (3.37). Content plays less of a role with this distracter because the quality of content is better than the quality of content for the other two distracters. The weaker content of the Afrikaans English distracter nevertheless blocks any positive effect of the accent.

Preliminary conclusions:

The professionals like the Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE accents. They seem to show slightly more preference for Acrolect BSAE than for Mesolect BSAE. These findings roughly confirm those of Coetzee-Van Rooy and Van Rooy (2005). They also show some preference for the Respectable SAE and the Afrikaans English accents, although this preference is not as definitive as it is for the Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE accents.

The Basilect BSAE and Extreme SAE accents, on the other hand, are disliked by the professionals. The Extreme SAE accent is disliked more than the Basilect BSAE accent. However, both these accents will disadvantage a candidate in a job interview.

The professionals definitely picked up on the weaker content of the distracter speakers, especially the Mesolect BSAE and Respectable SAE distracters. In this case, weak content will count against you in an interview, no matter with which accent you speak. When the quality of content is weak, the professionals focus primarily on content, as the high correlation values for distracters Mesolect BSAE and Respectable SAE show. If the quality of content is better, then accent comes into play, as is shown by the lower correlation value for the distracter Afrikaans English speaker.

4.2.2.2. Students

Table 10 includes the passage rating, sound input rating and correlation co-efficient for students – all groups combined.

Table 10: Passage rating, sound input rating and correlation score for students

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound inout rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P1/S1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.42 (0.47)	3.64 (0.47)	0.56
P2/S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.66 (0.44)	3.88 (0.58)	0.5
P3/S3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.28 (0.69)	3.73 (0.69)	0.81
P4/S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	3.06 (0.48)	2.84 (0.51)	0.48
P5/S5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.91 (0.66)	3.58 (0.65)	0
P6/S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.60 (0.58)	3.87 (0.43)	0.58
P7/S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.62 (0.51)	2.90 (0.54)	0.81
P8/S8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.96 (0.65)	3.88 (0.47)	0.61
P9/S9: Test Basi BSAE	4.11 (0.63)	3.40 (0.55)	0.22

The Acrolect BSAE speaker (S6):

This speaker has a correlation co-efficient of between 0.5 and 0.6, which makes it difficult to pinpoint whether accent or content makes the biggest contribution to the final rating of the speaker. The Acrolect BSAE speaker was given a higher rating (mean of 3.87) than the corresponding passage (mean of 3.60). This could be an indication that the students like the Acrolect BSAE accent. However, it is difficult to say this with any certainty due to the fact that content and accent make an almost equal contribution to the final rating. Be that as it may, accent still contributes to almost half of the final rating and thus it may be said that the student group like this accent, but not to the extent that this accent will excessively benefit a candidate in an interview.

The Mesolect BSAE speaker (S2):

Content makes the biggest contribution to the rating of the Mesolect BSAE speaker (a correlation co-efficient of about 0.7). The relatively small contribution of accent is

nevertheless a positive one. The Mesolect BSAE speaker had a higher mean (3.88) than the corresponding passage (3.66). The students seem to like the Mesolect BSAE accent but not to the extent that it would excessively advantage the speaker in a job interview. In fact, content plays a bigger role in the rating of this speaker than it does for the Acrolect BSAE speaker which indicates that the students show a bigger preference for the Acrolect BSAE accent than for the Mesolect BSAE accent because accent played a bigger role in the positive rating given to the Acrolect BSAE speaker than it did in the positive rating given to the Mesolect BSAE speaker.

The Basilect BSAE speaker (S9):

Accent accounts for a significant part of the rating for the Basilect BSAE speaker. With a correlation co-efficient of just over 0.2, accent accounts for much more of the final rating than content does. The Basilect BSAE accent has a negative influence on the final rating due to the fact that the passage was rated higher with a mean of 4.11 than the speaker with a mean of 3.40. A good content, in this case, does not guarantee success in the job interview, especially if you are speaking with an accent that is really disliked. Basilect BSAE seems to be stigmatized to the extent that no matter how good the quality of your content, speaking with this accent will count against the candidate in a job interview.

The Respectable SAE speaker (S3):

The rating of this speaker is attributed more to content than to accent (a correlation co-efficient of just over 0.8). This speaker had the highest correlation co-efficient of all the test speakers. It is very surprising to see that the students paid more attention to the content of this speaker instead of the accent. Previous studies show a marked preference for the Respectable SAE accent and in light of this one might assume that the students would be more influenced by accent than by content. Furthermore, one would assume a positive influence of this accent. The Respectable SAE speaker was indeed given a higher mean (3.73) than the corresponding passage (3.28) which might indicate a slight preference for the accent but it is in no way as definitive as the preferences shown in previous studies. Content still accounts for most of the final rating so it is difficult to state with any certainty that the students show a marked preference for this accent.

The Extreme SAE speaker (S5):

The students are very decisive in their dislike of the Extreme SAE accent. With a correlation co-efficient of 0, accent is the determining factor in the rating of the speaker. Content plays no part in their rating of this speaker. In other words, the students only paid attention to the accent and ignored the content completely. Furthermore, the Extreme SAE accent has a negative impact on the rating. The speaker was given a mean of 3.58 and the corresponding passage was given a mean of 3.91. This accent clearly counts against the speaker. Even though this passage was given one of the highest ratings overall (in terms of means), the accent of the speaker nullifies the quality of content. No matter how good the quality of content, an accent that is stigmatized will count against you in the job interview to the extent that the interviewer will discount what you say almost entirely.

The Afrikaans English speaker (S8):

Content makes the biggest contribution to the final rating of this speaker (a correlation co-efficient of just over 0.6). Although content is the overriding factor in determining the final rating, the impact of accent cannot be discounted altogether. Accent accounts for about forty percent of the final rating. The influence of accent is negative. The students gave a lower rating to the Afrikaans English speaker (mean of 3.88) than to the corresponding passage (mean of 3.96). The overall high rating given to the Afrikaans English speaker may be attributed more to content than to accent. The professional group showed more preference for the Afrikaans English speaker because accent played a bigger role and the speaker mean was higher than the passage mean.

The distracter speakers:

Content contributes the most to the rating of the distracter Respectable SAE (S7) and Mesolect BSAE (S4) speakers. The distracter Respectable SAE speaker had the highest correlation co-efficient of just over 0.8 whereas the correlation co-efficient for the distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker was slightly lower at about 0.7. The low rating of both speakers may be attributed to the weaker content. However, the distracter Respectable SAE speaker was still given a higher mean (2.90) than the corresponding passage (2.62), which might indicate a slight preference for the accent. The distracter

Mesolect BSAE speaker, on the other hand, was given a lower rating (mean of 2.84) than the corresponding passage (mean of 3.06). Despite this the overall ratings for both these distracter speakers were low which indicates that a weak content will disadvantage a speaker in a job interview because if the content is perceived as weak, then accent (even if it is liked) will not improve the person's chances for employment.

It is important to note that both the Mesolect BSAE speakers (test and distracter) as well as both the Respectable SAE speakers (test and distracter) were rated more on content than on accent and have approximately the same correlation co-efficient. These accents elicit similar reactions from the students. This testifies to the validity of the research design used in this study.

Accent played a bigger role in the rating of the distracter Afrikaans English speaker (a correlation co-efficient of between 0.5 and 0.6). The speaker was given a higher mean (3.64) than the corresponding passage (3.42). The better quality of content seems to bring accent into play. The students gave a lower rating to the test Afrikaans English speaker than they did to the corresponding passage but with the distracter Afrikaans English they give a higher rating to the speaker than to the passage.

Preliminary conclusions:

Accent plays a definitive role in the rating of the Basilect BSAE and Extreme SAE speakers. For all the other speakers, content plays a bigger role in determining the final ratings of the speaker. Generally speaking, the students focus more on content than the professionals do. It would appear that the professionals are more swayed by accent than the students.

The students also show a preference for the Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE accents, although it is not as marked as the preference shown by the professional group. As with the professionals, the students show a slight preference for Acrolect BSAE over Mesolect BSAE. Interestingly, the professionals like the Respectable SAE accent more than the students do. This is surprising because previous studies have shown that students show a bigger preference for this accent than is shown in this study.

The Basilect BSAE and Extreme SAE accents are disliked by the students. The students show a stronger disliking of both these accents than the professionals do. Furthermore, the students dislike the Extreme SAE accent more than the Basilect BSAE accent. Be that as it may, the bias against both accents is strong enough to severely harm a candidate's chances of employment. The students also show a slight negative bias towards the Afrikaans English accent, although not as much as towards the Basilect BSAE and the Extreme SAE accents. As compared to the students, the professionals showed more preference for the Afrikaans English accent.

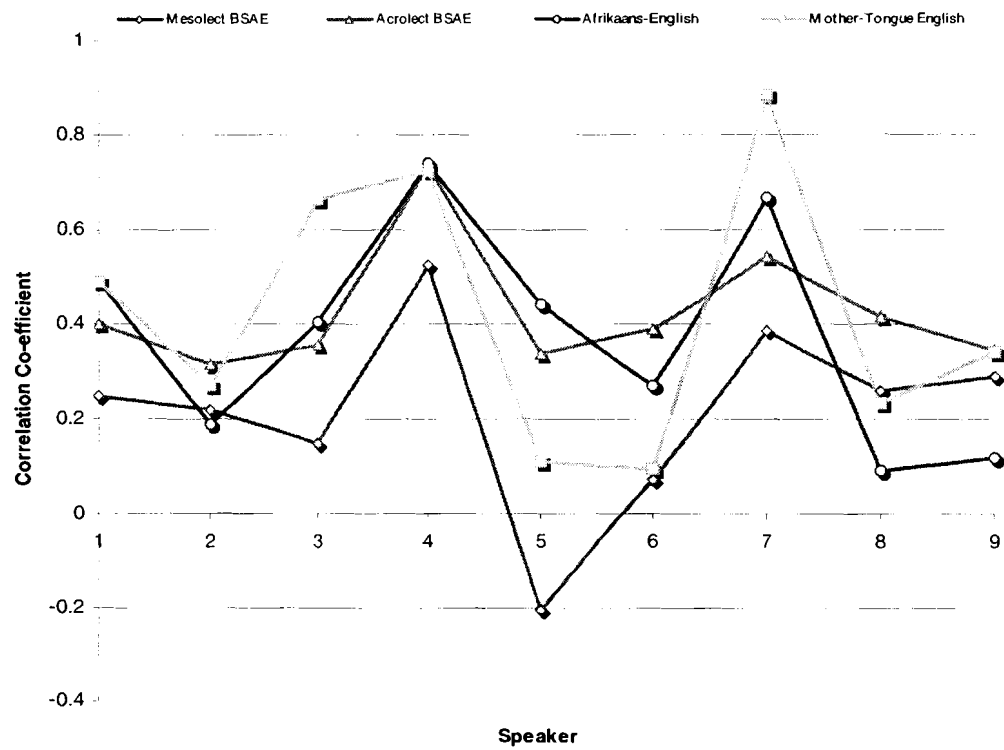
The students' rating of the distracter speakers is similar to the ratings of the professionals. The students also pick up on the weaker content of the distracters. Again, if the content is weak, then accent will not count in a candidate's favour, even if it is an accent that is liked.

4.2.3. Results: Correlation of passage rating and sound input rating – separate language groups

Graphs 2 & 3 indicate the relative contribution of content versus other possible factors (of which accent is a significant one) for the student and professional groups for the four separate language groups. A correlation co-efficient of greater than 0.5 is an indication that content contributed more to the final rating of the speaker than accent (and other factors). A correlation co-efficient of less than 0.5 is an indication that accent (and other factors) contributed more to the final rating of the speaker than content.

4.2.3.1. Professionals

Graph 2: Separate language groups: Professional group



The Mesolect BSAE group:

Table 11 contains the passage rating, sound input rating and correlation co-efficient for the professional Mesolect BSAE group.

Table 11: Passage rating, sound input rating and correlation score for Mesolect BSAE professionals

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound inout rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P1/S1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.35 (0.41)	3.47 (0.30)	0.22
P2/S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.68 (0.38)	4.00 (0.21)	0.21
P3/S3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.37 (0.54)	4.00 (0.40)	0.17
P4/S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	2.91 (0.51)	2.56 (0.17)	0.56
P5/S5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.88 (0.58)	3.66 (0.22)	-0.2
P6/S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.59 (0.44)	4.12 (0.16)	0.09
P7/S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.64 (0.29)	2.88 (0.49)	0.39
P8/S8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.72 (0.53)	4.12 (0.27)	0.23
P9/S9: Test Basi BSAE	3.82 (0.60)	3.94 (0.25)	0.24

The Acrolect BSAE speaker (S6):

The Acrolect BSAE accent seems to be popular with the Mesolect BSAE group. With a correlation co-efficient of just under 0.1, accent contributed significantly to the positive rating given to the speaker. The Mesolect BSAE professionals gave the Acrolect BSAE speaker the highest rating overall (with a mean of 4.12). Also, the speaker rating was much higher than the passage rating. The Acrolect BSAE passage had a mean of 3.59. It is possible that the Mesolect BSAE group likes this accent because it represents socio-economic mobility. It appears to be the ideal that they strive to achieve.

The Mesolect BSAE speaker (S2):

Accent contributes much more to the final rating of this speaker than content (a correlation co-efficient of just over 0.2). Accent has a positive impact on the rating of the speaker. The Mesolect BSAE speaker had a mean of 4.00 and the corresponding passage had a mean of 3.68. In addition, the Mesolect BSAE speaker had one of the highest overall means. This indicates a definite preference for the Mesolect BSAE accent. The positive influence of this accent is understandable because this group identifies with its own accent. However, it is worth noting that the Mesolect BSAE group shows a more marked preference for the Acrolect BSAE accent. They seem to prefer the Acrolect BSAE accent over their own accent.

The Basilect BSAE speaker (S9):

The rating of this speaker may also be attributed more to accent than to content (a correlation co-efficient of about 0.3). Surprisingly, accent seems to have a positive influence on the rating of the Basilect BSAE speaker. The speaker had a higher mean (3.94) than the corresponding passage (3.82). The Mesolect BSAE group is the only group to show a positive influence with the Basilect BSAE accent. This group probably understands this speaker much better than the other three response groups. This positive rating may be termed a 'sympathy' rating.

The Respectable SAE speaker (S3):

Accent contributed significantly to the rating of the Respectable SAE speaker with a correlation co-efficient value of just under 0.2. The Mesolect BSAE group shows the most preference for this accent, i.e. they have the lowest correlation co-efficient of all the groups and they also gave this speaker the highest mean (4.00) of all the language groups. The high mean may be attributed to accent rather than content. As with the Acrolect BSAE, the Respectable SAE accent represents socio-economic mobility. In the minds of the Mesolect BSAE speakers, speaking with a Respectable SAE accent indicates education, money and status, as is predictable from received knowledge in sociolinguistics.

The Extreme SAE speaker (S5):

The Mesolect BSAE group shows a strong dislike of this accent. With a correlation co-efficient of -0.2 , the rating is based entirely on accent. Amazingly, the negative value shows that the better the content the more they will discriminate against this speaker. The speaker had a much lower mean (3.66) than the corresponding passage (3.88). Also, the Extreme SAE speaker had the lowest mean of all the test speakers. The Mesolect BSAE group clearly had the lowest correlation co-efficient for this speaker, which reinforces their strong dislike of this accent. Speaking with an Extreme SAE accent would in all likelihood prevent a candidate's employment.

The Afrikaans English speaker (S8):

With a correlation co-efficient of just under 0.3, the rating of the Afrikaans English speaker may be attributed more to accent than to content. Accent seems to exert a positive influence on the rating of the speaker because the speaker had a higher mean (4.12) than the corresponding passage (3.72). It is surprising to see the positive influence of the Afrikaans English accent because it is an accent associated with the oppression of apartheid. However, accent still plays a bigger role in the positive impact of the Acrolect BSAE accent (speaker had a correlation co-efficient of just under 0.1). For this reason the Mesolect BSAE group still shows a stronger preference for the Acrolect BSAE accent than for the Afrikaans English accent. The high rating given to the Afrikaans English speaker may be attributed more to content than to accent. It is not necessarily a case of liking the accent, but rather a case of liking the content and the accent not interfering or harming the candidate's chances of success.

The distracter speakers:

Content makes a bigger contribution to the rating of the distracter Mesolect BSAE and the distracter Respectable SAE speakers than it does with the test speakers, but only marginally so. The Respectable SAE distracter had a correlation co-efficient of 0.4 and the Mesolect BSAE distracter had a correlation co-efficient of just over 0.5. The Mesolect BSAE group is the only language group where content played such a marginal role in the final rating of these two distracter speakers. All other language groups had a much higher correlation co-efficient for these two distracters, showing that their low

rating of these two distracter speakers may be attributed largely to content. However, with the Mesolect BSAE group it is difficult to determine whether the rating is due to content or accent. Nevertheless, content does come into play when the quality of the content is weak. The weak content clearly disadvantages the distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker as is shown by the lower speaker mean (2.56) as compared to the mean for the corresponding passage (2.91). It is worth noting though that the distracter Respectable SAE speaker was given a higher mean (2.88) than the corresponding passage (2.64). This corroborates the Mesolect BSAE group's preference for this accent.

The distracter Afrikaans English rating is more due to accent than content. Again, the better quality content brings accent into play. With a correlation co-efficient of just over 0.2, accent exerts a positive influence on the rating of this speaker. The speaker had slightly a mean of 3.47 as compared to the corresponding passage mean of 3.35. However, the positive influence of the Afrikaans English accent is by no means as definitive as the positive influence of the Acrolect BSAE, Mesolect BSAE and Respectable SAE accents. So even though the Mesolect BSAE group does not show a strong dislike of the Afrikaans English accent, they certainly do not show as strong a liking of it compared to other accents.

Preliminary conclusions (professionals – Mesolect BSAE group):

The Mesolect BSAE professionals show the most bias of all the language groups. All the correlation co-efficient values (except for the distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker) fall under 0.5. This indicates that accent played a significant part in their rating of the speakers. Their ratings are more dependent on the accent of the speaker rather than the content of the speaker. This kind of subjectivity may be problematic in an employment interview because it would prevent the selection of the best person for the job, which, in turn, may prove to be detrimental to the company concerned.

They show the most preference for the Acrolect BSAE and Respectable SAE accents. They are the only language group to show so much preference for the Respectable SAE accent. This corresponds with the findings of previous research. However, the Mesolect BSAE professionals still show more preference for the Acrolect BSAE accent than they

do for the Respectable SAE accent. They also like the Mesolect BSAE accent, although not as much as they do the Acrolect BSAE and Respectable SAE accents. The high overall rating given to the Afrikaans English speaker is more due to content than to accent. Although this group does not show an aversion to the Afrikaans English accent, they do not really show such a definite preference for it either. It is also important to note that the Mesolect BSAE professionals do not show the same dislike of the Basilect BSAE accent that is shown by the other language groups. They are, in fact, quite tolerant of this accent.

The Extreme SAE accent is very unpopular with this group. They show a strong dislike of this accent, so much so that they would probably not give a job to a person speaking with this accent.

Content plays the biggest role with the Mesolect BSAE and Respectable SAE distracters. This shows that the Mesolect BSAE professionals at least pick up on weaker content and do penalize candidates for it. Accent plays a bigger role with the Afrikaans English distracter due to the fact that this distracter's quality of content was slightly better than that of the other two distracters.

The Acrolect BSAE group:

Table 12 includes the passage rating, sound input rating and correlation co-efficient for the professional Acrolect BSAE group.

Table 12: Passage rating, sound input rating and correlation score for Acrolect BSAE professionals

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P1/S1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.35 (0.41)	3.60 (0.21)	0.4
P2/S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.68 (0.38)	4.38 (0.36)	0.31
P3/S3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.37 (0.54)	3.75 (0.51)	0.36
P4/S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	2.91 (0.51)	2.82 (0.17)	0.73

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P5/S5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.88 (0.58)	4.08 (0.30)	0.35
P6/S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.59 (0.44)	4.10 (0.42)	0.39
P7/S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.64 (0.29)	2.57 (0.17)	0.57
P8/S8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.72 (0.53)	4.10 (0.52)	0.41
P9/S9: Test Basi BSAE	3.82 (0.60)	3.76 (0.78)	0.36

The Acrolect BSAE speaker (S6):

The rating of this speaker is attributed more to accent than to content (a correlation co-efficient of about 0.4). In this case the influence of accent is a positive one. The Acrolect BSAE speaker had a mean of 4.10 whereas the corresponding passage had a mean of 3.59. However, accent only accounts for slightly more than half of the final rating, so the influence of content cannot be ignored completely. Although the Acrolect BSAE group does show a preference for its own accent it is not definitive enough to conclude that speaking with this accent will advantage a candidate significantly in a job interview.

The Mesolect BSAE speaker (S2):

Accent contributes slightly more to the rating of the Mesolect BSAE speaker than it did for the rating of the Acrolect BSAE speaker (a correlation co-efficient of 0.3). The impact of accent is also positive. The speaker had a mean of 4.38 whereas the corresponding passage had a mean of 3.68. Furthermore, the Mesolect BSAE speaker was given the highest overall mean. It seems that the Acrolect BSAE group shows a bigger preference for the Mesolect BSAE accent than it does for its own accent because of the higher overall mean and the bigger role played by accent in the final rating given to the speaker.

The Basilect BSAE speaker (S9):

With a correlation co-efficient of between 0.3 and 0.4, accent makes a bigger contribution than content to the rating of this speaker. The speaker was given a slightly lower mean (3.76) than the corresponding passage (3.82). Although the Basilect BSAE accent has a negative impact on the rating of the speaker, there is only a slight drop in the speaker mean when comparing it to the passage mean. Thus, even though there is a negative influence, it is not significant enough to assume that the Acrolect BSAE group will severely disadvantage a Basilect BSAE speaker in a job interview.

The Respectable SAE speaker (S3):

This speaker's rating is attributed more to accent than to content (a correlation co-efficient of between 0.3 and 0.4). Accent has a positive impact on the rating of the speaker. The Respectable SAE speaker has a higher mean (3.75) than the corresponding passage (3.37). The Acrolect BSAE group likes this accent but they are not as definitive in their preference as the Mesolect BSAE group is.

The Extreme SAE speaker (S5):

It is interesting to note that the Acrolect BSAE group gave the highest means (4.08) of all the language groups to the Extreme SAE speaker. Accent plays a marginally greater role in the final rating of this speaker (a correlation co-efficient of about 0.3). Whereas the Mesolect BSAE group were very clear about its dislike of this accent, the Acrolect BSAE group seem to be more tolerant of it. The accent did not put them off completely and they actually paid more attention to the content than did the Mesolect BSAE group. Furthermore the Acrolect BSAE group gave the Extreme SAE speaker a higher mean than the corresponding passage which indicates that they do not dislike this accent. In fact they seem to show a preference for it.

The Afrikaans English speaker (S8):

With a correlation co-efficient of just over 0.4, the Afrikaans English speaker had the highest correlation co-efficient of all the test speakers. Although accent is still the overriding factor in determining the final rating, content comes into play as well. The influence of accent is positive because the Afrikaans English speaker had a higher mean (4.10) than the corresponding passage (3.72). However, the high rating given to the Afrikaans English speaker cannot be definitively attributed to accent alone because content still contributes to the final rating. Thus even though the Acrolect BSAE may show a slight preference for the Afrikaans English accent, the preference is by no means significant enough to say that an Afrikaans English accent will strongly advantage you if you are being interviewed by Acrolect BSAE speakers.

The distracter speakers:

The Mesolect BSAE distracter had the highest correlation co-efficient, i.e. 0.7, followed by the Respectable SAE distracter at just over 0.5. These two distracter speakers are the only ones (of all the speakers) where content plays a bigger role than accent in determining the final rating of the speakers. The distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker has the least ambiguous value of all the speakers. With this speaker we can say with some certainty that the rating can be attributed more to content than to accent. The speaker had a mean of 2.82 and the corresponding passage had a mean of 2.91. Thus the speaker was given a lower rating than the passage. The weak content has a negative influence on the rating of the speaker. Also, the difference between the means is so small that one cannot attribute the lower speaker rating to dislike of accent.

The correlation co-efficient for the distracter Respectable SAE speaker falls between 0.5 and 0.6. Accent and content make almost equal contributions to the final rating of the speaker. The speaker had a lower mean (2.57) than the passage (2.64). However, one cannot attribute the lower speaker rating to the accent alone because content also makes a significant contribution to the rating of the speaker. It is more likely that the low mean given to the speaker is more due to weak content than to dislike of accent.

Accent plays a bigger role in the rating of the distracter Afrikaans English speaker than it does with the other two distracter speakers. With a correlation co-efficient of 0.4, accent contributes to slightly more than half of the final rating. In this case, the speaker had a higher mean (3.60) than the corresponding passage (3.35). However, it is difficult to say with any certainty that the higher speaker rating is due to accent because content also contributes to the rating. The higher speaker rating may be due to the somewhat better quality of content.

Preliminary conclusions (professionals – Acrolect BSAE group):

This group shows the least extremes, i.e. they have the flattest gradients. All the speakers, with the exception of the distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker, have more or less the same correlation values. This contrasts with the correlation values of the Mesolect BSAE professionals who seem to be much more decisive in which accent they find acceptable and which they do not.

Although the correlation values for most of the speakers are similar, the Acrolect BSAE professionals' ratings may also be attributed more to accent than to content. Most of the correlation values are below 0.5 with the exception of the distracter Mesolect BSAE and Respectable SAE speakers. As with the Mesolect BSAE professionals, the Acrolect BSAE professionals also show a significant amount of bias when rating the speakers because they pay more attention to accent rather than content. This classifies them as a subjective group of interviewers that would not necessarily employ the best person for the job. Combined with a very accommodating attitude towards most accents (little evidence of strong dislikes anywhere) one is puzzled at how this group would go about selecting candidates.

The Acrolect BSAE group shows more preference for the Mesolect BSAE accent than for the Acrolect BSAE accent. This contrasts with the findings for the Mesolect BSAE group, where the Acrolect BSAE accent is the preferred accent. They also show a preference for the Respectable SAE accent but not as much as the Mesolect BSAE group does. This group seems to show a slight preference for the Afrikaans English accent but it is not so significant as to really advantage a candidate in a job interview. Surprisingly,

even though there is still some negative bias towards the Extreme SAE accent, the Acrolect BSAE professionals do not seem to mind this accent as much as the other language groups do. The Basilect BSAE accent is disliked more than the Extreme SAE accent. The Acrolect BSAE professionals, however, do not dislike the Basilect BSAE accent as much as the two white groups do.

Their ratings of the distracter speakers are similar to the ratings shown by the Mesolect BSAE professionals in that they also pick up on weaker content and penalize the speaker for it.

The Afrikaans English group:

Table 13 includes the passage rating, sound input rating and correlation co-efficient for the professional Afrikaans English group.

Table 13: Passage rating, sound input rating and correlation score for Afrikaans-English professionals

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P1/S1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.35 (0.41)	2.93 (0.25)	0.49
P2/S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.68 (0.38)	3.58 (0.18)	0.19
P3/S3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.37 (0.54)	3.08 (0.49)	0.4
P4/S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	2.91 (0.51)	2.93 (0.30)	0.73
P5/S5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.88 (0.58)	3.40 (0.33)	0.42
P6/S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.59 (0.44)	3.40 (0.25)	0.27
P7/S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.64 (0.29)	2.49 (0.22)	0.67
P8/S8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.72 (0.53)	3.70 (0.41)	0.1
P9/S9: Test Basi BSAE	3.82 (0.60)	3.43 (0.37)	0.12

The Afrikaans English professional group is a very strict group of interviewers which makes their results difficult to interpret. Overall their speaker means are low. For example, the Afrikaans English speaker was given the highest mean (3.70) of all the speakers. Despite this the Afrikaans English speaker was still rated 0.02 lower than the corresponding passage (3.72). For this reason, the Afrikaans English professional group's responses will be approached differently from that of all the other language groups. The overall passage mean only differs 0.3 from the overall speaker mean. Given this, a 0.3 difference between speaker and passage indicates a neutral attitude towards the accent, whereas a mean that differs less than 0.3 between speaker and passage indicates that they like the accent and a mean that differs more than 0.3 indicates that they dislike the accent.

The Acrolect BSAE speaker (S6):

This speaker's rating is attributed more to accent than to content (correlation co-efficient of 0.3). The mean for the Acrolect BSAE speaker (3.40) is lower than the mean for the corresponding passage (3.59). However, the drop in mean is marginal (0.19) so it cannot be concluded that they dislike the accent. Be that as it may, the two Black groups (Acrolect and Mesolect BSAE) show a bigger preference for the Acrolect BSAE accent than does the Afrikaans English group.

The Mesolect BSAE speaker (S2):

The Mesolect BSAE speaker rating may also be attributed more to accent than to content (a correlation co-efficient of about 0.2). Accent plays a slightly bigger role in the rating of the Mesolect BSAE speaker than it does in the rating of the Acrolect BSAE speaker. The mean for the speaker (3.58) is lower than the mean for the corresponding passage (3.68) but only marginally so (only 0.1 difference). Also, the Afrikaans English group gave a relatively high rating to the Mesolect BSAE speaker. Even though they do not show the same distinct preference for this accent that the Acrolect and Mesolect BSAE groups did, it cannot be concluded that they dislike the Mesolect BSAE accent to the extent that a person speaking with this accent would be disadvantaged in a job interview.

The Basilect BSAE speaker (S9):

Accent makes a big contribution to the rating of this speaker (a correlation co-efficient of about 0.1). Of all the language groups, the Afrikaans English group has the lowest correlation co-efficient for this speaker. Accent has a negative impact on the rating of the speaker. The speaker (mean of 3.43) was rated much lower than the corresponding passage (mean of 3.82). Speaking with a Basilect BSAE accent may disadvantage you in this group's case. The Afrikaans English group is the only language group to show this much bias towards this accent.

The Respectable SAE speaker (S3):

With a correlation co-efficient of between 0.3 and 0.4, accent makes a bigger contribution to the final rating than content. Accent is still the bigger influence in determining the outcome of the ratings but less so than with the aforementioned speakers. Content has started to impact more on the final ratings. The Afrikaans English group gave the lowest rating (mean of 3.08) to the Respectable SAE speaker, i.e. of all the test speakers this one was given the lowest rating. The speaker was also given a lower mean than the corresponding passage (mean of 3.37). However, with a correlation value of 0.4, content contributes a significant amount to the final rating. It seems that the Afrikaans English group do not like the Respectable SAE accent as much as the Acrolect and Mesolect BSAE groups but it is difficult to say with any certainty that they have a strong dislike of this accent because the low rating may be attributed almost as much to content as to accent. Also, with a difference of 0.29 between the speaker and the passage mean, it can rather be said that the Afrikaans English group have a relatively neutral attitude towards this accent.

The Extreme SAE speaker (S5):

Accent makes a marginally greater contribution to the final rating of this speaker (a correlation co-efficient of between 0.4 and 0.5). Content plays almost as big a role in the final rating as does accent. Of all the language groups, the Afrikaans English group seems to be the least negative towards the Extreme SAE accent. Even though the speaker (3.40) is still rated lower than the passage (3.88), this group pays more attention to the

content when compared to the other language groups. However, with a 0.48 difference between the two means, it may be concluded that there is some dislike of the accent.

The Afrikaans English speaker (S8):

Accent makes the biggest contribution to the rating of the Afrikaans English speaker (a correlation co-efficient of 0.1). Be that as it may, the speaker mean (3.70) was marginally lower than the passage mean (3.72). Despite this, the Afrikaans English group still gave the highest overall rating to their own speaker. Also, the 0.02 difference in the mean shows that they identify quite strongly with their own accent.

The distracter speakers

Content played the most significant part in the rating of the distracter Mesolect BSAE (S4) and the distracter Respectable SAE (S7) speakers. Content made the biggest contribution to the rating of the Mesolect BSAE distracter (a correlation co-efficient of just over 0.7). Content contributed marginally less to the rating of the Respectable SAE distracter (a correlation co-efficient of just under 0.7). The distracter Respectable SAE speaker was given the lowest overall rating (mean of 2.49). Also, the speaker was given a lower rating than the passage (mean of 2.64). However, the drop in the speaker rating is marginal and due to the fact that the final rating is more due to content than to accent it cannot be concluded that the Afrikaans English group dislike the Respectable SAE accent.

The distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker was given a marginally higher rating (mean of 2.93) than the corresponding passage (mean of 2.91). The means for both the speaker and the passage are almost identical in this case. For this reason the Afrikaans English group do not seem to be particularly biased against the Mesolect BSAE accent. Possibly, this group likes the Mesolect BSAE accent slightly more than they do the Respectable SAE accent.

The distracter Afrikaans English speaker (S1) had a correlation co-efficient of 0.5. This means that accent and content made equal contributions to the final rating of this speaker. The speaker (mean of 2.93) had a lower rating than the corresponding passage (mean of

3.35). In this case, the speaker rating is significantly lower than the passage rating. For the previous two distracters the speaker and passage means were almost identical. It would appear that the Afrikaans English accent counts against this speaker. However, it is unlikely that they dislike the accent since they seemed to identify so strongly with their own accent when they rated the test speaker. It is likely, then, that the weaker rating of the speaker may be attributed to the weaker quality of content.

Preliminary conclusions (professionals – Afrikaans English group)

The Afrikaans English group has most of its correlation co-efficient values below 0.5, with the exception of the distracters Mesolect BSAE and Respectable SAE. These were the two weakest distracters by way of content. Again, the weaker the content the more important content becomes in the rating of the speaker. It is also noteworthy that the Afrikaans English group are stricter interviewers overall because they give lower means (as compared to the other language groups) to all the speakers.

This group identifies quite strongly with its own accent. Accent was the biggest contributing factor to the comparatively high mean given to the Afrikaans English speaker. Furthermore, this is the only language group to identify this strongly with its own accent.

Afrikaans English is the only accent that this group really likes. They show a marginal preference for Acrolect BSAE. However, it seems that the Afrikaans English group prefer the Mesolect BSAE accent over the Acrolect BSAE accent. In addition, they do not seem to mind the Respectable SAE accent but do not show the same preference for it as the Mesolect BSAE group did.

They show some dislike of the Extreme SAE accent but not as much as the other language groups. The Afrikaans English group is the only one to show some tolerance of this accent. The Basilect BSAE accent is, however, unacceptable and they show quite a bit of negative bias against this speaker.

The distracter speakers were rated in more or less the same way as all the other language groups. The weaker content of the distracters is unacceptable to this group of interviewers and the speakers are penalized, regardless of accent.

The mother-tongue English group:

Table 14 includes the passage rating, sound input rating and correlation co-efficient for the professional Mother-Tongue group.

Table 14: Passage rating, sound input rating and correlation score for Mother-Tongue English professionals

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P1/S1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.35 (0.41)	2.89 (0.25)	0.5
P2/S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.68 (0.38)	3.41 (0.43)	0.27
P3/S3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.37 (0.54)	3.27 (0.53)	0.67
P4/S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	2.91 (0.51)	2.39 (0.24)	0.73
P5/S5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.88 (0.58)	3.10 (0.29)	0.1
P6/S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.59 (0.44)	3.86 (0.58)	0.09
P7/S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.64 (0.29)	2.09 (0.57)	0.88
P8/S8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.72 (0.53)	3.95 (0.42)	0.21
P9/S9: Test Basi BSAE	3.82 (0.60)	3.63 (0.78)	0.33

The Acrolect BSAE speaker (S6):

Accent makes the biggest contribution to the rating of this speaker (a correlation co-efficient of 0.1). In this case, it seems that the mother-tongue English group shows a definite preference for the Acrolect BSAE accent. The speaker has a higher mean (3.86) than the passage (3.59) and the Acrolect BSAE speaker is given the second highest overall rating. This accent will definitely benefit a person if interviewed by mother-tongue English speakers.

The Mesolect BSAE speaker (S2):

The rating of this speaker may be attributed more to accent than to content (a correlation co-efficient of just under 0.3). Although content plays a bigger role than it does with the rating of the Acrolect BSAE speaker, it is far from becoming the dominant factor. For the Mesolect BSAE speaker there is a negative impact of accent. The speaker mean (3.41) is lower than the corresponding passage mean (3.68). Even though content is still a factor to consider when looking at the final rating of this speaker, accent still plays enough of a part to conclude that the Mesolect BSAE accent is not really liked by the mother-tongue English group. The mother-tongue English group is the only one of all the language groups to show this much dislike of the Mesolect BSAE accent.

The Basilect BSAE speaker (S9):

This speaker has a correlation co-efficient of just over 0.3. The mother-tongue English group shows a negative bias towards the Basilect BSAE accent. The speaker was given a lower mean (3.62) than the corresponding passage (3.82). However, they (along with the Acrolect BSAE group) seem to be the least biased towards the Basilect BSAE accent. The other two language groups (Mesolect BSAE and Afrikaans English) had lower correlation co-efficient values for this speaker. This indicates that accent played an even bigger part in the low ratings of the speaker by those two groups.

The Respectable SAE speaker (S3)

Interestingly, this is the only group where content contributed so much to the rating of the Respectable SAE speaker (a correlation co-efficient of about 0.7). All other language groups had a value of below 0.5 for this speaker. The speaker had a lower mean (3.27) than the passage (3.37). The lower rating of the speaker may be attributed to the weaker content because content makes a bigger contribution to the final rating. It is possible that the mother-tongue English group is neutral towards its own accent and for this reason paid more attention to content rather than accent. Due to the fact that this accent does not sound unusual to them in any way, they refrained from forming any particular preferences.

The Extreme SAE speaker (S5):

Accent is the biggest contributing factor to the rating of this speaker (a correlation value of 0.1). The mother-tongue English group shows a negative bias towards the Extreme SAE accent. The speaker was given a lower mean (3.10) than the corresponding passage (3.88). This group also gave the Extreme SAE speaker the lowest overall rating. Along with the Mesolect BSAE group, they like this accent the least.

The Afrikaans English speaker (S8):

With a correlation co-efficient of between 0.2 and 0.3, accent makes the biggest contribution to the rating of this speaker. For the Afrikaans English speaker this value seems to have a positive direction. The speaker had a higher mean (3.95) than the corresponding passage (3.72). Although content is still a factor in the rating of this speaker, accent plays a big enough part to conclude that the Afrikaans English accent is liked.

The distracter speakers:

The rating of the distracter Mesolect BSAE (S4) and the distracter Respectable SAE (S7) speakers may be attributed mostly to content. The distracter Respectable SAE speaker had the highest correlation co-efficient at 0.9. The distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker had a slightly lower correlation co-efficient at about 0.7. Both distracter speakers had a lower mean than the corresponding passages. However, the lower speaker rating is largely due to the weak quality of content and not necessarily due to dislike of accent.

The correlation co-efficient for the distracter Afrikaans English speaker (S1) is more ambiguous. With a value of 0.5, half of the rating is attributed to content and the other half to accent. This distracter had the best quality content but was still weaker than the test passages. The other two distracters were much weaker in the quality of their content and because of this content played a bigger role in the rating of these speakers. Accent plays a bigger role when the quality of content is better. In this case, the distracter Afrikaans English speaker was given a lower mean (2.89) than the corresponding passage (3.35). However, half of this lower rating may be due to content. Also, due to the

positive rating given to the test Afrikaans English speaker it is unlikely that the low rating given to the distracter Afrikaans English speaker is due to the dislike of accent.

Preliminary conclusions (professionals – mother-tongue English group)

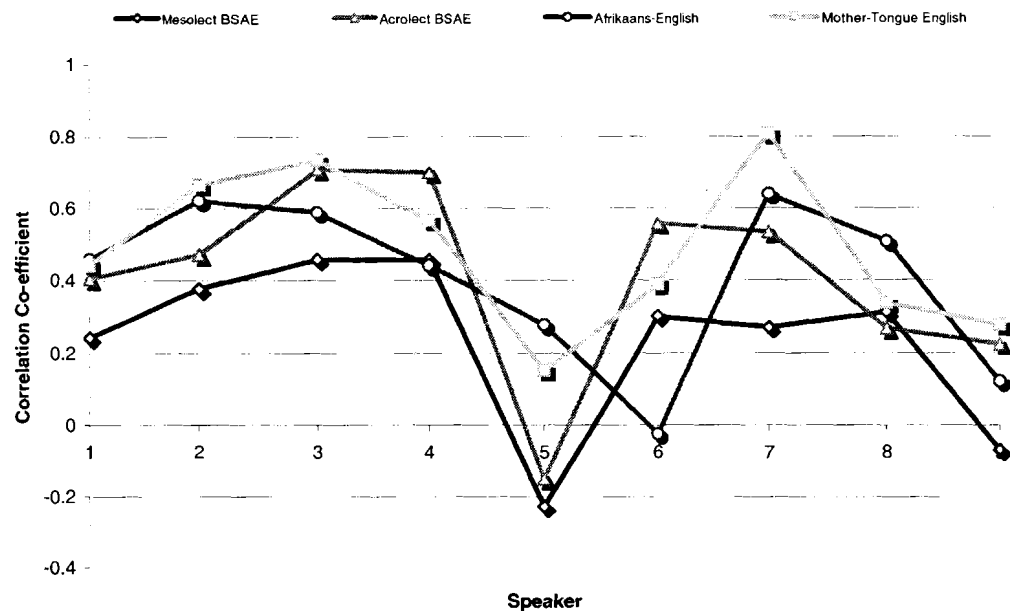
The mother-tongue English group really likes the Acrolect BSAE accent. They prefer the Acrolect BSAE speaker over their ‘own voice’ speaker. Although they are not necessarily negative towards their own accent, they do not show any definitive preference for their own accent over all other accents. In fact, they seem to like the Afrikaans English accent more than they like their own accent, i.e. the speaker had a higher mean and was rated more on accent than the Respectable SAE speaker.

The Mesolect BSAE accent is less acceptable to the mother-tongue English professionals. The Basilect BSAE accent is also unacceptable. They show the most negative bias towards the Extreme SAE speaker whose low overall rating may be attributed mostly to the accent.

They also paid attention to the lower quality content of the distracters. The lower the quality of content, the more attention they pay to it. Bad content influences the speaker rating negatively, regardless of accent.

4.2.3.2. Students

Graph 3: Separate language groups: Student group



The Mesolect BSAE group:

Table 15 includes the passage rating, sound input rating and the correlation co-efficient for the learner Mesolect BSAE group.

Table 15: Passage rating, sound input rating and correlation score for Mesolect BSAE students

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P1/S1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.42 (0.47)	3.73 (0.25)	0.23
P2/S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.66 (0.44)	3.87 (0.72)	0.39
P3/S3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.28 (0.69)	3.94 (0.94)	0.42
P4/S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	3.06 (0.48)	3.01 (0.65)	0.42
P5/S5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.91 (0.66)	3.21 (0.34)	-0.21

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P6/S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.60 (0.58)	3.95 (0.28)	0.3
P7/S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.62 (0.51)	3.19 (0.56)	0.29
P8/S8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.96 (0.65)	3.56 (0.63)	0.32
P9/S9: Test Basi BSAE	4.11 (0.63)	3.52 (0.51)	-0.08

The Acrolect BSAE speaker (S6):

With a correlation co-efficient of 0.3, the rating of this speaker is attributed more to accent than to content. The speaker mean (3.95) is higher than the corresponding passage mean (3.60), which indicates a positive impact of accent. The Mesolect BSAE students identify with the Acrolect BSAE accent because it probably represents socio-economic mobility. People who speak with this accent are associated with education, money and status.

The Mesolect BSAE speaker (S2):

This speaker has a correlation co-efficient of just under 0.4. Although accent is still the overriding factor, content must also be considered when looking at the final rating. There is a higher mean for the speaker (3.87) than for the corresponding passage (3.66). There is a positive influence of accent. The Mesolect BSAE students identify with their own accent to some extent, but it seems that even more preference is given to the Acrolect BSAE accent. They admire the Acrolect BSAE accent and this is quite possibly the accent that they strive to acquire.

The Basilect BSAE speaker (S9):

The Basilect BSAE accent is not liked. Accent is the biggest determining factor in the negative evaluation of this speaker (a correlation co-efficient of just under 0). Content made no contribution to the rating of the Basilect BSAE speaker. He was rated entirely on accent. The speaker had a much lower mean (3.52) than the corresponding passage (4.11). Of all the language groups among the students, the Mesolect BSAE group showed the strongest dislike of the Basilect BSAE accent. Although the content was of a

high quality (as can be seen from the high mean) the accent nullifies the good content completely. Thus it may be assumed that speaking with a Basilect BSAE accent in a job interview will severely disadvantage the candidate if he/she is interviewed by this group of interviewers.

The Respectable SAE speaker (S3):

The rating of the Respectable SAE speaker is attributed marginally more to accent than to content (a correlation co-efficient of between 0.4 and 0.5). Although accent is the dominant factor, content still contributes to almost half of the final rating. So in a manner of speaking, both accent and content play a part in determining the final rating. The speaker has a higher mean (3.94) than the corresponding passage (3.28) so there is a positive influence of accent. Although the Mesolect BSAE student group shows a slight preference for this accent it is not as marked as the preference shown by the Mesolect BSAE professional group. In the case of the student group, content plays a much bigger role in determining the positive rating of the speaker than it does with the professional group.

Previous studies (Smit, 1996; De Klerk & Bosch, 1993/1995; Van Rooyen 2000 and Gottschalk & Van Rooy 2001) show a much bigger preference for Respectable SAE on the part of Mesolect student respondents. In this case, the Mesolect student respondents prefer Acrolect BSAE over Respectable SAE. Acrolect BSAE, not Respectable SAE, is the accent that this group admires.

The Extreme SAE speaker (S5):

With a correlation co-efficient of slightly below -0.2 , accent is the only contributing factor to the final rating of this speaker. Content plays no part. The Extreme SAE accent has a very negative impact on the speaker's rating. The higher the quality of the content, the less the Mesolect BSAE students like this speaker's accent. It would appear that they do not believe that the Extreme SAE speaker can talk sense and therefore the more sense he talks the more they penalize him for it. The Extreme SAE speaker was given the lowest overall rating. Also, the speaker was given a lower mean (3.21) than the passage

(3.91). This group is very decisive in their dislike of this accent. This corresponds with the Mesolect BSAE professional group's negative rating.

The Afrikaans English speaker (S8):

The rating of this speaker may be attributed more to accent than to content (a correlation co-efficient of 0.3). There is a negative influence of accent. The speaker mean (3.56) was lower than the corresponding passage mean (3.96). The Mesolect BSAE students do not like this accent. A possible reason for this could be the association that this accent has with the oppression of apartheid. However, they do not show as strong a negative bias as they did with the Extreme SAE and the Basilect BSAE accent. This contradicts the findings of Cooper (1989).

The distracter speakers:

The Mesolect BSAE student group's rating of the distracter speakers is very interesting. Accent makes the biggest contribution to the ratings of all the distracters. They are the only language group to do this. For the other language groups, content made the bigger contribution to the rating, especially for the distracters Mesolect BSAE and Respectable SAE. For the other language groups, the weaker content clearly stood out. The Mesolect BSAE student group seems to be a very biased group of interviewers, paying attention to the accent even when the content is very weak.

The distracter Mesolect BSAE had a correlation co-efficient of between 0.4 and 0.5. Out of all the distracters, content played the biggest role for this one. The speaker (3.01) and corresponding passage (3.06) means were almost identical. Even though the speaker mean is marginally lower it is not enough to indicate a negative effect of accent.

The distracter Respectable SAE had a correlation co-efficient of about 0.3. Accent is still the major contributing factor to the final rating. Furthermore, the speaker (3.19) was given a higher rating than the corresponding passage (2.62). Because accent plays a bigger role than content, it is possible that the Mesolect BSAE student group like this accent, more so than the other language groups. However, it is difficult to determine

accent effects with any certainty with the distracters, because the influence of content cannot be ruled out.

The distracter Afrikaans English speaker had a correlation co-efficient of just over 0.2. Accent made the biggest contribution (out of all the distracters) to this speaker. The speaker (3.73) was given a higher rating than the corresponding passage (3.42). Surprisingly, the Mesolect BSAE student group gave a higher mean to the Afrikaans English distracter speaker than they gave to the Afrikaans English test speaker. This indicates, quite clearly, that they are immune to content because they do not register the weaker content of the distracter speaker in this case.

Preliminary conclusions (students – Mesolect BSAE group)

All the ratings of this group can be attributed more to accent than to content. All speakers had a value of below 0.5. This makes them a very subjective group of interviewers.

The Mesolect BSAE students show a strong preference for Acrolect BSAE. This seems to be their preferred accent. Although they like the Mesolect BSAE accent as well, they show more preference for the Acrolect BSAE accent. Acrolect BSAE is also preferred over Respectable SAE. This group shows a slight preference for the Respectable SAE accent, but it is not as significant a preference as shown in previous studies.

This group shows a slight negative bias against Afrikaans English. The Mesolect BSAE student group shows more bias towards Afrikaans English than the Mesolect BSAE professional group. Basilect BSAE and Extreme SAE are strongly disliked as well. Whereas the Mesolect BSAE professional group sympathized more with the Basilect BSAE speaker, the student group shows no such sympathy. In addition they show even less sympathy for the Extreme SAE speaker, whom they dislike even more than the Basilect BSAE speaker.

The distracters were all rated more on accent than on content. This contrasts with the Mesolect BSAE professional group who paid much more attention to the weak content of

the distracters than the Mesoelect BSAE students. Clearly, the students do not have the necessary expertise to distinguish between weaker and stronger content. This makes them an extremely 'dangerous' group of interviewers because they are so easily swayed by accent.

The Acrolect BSAE group:

Table 16 includes the passage rating, sound input rating and the correlation co-efficient for the learner Acrolect BSAE group.

Table 16: Passage rating, sound input rating and correlation score for Acrolect BSAE students

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P1/S1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.42 (0.47)	3.37 (0.70)	0.4
P2/S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.66 (0.44)	3.79 (0.76)	0.45
P3/S3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.28 (0.69)	3.56 (0.81)	0.7
P4/S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	3.06 (0.48)	2.67 (0.38)	0.7
P5/S5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.91 (0.66)	3.62 (0.78)	-0.18
P6/S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.60 (0.58)	3.81 (0.30)	0.58
P7/S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.62 (0.51)	2.58 (0.70)	0.56
P8/S8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.96 (0.65)	3.81 (0.42)	0.23
P9/S9: Test Basi BSAE	4.11 (0.63)	3.50 (0.73)	0.21

The Acrolect BSAE speaker (S6):

With a correlation co-efficient of between 0.5 and 0.6 it is relatively difficult to distinguish between the contribution of accent and content. Technically speaking, content makes a bigger contribution to the rating, but only marginally so. The Acrolect BSAE speaker has a higher mean (3.81) than the corresponding passage (3.60) which may indicate a preference for the accent but this preference is not exceptional because content makes a marginally bigger contribution to the final rating. Although the Acrolect

BSAE student group shows some preference for its own accent, this preference is not as marked as the preference shown for Acrolect BSAE by the Mesoelect BSAE student group.

The Mesoelect BSAE speaker (S2):

Accent plays a slightly bigger role in the rating of this speaker than it did with the Acrolect BSAE speaker (a correlation co-efficient of between 0.4 and 0.5). However, accent and content still make about equal contributions to the final rating. The Mesoelect BSAE speaker was given a higher mean (3.79) than the corresponding passage (3.66). This shows a slight preference for this accent.

The Basilect BSAE speaker (S9):

The Basilect BSAE accent has a negative impact on the rating of the speaker. With a correlation co-efficient of between 0.2 and 0.3, the rating may be attributed more to accent than to content. There is a negative influence of accent because the speaker had a lower mean (3.50) than the corresponding passage (4.11). Like the Mesoelect BSAE students, the Acrolect BSAE students do not like this accent.

The Respectable SAE speaker (S3):

Content plays a significant role in determining the final rating of this speaker (a correlation co-efficient of 0.7). Although the Respectable SAE speaker is given a higher mean (3.56) than the corresponding passage (3.28), this cannot really be attributed to accent alone because content plays a bigger role in determining the rating of this speaker. The Mesoelect BSAE student group shows more preference for Respectable SAE than the Acrolect BSAE student group.

The Extreme SAE speaker (S5):

This group does not like the Extreme SAE accent either. Accent is the biggest contributing factor to the rating of this speaker, i.e. correlation co-efficient value of just over -0.2. The speaker was given a lower mean (3.62) than the passage (3.91). This indicates the negative impact of accent on the rating of this speaker. As with the Mesoelect BSAE group the higher the quality of content, the lower they will rate the

speaker. The Acrolect BSAE group also cannot believe that a person with this accent can speak sense and therefore the more sense he talks the more they will penalize him.

The Afrikaans English speaker (S8):

The rating of the Afrikaans English speaker can be attributed to accent (a correlation coefficient of between 0.2 and 0.3). The speaker mean (3.81) was lower than the corresponding passage mean (3.96). This shows a negative impact of accent. It is not surprising to find a negative evaluation of the Afrikaans English accent because the Acrolect BSAE students might associate this accent with apartheid.

The distracter speakers:

The rating of the distracter Mesolect BSAE (S4) and Respectable SAE (S7) speakers may be attributed to content. The distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker had a correlation coefficient of 0.7, whereas the distracter Respectable SAE speaker had a correlation coefficient of just over 0.5. Content plays a much bigger role in the rating of the distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker than it does for the distracter Respectable SAE speaker. The distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker was given a lower mean (2.67) than the corresponding passage (3.06). However, the low speaker rating may be attributed to content rather than accent. With the distracter Respectable English speaker, content only contributes slightly more to the final rating than accent. In this case, the speaker mean (2.58) is marginally lower than the corresponding passage mean (2.62). This does not necessarily indicate a dislike of accent. Firstly, there is only a marginal drop in the speaker mean and secondly, content still plays enough of a role to have a negative influence on the speaker rating.

Accent makes a marginally bigger contribution to the final rating of the distracter Afrikaans English speaker (a correlation co-efficient of between 0.4 and 0.5). Accent and content make about equal contributions to the final rating of this speaker. The speaker was given a marginally lower rating (mean of 3.37) than the corresponding passage (mean of 3.42). However, this is not significant enough to assume a negative effect of accent. Furthermore, the drop in the speaker rating may also be attributed to the influence of content as much as the influence of accent.

Preliminary conclusions (students – Acrolect BSAE group)

They are positive towards Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE, showing slightly more preference for Mesolect BSAE over their own accent. They are not as positive towards Acrolect BSAE as the Mesolect BSAE professional group was. Furthermore, it is difficult to say whether this group likes the Respectable English accent, because content played such a big role in the final rating of this speaker. Be that as it may, they do not show any distinctive dislike of the Respectable SAE accent.

As with the Mesolect BSAE student group, this group also does not really like the Afrikaans English speaker. Basilect BSAE and Extreme SAE are the most stigmatized.

The Mesolect BSAE distracter was rated more on content, whereas the distracters Respectable SAE and Afrikaans English were rated on both content and accent (about equal proportions). They are maybe a little less biased than the Mesolect BSAE student group because they pay more attention to the content of the distracters. Weak content results in lower rating of the speakers. Weak content will count against you in an interview.

The Afrikaans-English group:

Table 17 includes the passage rating, sound input rating and the correlation co-efficient for the learner Afrikaans English group.

Table 17: Passage rating, sound input rating and correlation score for Afrikaans-English students

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P1/S1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.42 (0.47)	3.84 (0.49)	0.46
P2/S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.66 (0.44)	3.81 (0.38)	0.61
P3/S3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.28 (0.69)	3.81 (0.65)	0.59
P4/S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	3.06 (0.48)	2.97 (0.49)	0.42
P5/S5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.91 (0.66)	3.70 (0.68)	0.29

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P6/S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.60 (0.58)	3.93 (0.39)	0
P7/S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.62 (0.51)	3.12 (0.38)	0.62
P8/S8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.96 (0.65)	4.21 (0.37)	0.5
P9/S9: Test Basi BSAE	4.11 (0.63)	3.40 (0.45)	0.13

The Acrolect BSAE speaker (S6):

Accent makes the biggest contribution to the rating of the Acrolect BSAE speaker (a correlation co-efficient of 0). Accent has a positive impact on the speaker rating. The speaker mean (3.93) is higher than the corresponding passage mean (3.60). Of all the language groups, the Afrikaans-English group has the lowest correlation co-efficient value for the Acrolect BSAE speaker. When it comes to the Acrolect BSAE speaker, the Afrikaans student group is the one that pays the most attention to this speaker's accent. Because of the fact that the accent has a positive impact, the Afrikaans English student group shows the most preference for this accent out of all the language groups. The preference they give to this accent is surprising since it is one of the black accents. The Afrikaans English professionals did not show a preference for this accent. The professionals actually identified quite strongly with their own accent whereas the corresponding student group does not show this affinity with their own accent.

The Mesolect BSAE speaker (S2):

The rating of the Mesolect BSAE speaker is attributed more to content than to accent (a correlation co-efficient of just over 0.6). The speaker has a higher mean (3.81) than the corresponding passage (3.66). However, the higher speaker rating cannot be definitively attributed to accent in this case. Although accent makes a marginal contribution to the rating, content makes the bigger contribution. Thus, the higher speaker rating is probably due to the influence of content rather than accent. It is, however, possible that accent has a marginally positive impact on the rating of the speaker. The Afrikaans English student group shows much more preference for the Acrolect BSAE accent than it does for the Mesolect BSAE accent.

The Basilect BSAE speaker (S9):

With a correlation co-efficient of about 0.3, the rating of the Basilect BSAE speaker is attributed more to accent than to content. As with all the other language groups, the impact of accent is negative. The speaker had a lower mean (3.40) than the corresponding passage (4.11). In addition, the Afrikaans English student group gave the Basilect BSAE speaker the lowest rating (of all the test speakers). They clearly do not like this accent.

The Respectable SAE speaker (S3):

Content plays a bigger role in determining the rating of this speaker (a correlation co-efficient of just under 0.6). However, content only contributes marginally more to the final rating than accent. The Respectable SAE speaker had a higher mean (3.81) than the corresponding passage (3.28). Given that content makes the bigger contribution, accent only has a marginal positive influence on the rating of this speaker.

The Extreme SAE speaker (S5):

Accent is an important contributor to the negative rating of this speaker, however, not to the extent as it is for the other language groups. Of all the language groups, the Afrikaans English group has the highest correlation co-efficient for this speaker, i.e. this group pays the most attention to the content of this speaker (out of all the other language groups). The Extreme SAE speaker has a correlation co-efficient of about 0.3. The speaker had a lower mean (3.70) than the corresponding passage (3.91). Despite the negative impact of accent, the Afrikaans English student group seems to be more tolerant of the Extreme SAE accent. This corresponds with the ratings of the Afrikaans English professional group who are also more lenient in their rating of this speaker.

The Afrikaans English speaker (S8):

The 0.5 correlation co-efficient value for the Afrikaans English speaker is very interesting to note. Both accent and content make equal contributions to the rating of this speaker. The Afrikaans English student group gave the Afrikaans English speaker the

highest overall rating, with a mean of 4.21. The speaker mean was also higher than the corresponding passage mean (3.96). However, we cannot attribute that exclusively to them liking the accent because content plays such a big role here. The student group does not identify as strongly with their own accent as the professional group does.

The distracter speakers:

The rating of the distracter Respectable SAE speaker (S7) is attributed more to content than to accent (a correlation co-efficient of just over 0.6). The weak content is responsible for the low rating of the speaker. The distracter Respectable SAE speaker is, however, given a higher mean (3.12) than the passage (2.62). So even though this group pays attention to the content, there is still a slight preference for the accent.

The rating of the distracter Afrikaans English (S1) and the distracter Mesolect BSAE (S4) speakers may be attributed more to accent than to content, but only marginally so (a correlation co-efficient of between 0.4 and 0.5). The Afrikaans English distracter speaker had a higher mean (3.84) than the corresponding passage (3.42), which indicates a slight preference for the accent. However, the preference is by no means definitive as content still contributes to about half of the final rating. The Mesolect BSAE speaker, on the other hand, had a lower mean (2.73) than the corresponding passage (3.06). Again, the lower speaker score may be due to content as much as due to accent. It is not necessarily a case of disliking the accent.

Preliminary conclusions (students – Afrikaans English group)

This group shows a lot of preference for Acrolect BSAE, even more so than the two black groups. They much prefer the Acrolect BSAE accent over the Mesolect BSAE accent. There is only a marginal positive influence of the Respectable SAE accent, but not as definitive as shown by previous studies. As opposed to the Afrikaans English professional group, the students do not show a strong identification with their own accent. The students show only a marginal preference for their own accent.

The Basilect BSAE and Extreme SAE speakers had negative ratings. They do not like these two accents. However, they are more tolerant of the Extreme SAE accent than the other language groups.

This group does pay attention to the weak content of the distracters, especially the Respectable SAE distracter. Weak content counts against the speaker, regardless of accent.

The mother-tongue English group:

Table 18 includes the passage rating, sound input rating and the correlation co-efficient for the learner mother-tongue English group.

Table 18: Passage rating, sound input rating and correlation score for Mother-Tongue English students

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P1/S1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.42 (0.47)	3.64 (0.33)	0.42
P2/S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.66 (0.44)	4.04 (0.56)	0.63
P3/S3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.28 (0.69)	3.59 (0.42)	0.77
P4/S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	3.06 (0.48)	2.73 (0.55)	0.58
P5/S5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.91 (0.66)	3.77 (0.75)	0.18
P6/S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.60 (0.58)	3.77 (0.73)	0.39
P7/S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.62 (0.51)	2.70 (0.32)	0.8
P8/S8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.96 (0.65)	3.92 (0.30)	0.37
P9/S9: Test Basi BSAE	4.11 (0.63)	3.18 (0.58)	0.26

The Acrolect BSAE speaker (S6):

It is difficult to attribute the rating of the Acrolect BSAE speaker to either accent or content (a correlation co-efficient of 0.4). Accent only makes a marginally bigger contribution to the final rating. Although the speaker was given a higher mean (3.77) than the corresponding passage (3.60) it is difficult to attribute that mainly to the influence of accent because content makes almost just as much of a contribution. Thus, even though the mother-tongue English student group may show a slight preference for the Acrolect BSAE accent, it is by no means definitive enough to say that the accent would advantage a person in a job interview.

The Mesolect BSAE speaker (S2):

The rating of this speaker is more due to content than to accent (a correlation co-efficient of between 0.6 and 0.7). Interestingly, this was the speaker that the mother-tongue English group gave the highest overall rating to with a mean of 4.04. Also, the speaker rating was higher than the corresponding passage rating (3.66). However, the high rating of the speaker is due to the group's perceived quality of content and not necessarily due to the group's liking of the accent.

The Basilect BSAE speaker (S9):

Accent contributes more than content to the rating of the Basilect BSAE speaker (a correlation co-efficient of just under 0.3). The influence of accent is negative because the speaker had a much lower mean (3.18) than the corresponding passage (4.11). The mother-tongue English student group gave the lowest rating (of all the test speakers) to the Basilect BSAE speaker. They do not like this accent.

The Respectable SAE speaker (S3):

Content makes a significant contribution to the rating of this speaker (a correlation value of just over 0.7). The speaker mean (3.59) is higher than the corresponding passage mean (3.28), but because content plays such a big role in determining the final rating, the higher speaker mean cannot be attributed to accent. There is only a small positive influence of accent in this case. It is surprising that the mother-tongue English group do not identify more strongly with their own accent.

The Extreme SAE speaker (S5):

Accent contributes significantly to the rating of this speaker (a correlation co-efficient of between 0.1 and 0.2). The accent has a negative impact on the rating of the speaker. The speaker mean (3.77) is lower than the corresponding passage mean (3.91). They penalize this speaker for his accent, although not as much as the Mesolect BSAE and Acrolect BSAE student groups do.

The Afrikaans English speaker (S8):

With a correlation co-efficient of just over 0.3, accent makes the bigger contribution to the rating of this speaker. The influence of accent in this case is negative. The speaker has a marginally lower mean (3.92) than the corresponding passage (3.96). The drop in the speaker mean is very slight, so it cannot really be concluded that the mother-tongue English group dislike this accent. If they do dislike the accent, then it is very marginal and it will probably not impact strongly on an Afrikaans English speaking candidate's chances of employment.

The distracter speakers:

Content made the biggest contribution to the rating of the distracter Respectable SAE speaker (S7) with a correlation value of 0.8. The weak content of this speaker seems to stand out for the mother-tongue English group. Although the speaker had a higher mean (2.70) than the corresponding passage (2.62), the positive influence of accent in this case is only marginal.

The distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker had a correlation co-efficient of between 0.5 and 0.6 which means that accent and content make about equal contributions to the final rating. The speaker mean (2.73) was lower than the corresponding passage mean (3.06). This drop in the speaker rating, however, may be as much due to content as to accent so it is difficult to say with any certainty that the mother-tongue English group dislike the Mesolect BSAE accent.

The distracter Afrikaans English speaker had a correlation co-efficient of between 0.4 and 0.5. Accent makes a marginally bigger contribution to the final rating than content.

The speaker had a higher mean (3.64) than the corresponding passage (3.42). Again, the slight rise in the speaker rating may be as much due to content as it is due to accent.

Preliminary conclusions (students – mother-tongue English group)

Of all the language groups, the mother-tongue English group is the least influenced by accent in their ratings of the speakers. They do not really have any extremely low correlation co-efficient values. This would make them the most objective interviewers of all the groups.

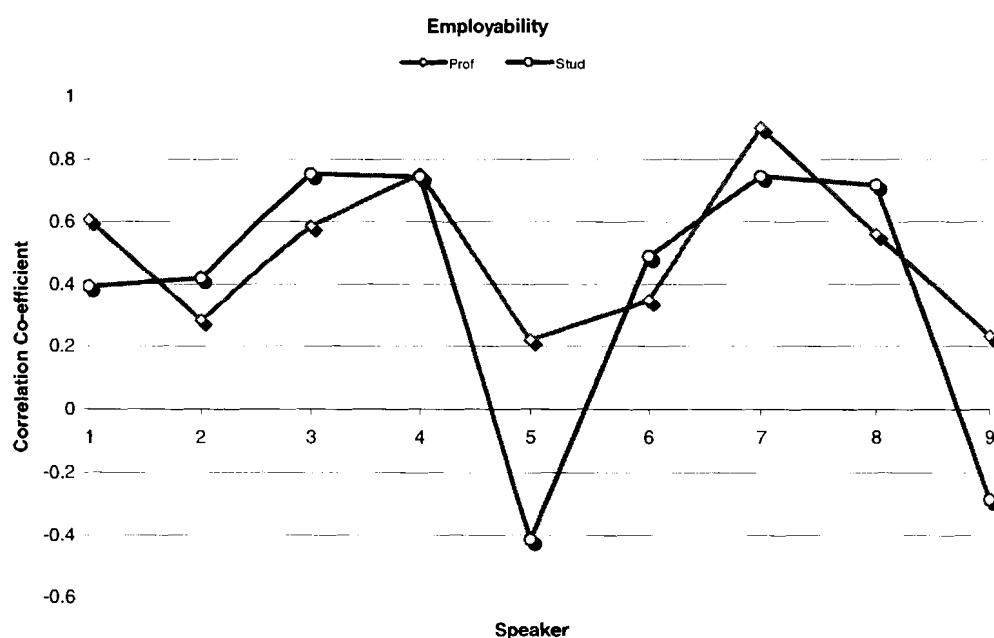
They do not show any strong preference for any of the accents, although show slight preferences for Acrolect BSAE, Mesolect BSAE and Respectable SAE. These preferences are, however, not as strong as some of the preferences shown by the other language groups in the student category. As with the mother-tongue English professional group, they do not show any strong preference for their own accent either. In fact, they seem to identify slightly more with the Acrolect BSAE accent rather than their own accent.

Furthermore, they indicated a slight dislike of the Afrikaans English accent as opposed to the mother-tongue English professional group who showed a slight preference for it. However, this negativity is marginal and is not really significant enough to warrant much attention. The mother-tongue English students are, however, more decisive in their dislike of the Basilect BSAE and Extreme SAE accents. They dislike the Basilect BSAE accent more than the Extreme SAE accent. They did not penalize the Extreme SAE speaker as much as the Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE student groups did. This group is aware of the weaker content of the distracters, particularly for the Mesolect BSAE and Respectable SAE distracters. The weaker content of the distracters impacted negatively on the speakers, regardless of accent.

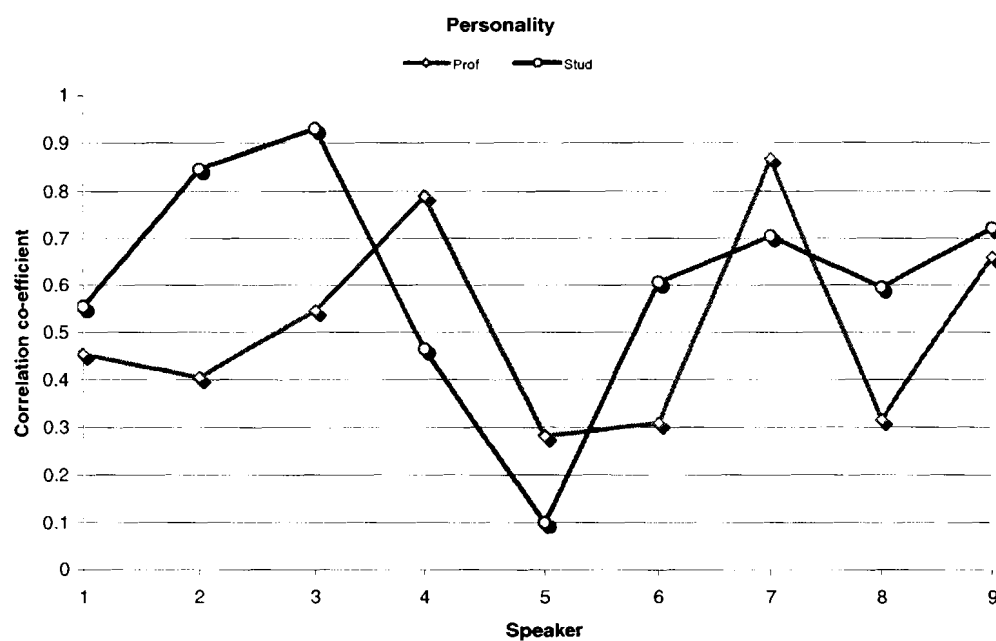
4.2.4. Correlation of passage rating and sound-input rating – employability and personality categories

Graphs 4 and 5 indicate the relative contribution of content versus other possible factors (of which accent is a significant one) for the student and professional groups for the separate categories of employability and personality. The employability section of the questionnaire aimed to test the perceived ability of the candidate's ability to perform the job, whereas the personality section of the questionnaire aimed to test the perceived 'likeability' of the candidate. A correlation co-efficient of greater than 0.5 is an indication that content contributed more to the final rating of the speaker than accent (and other factors). A correlation co-efficient of less than 0.5 is an indication that accent (and other factors) contributed more to the final rating of the speaker than content.

Graph 4: Employability: Professional group and student group



Graph 5: Personality: Professional group and student group



4.2.4.1. Professionals

Table 19 includes the passage rating, sound input rating and the correlation co-efficient for the employability category – professionals.

Table 19: Passage rating, sound input rating and correlation score for employability category - professionals

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P1/S1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.25 (0.57)	3.05 (0.59)	0.6
P2/S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.67 (0.43)	3.80 (0.50)	0.28
P3/S3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.35 (0.63)	3.42 (0.64)	0.59
P4/S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	2.61 (0.67)	2.13 (0.40)	0.78
P5/S5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.87 (0.52)	3.53 (0.55)	0.21
P6/S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.64 (0.40)	3.76 (0.48)	0.33

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P7/S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.29 (0.44)	1.97 (0.57)	0.9
P8/S8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.79 (0.62)	3.91 (0.48)	0.58
P9/S9: Test Basi BSAE	3.91 (0.62)	3.49 (0.70)	0.22

Table 20 includes the passage rating, sound input rating and the correlation co-efficient for the personality category – professionals.

Table 20: Passage rating, sound input rating and correlation score for personality category - professionals

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P1/S1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.45 (0.39)	3.42 (0.33)	0.45
P2/S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.69 (0.43)	3.89 (0.51)	0.4
P3/S3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.40 (0.51)	3.64 (0.57)	0.54
P4/S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	3.23 (0.45)	3.26 (0.28)	0.79
P5/S5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.89 (0.71)	3.60 (0.40)	0.28
P6/S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.54 (0.58)	3.98 (0.51)	0.3
P7/S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	3.00 (0.32)	3.08 (0.55)	0.88
P8/S8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.65 (0.51)	4.03 (0.42)	0.31
P9/S9: Test Basi BSAE	3.72 (0.65)	3.87 (0.53)	0.66

For the employability category, accent makes the biggest contribution to the Extreme SAE speaker with a correlation value of just over 0.2. The Extreme SAE speaker had a lower mean (3.53) than the corresponding passage (3.87). Accent has a negative influence on the rating of this speaker. Accent will disadvantage him in an interview because it creates a negative perception of the speaker's ability to perform the job adequately.

For the personality category, however, the Extreme SAE speaker is rated slightly more on content than was the case for the employability category (a correlation value of just under 0.3). Accent plays a bigger role when evaluating the employability of this speaker than it does when rating the personality of this speaker. This shows bias on the part of the professional group because they should pay more attention to the content when evaluating this speaker's employment potential. The professional respondents give an overall higher mean for the personality category than they do for the employability category. The professionals are much stricter in their rating of the employability of a speaker than they are with the personality of the speaker. Be that as it may, there is still a negative influence of accent on the rating of the Extreme SAE speaker's personality. The speaker had a lower mean (3.60) than the corresponding passage (3.89) for the personality category. Suffice to say that the professional group's 'liking' of the Extreme SAE speaker is also negatively affected by the accent.

The Basilect BSAE speaker has a correlation value of just over 0.2 for the employability category. Accent also makes a significant contribution to the final rating of this speaker's employability. As with the Extreme SAE speaker there is a negative influence of accent on the perceived employability of the Basilect BSAE speaker. The speaker (3.49) had a lower mean than the passage (3.91). As far as employability is concerned this accent disadvantages the speaker.

The professional group is less strict in their rating of the Basilect BSAE speaker's personality giving a mean of 3.87. However, the higher mean in this case is attributed more to content than to accent because this speaker had a correlation of almost 0.7 for the personality category. As with the Extreme SAE speaker, content plays a bigger role when rating a speaker's personality. Accent makes a bigger impact when evaluating the speaker's ability to do the job at hand.

The Mesolect BSAE speaker's employability rating can be attributed more to accent than to content (correlation value of about 0.3). In this case, accent has a positive influence on the rating. The speaker mean (3.80) was higher than the passage mean (3.67) for the

employability category. Speaking with a Mesolect BSAE accent in an interview will be to the speaker's advantage.

When evaluating the personality of the Mesolect BSAE speaker, content plays a slightly bigger role (a correlation value of 0.4). The direction of influence is still positive.

The professional group also shows a preference for the Acrolect BSAE accent. Accent is the biggest contributing factor in the employability rating with a correlation value of between 0.3 and 0.4. The direction of influence is positive. The speaker's employability mean (3.76) is higher than the corresponding passage employability rating (3.64).

The personality of the Acrolect BSAE speaker was rated slightly more on accent than was the speaker's employability (a correlation value of 0.3). Accent contributed to their 'liking' of this speaker.

Content plays a big role in the evaluation of the three distracter speakers for both the employability and the personality ratings. The distracter Respectable SAE speaker had the highest correlation value for the employability and personality categories (0.9 for both categories). The low rating of this speaker is thus due to the weak content. The distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker had a correlation value of approximately 0.8 for both the employability and personality categories. The low rating of this speaker may also be attributed more to content than to accent. The correlation values for the distracter Afrikaans English speaker are slightly lower. The employability rating had a correlation value of 0.6 whereas the personality rating had a correlation value of between 0.5 and 0.6. The lower correlation values indicate that content plays a lesser role than it did with the other two distracters. The Afrikaans English distracter was of a higher quality so it follows that the better the content the less attention is paid to it.

For the employability category, the Respectable SAE and Afrikaans English speakers have approximately the same correlation value (between 0.5 and 0.6). Content is marginally more important when rating these speakers' employability, but accent still plays a role as well. In both cases accent has a marginally positive effect because the mean for the speaker is higher than the passage. The Respectable SAE speaker had a

mean of 3.42 and the corresponding passage had a mean of 3.35. The Afrikaans English speaker had a mean of 3.91 and the corresponding passage had a mean of 3.79. Speaking with a Respectable SAE accent or an Afrikaans English accent, may help your chances of employment, but only slightly.

For the personality categories, the Respectable SAE and the Afrikaans English speakers had different correlation values. The Respectable SAE speaker had a correlation value of between 0.5 and 0.6 whereas the Afrikaans English speaker had a correlation value of just over 0.3. The personality of the Respectable SAE speaker is thus rated more on content and the personality of the Afrikaans English speaker is rated more on accent. In both cases the speaker had a higher personality rating than the corresponding passage. However, in the case of the Afrikaans English speaker this positive influence may be attributed to accent whereas with the Respectable SAE speaker it is attributed more to content. The professional group's 'liking' of the Afrikaans English speaker may be attributed to his accent whereas this is not the case with the Respectable SAE speaker.

4.2.4.2. Students

Table 21 includes the passage rating, sound input rating and the correlation co-efficient for the employability category – students.

Table 21: Passage rating, sound input rating and correlation score for employability category - students

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P1/S1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.20 (0.65)	3.61 (0.49)	0.4
P2/S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.66 (0.58)	3.98 (0.53)	0.41
P3/S3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.19 (0.89)	3.73 (0.79)	0.77
P4/S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	2.89 (0.58)	2.61 (0.65)	0.77
P5/S5: Test Extr.-Eng.	4.05 (0.64)	3.60 (0.70)	-0.4
P6/S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.58 (0.70)	3.85 (0.50)	0.5

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P7/S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	2.38 (0.59)	2.67 (0.70)	0.76
P8/S8: Test Afr.-Eng.	4.00 (0.78)	3.88 (0.59)	0.73
P9/S9: Test Basi BSAE	4.17 (0.73)	3.42 (0.64)	-0.3

Table 22 includes the passage rating, sound input rating and the correlation co-efficient for the personality category - students.

Table 22: Passage rating, sound input rating and correlation score for personality category - students

<i>Passages/Speakers</i>	<i>Passage rating</i>	<i>Sound input rating</i>	<i>Correlation co-efficient</i>
P1/S1: Distr. Afr.-Eng.	3.66 (0.39)	3.68 (0.60)	0.55
P2/S2: Test Meso BSAE	3.67 (0.33)	3.78 (0.76)	0.85
P3/S3: Test Resp.-Eng.	3.37 (0.53)	3.72 (0.67)	0.92
P4/S4: Distr. Meso BSAE	3.24 (0.42)	3.10 (0.43)	0.47
P5/S5: Test Extr.-Eng.	3.75 (1.04)	3.55 (0.64)	0.1
P6/S6: Test Acro BSAE	3.62 (0.54)	3.88 (0.46)	0.6
P7/S7: Distr. Resp.-Eng.	3.04 (0.84)	3.15 (0.51)	0.7
P8/S8: Test Afr.-Eng.	3.93 (0.61)	3.87 (0.46)	0.6
P9/S9: Test Basi BSAE	4.05 (0.59)	3.38 (0.51)	0.71

Accent is the biggest contributing factor to the employability rating of the Extreme SAE and the Basilect BSAE speakers. The Extreme SAE speaker had a correlation value of – 0.4 whereas the Basilect BSAE speaker had a correlation value of –0.3. In both cases the influence of accent is negative because both speakers had a lower employability mean than the corresponding passage mean. As with the professional group, the student group will severely penalize these speakers on their employment potential.

It is interesting to note that the student group gave lower means for the personality category than the professional group did. The professionals are stricter in their rating of employability whereas the students are stricter in their rating of the personality of the speaker. The students seem to strongly dislike the Extreme SAE speaker. For the personality category the Extreme SAE speaker had a correlation value of 0.1 so accent is the main determining factor in the low personality rating given to this speaker. On the other hand, the low personality rating given to Basilect BSAE speaker is more due to content than to accent (a correlation value of just over 0.7). Whereas accent disadvantaged this speaker in his employability rating, accent does not really disadvantage him in his personality rating.

The test Mesolect BSAE and the distracter Afrikaans English had a correlation value of just over 0.4 for the employability category. Accent makes a bigger contribution to the employability rating of these two speakers. In both cases the speakers had a higher mean than the corresponding passage. Accent thus contributes to the higher rating of the speakers and it follows that the students show a preference for these two accents.

The personality rating, however, may be attributed more to content than to accent. The distracter Afrikaans speaker had a correlation of between 0.5 and 0.6 and the Mesolect BSAE speaker had a correlation value of between 0.8 and 0.9. There is a big difference between the correlation values (for employability and personality) for the Mesolect BSAE speaker. Accent plays a much bigger role in determining the Mesolect BSAE speaker's employability than it does with determining his personality. The personality rating for this speaker is attributed to content rather than to accent. In this case there is a positive direction because the speaker's personality rating was higher than the corresponding passage rating. However, they like the speaker's personality because of the content not necessarily because of the accent. The distracter Afrikaans English speaker's personality rating is slightly more ambiguous because almost equal amounts of content and accent contribute to the final rating. There is a positive direction because the speaker's personality rating was higher than the corresponding passage rating. Accent plays a bigger role in the student group's liking of the distracter Afrikaans speaker's personality than it does with the Mesolect BSAE speaker.

For the employability category, the Acrolect BSAE speaker had a correlation value of 0.5. The rating of this speaker is attributed to equal amounts of content and equal amounts of accent. There is a positive influence of accent because the speaker's employability is rated higher than the corresponding passage employability rating. As with the Mesolect BSAE speaker, the Acrolect BSAE accent seems to count in the candidate's favour as far as his perceived employability is concerned.

For the personality category, the Acrolect BSAE speaker had a higher correlation value of 0.6. Content plays a slightly bigger role in his personality rating. The influence of content is positive because the speaker had a higher mean than the corresponding passage. However, accent still contributes to the final rating albeit slightly less than the content.

The Respectable SAE, distracter Mesolect BSAE, distracter Respectable SAE and Afrikaans English speakers all had approximately the same correlation value for the employability rating, i.e. between 0.7 and 0.8. The employability rating of these speakers is significantly more due to content than it is to accent. For the Respectable SAE (correlation value of between 0.9 and 1), distracter Respectable SAE (correlation value of 0.7) and Afrikaans English (correlation value of 0.6) speakers the personality rating may also be attributed more to content than to accent. However, the distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker's (correlation value of almost 0.5) personality rating is attributed more to accent than to content.

For the Respectable SAE speaker there is a positive influence of content on his employability rating. The speaker's employability was rated higher than the passage. However, this positive influence is mainly due to content and not accent. Speaking with a Respectable SAE accent in an interview will not necessarily increase your chances of employment substantially with this group of students. The higher mean given to the personality rating of this speaker is mostly due to content with accent only playing a very slight role. Their higher rating cannot really be attributed to accent. They do not 'like' this speaker because of his accent but rather because of what he says.

For the Afrikaans English speaker there is a negative influence because the speaker's employability mean is lower than the corresponding passage mean. Although the lower speaker rating is mainly due to content it could be the case that the marginal influence of accent is nevertheless negative. Speaking with an Afrikaans English accent may count against you in an interview. There is also a negative influence for the personality rating of this speaker. The speaker personality rating was lower than that of the corresponding passage. Although content is still the overriding factor in determining this negative influence, accent nevertheless still comes into play, i.e. slightly less than half of the contribution to the final rating. The student group shows an aversion to this accent.

The distracter Mesolect BSAE speaker is also given a lower mean for employability than the corresponding passage. The lower rating of the speaker is more due to content than accent. This speaker's content was of a significantly lower quality so it is not surprising to find that the content has penalized this speaker's chances of employment. Despite this there is a positive influence when looking at the speaker's personality rating and this positive influence is more due to accent than to content, so the student group 'like' this speaker because of his accent.

On the other hand, the distracter Respectable SAE speaker's employability rating was higher than the passage, even though this speaker had the weakest overall quality of content. It seems that the small role played by accent may actually have had a positive effect on this speaker's employability rating. This speaker's personality rating was also higher than the corresponding passage. Again, the higher rating given to the speaker's personality is more due to content than it is to accent. Be that as it may, the student group does show some preference for this accent but not as much as they show towards the Mesolect BSAE and Acrolect BSAE accents.

Preliminary conclusions (Professional group)

The professionals are stricter when it comes to judging the employability of a speaker. The means for the employability category were lower than for the personality category. Therefore, they might still 'like' a speaker even though they would not necessarily employ him. Be that as it may, accent plays a significant role in the ratings for both the employability and the personality categories, especially for the test speakers. This makes the professionals a subjective group of interviewers, especially when it comes to assessing a candidate's employability potential.

For the professionals only the test Respectable SAE and the test Afrikaans English speakers' employability rating came down to content and even then accent still plays quite a significant role, i.e. the correlation co-efficients were still fairly low. The employability potential of the distracter speakers, on the other hand, were rated more on content than on accent. Thus, the weaker the content the more important it becomes, but as the quality of content improves, the professionals start paying more attention to accent.

Accent also plays a significant part in determining the ratings in the personality category, although content comes into play slightly more than it did with the employability category, i.e. the correlation co-efficients are slightly higher. Therefore, their more lenient evaluation of a speaker's personality is possibly more due to the positive influence of content rather than the positive influence of accent. This is especially the case with the accents that are disliked, i.e. Extreme SAE and Basilect BSAE, where the rise in mean is attributed more to content than to accent.

Preliminary conclusions (student group)

Overall, the students were more lenient in their employability ratings (higher means) than they were in their personality ratings (lower means). It is possible that their lack of experience and training in evaluating the employability of a candidate caused them to be more lenient in their employability ratings. Be that as it may, their employability ratings may also be attributed more to accent than to content. Content only played a bigger role with the test Respectable SAE and test Afrikaans English speakers. As with the

professionals, the students show quite a bit of bias when evaluating someone's employability potential, choosing to pay more attention to accent than to content.

The students pay much more attention to content when it comes to evaluating the personality of a speaker. Overall, their personality ratings may be attributed more to content than to accent, i.e. higher correlation co-efficients. Only the Extreme SAE speaker's personality rating was more due to accent than to content. This shows that if the students strongly dislike an accent then they will also dislike the person because of the accent.

4.3. CONCLUSION

Evidently, the Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE accents are no longer as stigmatized as they once were. Previous research (which looked at attitudes towards BSAE as a whole, without distinguishing clearly between the different varieties) showed a negative bias towards BSAE (Lanham, 1985; Gough, 1996 and Verhoef & Smit, 2000). However, in this study, both the students and the professionals show a distinct liking of the Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE accents. The attitudes towards Acrolect BSAE are slightly more positive than the attitudes towards Mesolect BSAE. Although, the mother-tongue English professionals showed a slight disliking of the Mesolect BSAE speaker, all other language groups (in both the professional and student groups) showed a positive attitude towards Mesolect BSAE. Overall, then, both these accents are seen in a positive light.

The Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE professionals showed a definite preference for the Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE accents. Seemingly, the Mesolect BSAE professionals identify more with the Acrolect BSAE accent, whereas the Acrolect BSAE professionals identify more with the Mesolect BSAE accent. It is possible that the Acrolect BSAE respondents associate a Mesolect BSAE speaker with a lower managerial position (like a Cinema Manager) and that they associate Acrolect BSAE speakers with higher managerial positions.

The mother-tongue English professionals also showed a very positive attitude towards the Acrolect BSAE accent. Even the Afrikaans English professionals perceived the two

black accents as positive, although they still prefer their own accent, i.e. Afrikaans English, over the two black accents. The two black accents also seem to be the preferred accents of the students. All four student language groups showed a definite preference for Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE over the other accents. Even the Afrikaans English student group identified more with the black accents than they did with their own accent.

Attitudes towards the Respectable SAE accent are not as positive as the attitudes towards Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE. Although the professionals and students do not dislike this accent, they do not show the overwhelming preference for it that was shown in previous research. The only group to show a more definite preference for Respectable SAE was the Mesolect BSAE professional group. Even then, they still preferred the Acrolect BSAE accent over the Respectable SAE accent. Surprisingly, the professionals show a more positive attitude towards Respectable SAE than the students.

Attitudes towards the Afrikaans English accent are more ambiguous. Some groups showed a slight preference for it whereas others showed a slight dislike of it. The two black professional groups showed more tolerance of the Afrikaans English accent than the two black student groups. Overall, the white professional respondents are more positive towards this accent. The Afrikaans English professionals seemed to identify quite strongly with their own accent. Furthermore, the mother-tongue English professionals seemed to show slightly more preference for the Afrikaans English accent than they did for their own accent. The Afrikaans English students did not show the same degree of identification with their own accent. They do not dislike the accent, but only show a slight preference for it. The mother-tongue English, Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE students showed a slight dislike of the Afrikaans English accent, but not to the extent that it would severely disadvantage an Afrikaans English speaker in an interview.

The Extreme SAE and the Basilect BSAE accents are definitely stigmatized, so much so that speaking with these accents will almost certainly disadvantage a candidate in an interview. Van Rooyen (2000) also shows that Acrolect BSAE and Mesolect BSAE are

preferred over Basilect BSAE. The Mesolect BSAE and mother-tongue English professionals are slightly more tolerant of the Basilect BSAE accent but not to the extent that it would not impact negatively on the speaker in an interview. The Acrolect BSAE and Afrikaans English professionals, on the other hand, are more tolerant of the Extreme SAE accent. However, this tolerance would not improve the candidate's chances in an interview.

The Mesolect BSAE, Acrolect BSAE and mother-tongue English students are all very biased against the Extreme SAE accent. They all dislike the Extreme SAE accent even more than they dislike the Basilect BSAE accent. The Afrikaans English students, however, show some tolerance of Extreme SAE but not so much that they would not penalize a speaker for it in an interview.

When considering the relative influence of content and accent it is important to note that content is an important contributing factor to the final rating of a speaker if it is of a poor quality. This is evident from the distracter ratings. The two weaker distracters, i.e. Mesolect BSAE and Respectable SAE, were all rated more on content than on accent. Furthermore, bad quality content will adversely affect the rating of the speaker. Therefore, if *what* you are saying is perceived as negative, then your accent (even if it is liked) is not going to significantly improve your rating. Accent (and preferences for particular accents) only comes into play when the quality of content is good.

Finally, the ratings for the employability and personality categories yield some differences. The professionals are stricter in their employability ratings, whereas the students are stricter in their personality ratings. Furthermore, accent played a bigger role in the rating of employability than it did for the rating of personality (for both the professional and the student groups). This is a very disturbing finding because, to ensure that the best person for the job is selected, content should make a much bigger contribution to the employability ratings than it does. This makes both groups more subjective when it comes to rating a candidate's employment potential.

Content plays a bigger role in the ratings for the personality category, especially for the students. It seems that they base their like/dislike of the speaker on what he says, more so than how he says it.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. CONCLUSIONS

Several conclusions may be drawn from the results:

Firstly, Mesolect BSAE does not act as a barrier to employment. On the contrary, both Acrolect and Mesolect BSAE received consistently high ratings from both the professionals and the students. Even though the attitudes towards Acrolect BSAE were slightly more positive, Mesolect BSAE will not act as a barrier to employment. Both the black and white respondents showed a positive attitude towards these two varieties of BSAE. For the black respondents this indicates a growing awareness of and pride in their own language variety. This corroborates the findings of Van Rooyen (2000), Verhoef and Smit (2000), De Klerk and Gough (2002) and Coetzee-Van Rooy and Van Rooy (2005).

The positive attitudes of the white groups also reflect their growing support of black speakers of English. Clearly, the integration of blacks and whites in universities and in the workplace has contributed to an attitude of mutual tolerance. Past prejudices, ingrained by the apartheid system, seem to be disappearing. It is nevertheless surprising to find that the white respondents (with the exception of the Afrikaans English professionals) identify more with the black varieties than they do with their own. It is possible that they are merely giving the 'socially desirable answer'. As there are many variables that mediate between attitude and behaviour of which subjective norms influencing a person's perception of social pressures is one (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), it is possible that the whites (especially the professionals) are influenced by fears of appearing prejudiced.

Due to the fact that language attitudes are often a reflection of broader socio-political beliefs and values it may be assumed that the positive attitudes towards the Acrolect and Mesolect BSAE varieties (shown by both the white and black respondents) are indicative of the broader socio-political shifts that have taken place in South Africa over the past ten years. These socio-political changes have contributed to breaking down many of the stigmas and stereotypes associated with blacks and by implication BSAE.

The general climate of democracy and mutual tolerance has no doubt contributed much to the rising status of BSAE. Affirmative action has given blacks unprecedented access to all job levels in the labour market. Thus, over the past ten years, more blacks have had access to higher-level positions than ever before. This practice seems to have eliminated some of the negative stereotypes associated with blacks as low-level, unskilled and uneducated workers. In eliminating these stereotypes, some of the stereotypes associated with BSAE as a non-standard variety have also been eliminated. The fears that changing the labour legislation would only change things on the surface were unfounded. The existing labour legislation has done much to change socio-political attitudes and by implication the legislation has done much to change underlying prejudices and stereotypes as well.

Secondly, Respectable SAE (or standard English) has also lost its hegemony as the only acceptable variety of English. Although it is by no means unpopular, the accent typically associated with standard English is also not the only preferred variety as was previously thought (Titlestad, 1996 and Honey, 1997). Surprisingly, the professionals showed only slightly more preference for standard English than the students. This may be because the professionals are part of the 'older generation' where it was believed that standard English, and only standard English, is the accepted variety. With the students, who are part of the 'younger generation', this belief is changing. Previously, standard English was associated with education and upward socio-economic mobility. Non-standard varieties of English (especially BSAE) were regarded as barriers to socio-economic success. However, the findings of this study show that you do not have to speak standard English to get the job. Although English still has significant instrumental value, local varieties are now more acceptable. This corroborates the views of those who advocate the establishment of a more distinctive endonormative South African standard (Ndebele, 1987; Webb, 1996; Kachru, 1992; Schmied, 1991 and De Klerk, 1999).

Thirdly, it is important to note that this change in attitude is only extended to the Acrolect and Mesolect varieties of BSAE and not to the Basilect BSAE variety. The Basilect variety still has a stigma attached to it. It is likely that a person speaking Basilect BSAE is still stereotyped as being uneducated and unskilled. It is also possible that the Basilect

BSAE variety deviates too far from standard English. Thus, even though standard English is no longer the only acceptable variety, some adherence to it is still desired. It must also be remembered that Basilect BSAE deviates from the norm to the extent that it becomes unintelligible. If this is the case then the unintelligibility of the Basilect BSAE speaker also contributed to his low rating.

Several conclusions may also be drawn from the approach used in this study.

Firstly, it is important to consider the possible influence of using the same content for every speaker. In real-life situations, speakers do not have exactly the same content. Also, using the same content for every speaker could result in boredom on the part of the respondent, which would, in turn, influence the final ratings. When analyzing the relative influence of content and accent, content is the most important factor to consider when the quality of content is weak. However, if the quality of content is good, then accent is the most important factor to consider. Thus, if there are a number of candidates with content that is equally good, then accent may be the factor that determines whether or not the person gets the job.

Secondly, accent does not only play a role in determining the 'likability' of a person. It appears that accent plays a bigger role in evaluating a person's employment potential than it does when evaluating the 'likability' of a person. Accent is thus an important factor to consider when it comes to employment potential and selection practices, which, in turn affect access to the job market. The mere fact that accent is such an important factor in the job interview is disturbing because it shows the presence of indirect bias. Despite the fact that the professional interviewers all had experience and training they still showed significant bias when rating the speakers used in this study. Furthermore, the interviews held with the professional respondents showed that the majority of them believed the selection interview to be a reliable instrument. To most of them, Targeted Selection ensured the objectivity of the interviewer. However, the success of Targeted Selection depends on the extent to which the interviewer in question listens to the content of the candidate being interviewed. Clearly, as this study has shown, interviewers do not always listen to content when rating a person's employability potential. In this study,

accent was a bigger factor when rating the employability potential of a candidate. This makes the job interview dangerously subjective. Also, due to the fact that the majority of professional respondents believed the selection interview to be objective, it is entirely possible that they are not aware of their own prejudices.

Finally, a number of conclusions may be drawn when comparing the ratings of students and professionals. Both the students and the professionals show a distinct liking of Acrolect and Mesolect BSAE accents. The shift to a more positive attitude towards Acrolect and Mesolect BSAE is thus not limited to educational settings but has also taken place in the real-world setting of the employment arena.

The professionals showed more preference for Respectable SAE than the students. This is in contrast to previous research, where students show a definite preference for Respectable SAE. The professionals (both white and black) also had a more positive attitude towards Afrikaans English than the students. It seems that both the Afrikaans English and the Respectable SAE accents are less popular with students than it is with professionals. Both professionals and students showed a clear dislike of Basilect BSAE and Extreme SAE.

Surprisingly, the students also paid attention to the content as is shown by their overall lower rating of the distracter passages. It was initially assumed that students would pay much less attention to the content and much more attention to accent because they lacked the necessary training and experience in employment interviewing. However, the students were not as strict in their rating of the employability of the speakers as were the professionals. Both students and professionals showed a surprising amount of subjectivity due to the fact that accent played a bigger role than content when rating the employability of the speakers. Thus, the assumption that professionals are more objective in their assessment of potential candidates due to training and experience is unfounded.

5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The main focus of this study was on the affective and behavioural components of attitudes in that it tried to determine which attitudes are liked and which ones are disliked. However, the cognitive component (which consists of beliefs and values informed by both macro- and micro-environmental influences) is equally as important because it informs the affective and behavioural components of attitude. The cognitive component has not been the primary focus of previous attitude research, possibly because it would prove to be a very complicated process trying to locate the cognitive factors that contribute to the final overall attitude. It would thus be interesting to investigate the link between a person's cognitive framework and how this influences the overall attitude to any given accent. Possibly, a more qualitative approach would need to be employed to discern specific cognitive aspects that impact on the rating of accent.

It must be remembered that attitudes to accents are very difficult to measure reliably because it is so difficult to isolate both attitude and accent as variables. There is no simple link between attitude and behaviour as there are a number of personal and social variables that mediate between the two. It would prove beneficial to isolate and evaluate some of these social and personal variables that shape the resultant attitude behaviour. Furthermore, accent may prove to be more important when evaluating someone's employability than it is when evaluating someone's personality. Future research must take note of different roles played by accent in different contexts.

Finally, it is important to realize that the employment interview is, by nature, a very biased process that may adversely affect any given company's ability to hire the best person for the job. Given the findings of this study, it is recommended that companies make use of mixed interview panels in which people from different language groups are represented. Furthermore, companies should implement compulsory training for those conducting employment interviews. Training should also take place on a continuous basis and should stress the importance of paying attention to what the candidate is saying rather than how he/she is saying it. Training should also focus on drawing the interviewer's attention to his/her own attitudes and perceptions. If interviewers are made aware of their own prejudices then they can compensate for those in an interview.

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SUMMARY

South Africa recognises eleven official languages. Of those eleven, English is regarded as a *lingua franca* and as the language of business and education. For this reason, English is afforded significant status in South Africa (De Kadt, 1993; De Klerk & Bosch, 1993, 1995; Lazenby, 1996; De Klerk, 1997; Conradie, 1999 and Van Der Schyf & Wissing, 2000). However, the majority of speakers in this country are second language speakers of English. This has resulted in the emergence of a number of non-standard varieties of English. In light of this one must consider which English empowers.

The focus of this study was on the attitudes of Human Resources professionals and students (with no prior Human Resources training and experience) towards BSAE in an employment interview context. The main aim was to investigate the possibility of negative attitudes towards Mesolect BSAE and Basilect BSAE. Twenty Human Resources professionals and twenty students were asked to rate a variety of speakers. The Acrolect, Mesolect and Basilect BSAE accents were represented, along with the Afrikaans English, Extreme SAE and Respectable SAE accents. An additional twenty Human Resources professionals and twenty students were asked to rate the content of each of the passages read by the speakers so as to control for the possible influence of content on the ratings.

The results revealed that Acrolect and Mesolect BSAE are enjoying increased status among the whites and the blacks. They are no longer stigmatised and will not disadvantage a speaker in an employment interview. This corroborates the findings of De Klerk (1999); De Klerk and Gough (2002); Wade (1995); Van Rooyen (2000) and Coetzee-Van Rooy and Van Rooy (2005). Respectable SAE, although by no means disliked, has lost some of its hegemony. Clearly, it is no longer regarded as the only acceptable variety.

Results also showed that accent is an important influencing factor on the ratings of the speakers, especially if the quality of the content is good. If the quality of content is poor, however, then content is the more important influencing factor and in this case an accent (even if it is liked) will not help the candidate.

Finally, the results showed that there is significant bias involved in selection interviewing. When rating the candidate's employability potential, the respondents based their rating more on accent than they did on content. When rating the candidate's personality, the respondents based their rating more on content than on accent. It is unacceptable for accent to play such a large role in determining a candidate's employability potential. Technically speaking, respondents should have based their employability rating more on content than on accent, because it is content, not accent, that will give an indication of whether or not the candidate is the best person for the job.

APPENDIX I: JOB DESCRIPTION FOR CINEMA MANAGER

STER-KINEKOR

The entire job description for the position of Cinema Manager is included. The knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) used in the employability section of the questionnaire are highlighted.

DESIGNATION Cinema Manager INCUMBENT:	COMPILED BY: Sean Quinn
DIVISION: Ster-Kinekor Theatres	DESIGNATION OF: HR Consultant COMPILER
POSITION GRADING:	
REPORTING TO: Regional Manager	DATE COMPILED: Sept 2003
<u>PURPOSE OF THE FUNCTION</u> To manage the overall daily operation of the cinema thereby ensuring that all customers enjoy a glamorous experience and that their expectations are met or exceeded.	

PERSONAL SPECIFICATION

QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

Minimum : Grade 12

Preferable:

Reason :

WORKING EXPERIENCE

Minimum : Practical experience as a catering and box office cashier both with a CBMT pass as well as practical experience as a Ster-Kinekor supervisor with a CBMT pass. Will require formal on the job training for 3 to 6 months.

Reason : Able to interact with both staff and customers professionally, understand, monitor and manage all the functions relating to the effective and efficient running of the cinema complex and quickly become familiar with The Cinema Complex systems and procedures.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Skills

Interpersonal (building and maintaining relationships, cross cultural awareness)

Listening

Administration

Computer

Arithmetic

Verbal and written communication

Leadership

Management

Problem solving

Customer service

Technical

Business

Analytical

Motivational and mentoring

Organisational

Knowledge

Cash handling and control

Selling methods

Ticket issuing and control process

Hygiene and cleanliness

'Hands on' management

People management

Safety and security requirements

Team building

Stock control and ordering methods

Film presentation

Finance and costing

Change management

Career development

Marketing

HR requirements and legislation

Ster Kinekor products, services, systems and procedures

JOB DESCRIPTION

KEY RESULT AREA	TASK ANALYSIS	PERFORMANCE STANDARD
CUSTOMER SERVICE <u>Objective:</u> To ensure that the customer experiences friendly and efficient service and hospitality, thereby meeting or exceeding customer expectations.	<u>By:</u> Motivating and training of staff to implement "Service Excellence". Maintaining contact with customers by "managing by walking about". Maintaining safety/ security regulations.	 Fast moving queues. Friendly service. Fresh stock. Sufficient stock on hand. Staff aware of, and follow, all safety standard regulations.

STAFF MANAGEMENT

Objective:

To ensure that staff are equipped, trained and motivated to provide "Service Excellence" and a Glamorous Experience to customers.

By:

Interviewing, selecting and recruiting suitable applicants to fill vacancies.

Inducting and training new employees.

Conducting ongoing "on-the-job" training with all categories of employees.

Managing the performance of all employees.

Conducting disciplinary hearings.

Scheduling of staff duty rosters.

Promotions from within.

Low staff turnover.

All employees 100% competent.

All staff 100% competent in terms of vocational "CBMT" programmes.

Make sure that all staff agree, aware of and achieve objectives/ meet performance standards.

All staff encouraged to build on their strengths and tackle areas for improvement.

All staff who perform are given recognition and encouragement.

Non-performers counseled as per policy.

Disciplinary policy and procedures are adhered to.

Minimal appeals or referrals to Bargaining Council.
Cases referred to Bargaining Council are successfully defended.

Maximise effectiveness and customer service.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Objective:

To prepare and utilize financial information and productivity ratios to monitor and improve the cinema's performance. To provide information upon which important decisions can be made.

By:

Preparing budgets, forecasts and Capex.

Controlling actual income and expenditure against budget and forecast.

Monitoring daily and weekly targets for attendances, cents per person etc.

Preparing and submitting various reports/information as required by Regional Manager.

Budget and Capex submitted timeously and within the required parameters.

Key ratios maintained.

Income meets or exceeds Budget/
Forecast

Expenditure within Budget/ Forecast.

Budget or forecast targets and key ratios achieved.

Reports and information accurate, up to date and submitted timeously.

CASH AND ADMINISTRATION CONTROL

Objective:

To ensure that the correct procedures are followed when issuing, receiving, storing, recording of and accounting for monies received: thereby ensuring the safety and individual accountability for the safety of cash.

By:

Issuing cash floats and change to cashiers.

Completing random checks weekly on cashiers' floats.

Cashing-up cashiers at end of each shift.

Checking and making up daily cash-up and banking.

Completing regular house counts.

Handing over banking to security company guards.

Transmitting daily figures to head office.

Cash float counted and signed for in supervisor's presence.

Cash float signed for by cashier.

Any variances investigated and appropriate action taken.

In accordance with company Standard Operating Procedures.

Amount received entered on pay-in docket by cashier before money paid in.

Money and vouchers checked and signed for in the presence of cashiers.

Any variances noted and appropriate action taken if necessary.

100% accuracy.

Banked next working day.

Once per day.

Nil variances.

Receipt for money on hand.

Figures accurate and submitted timeously.

CATERING MANAGEMENT

Objective:

To ensure the required resources are in place and staff are equipped to meet or exceed customer's expectations with regard to refreshments and catering service.

By:

Assessing stock levels in main store and placing orders timeously from suppliers.

Receiving and checking stock on delivery.

Issuing stock to cashiers and capturing transfers onto system.

Monitoring all yields tests, e.g. Popcorn, coke and juice and ensuring that quality and recipe mix are correct.

Checking daily stock counts of cashiers and investigating any variances.

Taking stock of 5 items daily, as well as full stock checks as and when required.

Conducting stock takes on a regular basis.

Sufficient stock for day's performances.

Maximum of 14 days stock on hand.

Main store balances to computer.

Stock rotated – first in, first out.

Main store neat and tidy.

Main store balances to computer.

Any variances investigated and appropriate action taken.

Variances reported to Complex manager.

Appropriate action taken if necessary.

Variances reported to Complex manager.

Cashier's stock balances to computer.

Variances investigated and appropriate action taken if necessary.

Any variances investigated.

Trading Account printed timeously.¹⁷⁵

Figures and ratios accurate.

BOX OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Objective:

To ensure that tickets are effectively controlled and customer film / seating requirements are met in a systematic, professional and glamorous way.

By:

Preparing information for customers.

Controlling credit card transactions.

Re-instating tickets when necessary.

Controlling complimentary tickets.

Monitoring acceptance of gift vouchers.

Controlling issue of movie club and "over 60" packs.

Checking cleanliness of box office and surrounding areas.

Running time schedule on hand.

Info book updated and available.

Voucher signed by customer.

Cashier's name printed on voucher.

Reason for re-instatement written on ticket.

Ticket signed by manager and cashier.

Torn tickets to reflect customer's name and telephone number.

All vouchers must be cancelled.

Correct computer codes must be used.

Time of show and amount of sale must be written on voucher.

Gift vouchers processed at "block booking" price.

Used vouchers cancelled.

Stocks must balance to computer.

Floors clean and polished – no papers or dirt lying around.

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Walls clean and neat.

MARKETING

Objective:

To provide the necessary support in order to ensure that marketing initiatives are implemented effectively thereby ensuring that upcoming films get maximum exposure.

By:

Recommending weekly film allocations.

Assisting with preparation/implementation of weekly trailer list.

Assisting with developing, planning and implementing promotional action plans at complex level.

Assisting with implementing national and regional promotions at complex level.

Utilising all display/ promotional material.

Recommendations submitted timeously and accepted by Marketing Manager.

Trailer list received at Regional Office timeously.

Trailers screened to correct target market.

Trailer for each film screened within the 6-week window.

Action plans documented and submitted to Marketing Manager monthly.

Required promotions initiated as requested by Marketing Manager.

Displays placed in prominent positions.

As per action plans.

**FILM
PRESENTATION**

Objective:

To ensure that customers perceive and enjoy a perfect viewing experience at all performances, thereby meeting or exceeding their expectations.

By:

Checking programme content and film presentation regularly on all screens.

Ensuring that all projectionists and doorman check film presentation at every performance.

Monitoring film care and maintenance.

Maintaining all equipment, fixtures and fittings.

Perfect presentation at all performances.

Perfect presentation at all performances.

All films in good condition.

Corrective action taken if necessary.

Condition of complex building and equipment accepted by Regional Manager.

GENERAL

Objective:

To ensure the employee functions as a productive and flexible member of the team, thereby increasing the Cinema Complex's effectiveness.

By:

Adding value as a team member within the Cinema Complex by:

- ☐1 Performing any other which relates to business operation if required by management.
- ☐1 Actively participating and contributing in the necessary meetings.
- ☐2 Forming good and helpful working relationships with fellow staff.
- ☐2 Assisting fellow staff members as directed by management.
- ☐2 Performing any other functions as required by management

Preparedness to take on and satisfactory completion of these additional duties.

Positive feedback from customers, management and fellow staff members.

Relationships with internal and external parties are optimized, resulting in other parties being prepared to collaborate and assist when needed.

APPENDIX II: GENERIC COMPETENCIES OF JUNIOR MANAGER CROSS-REFERENCED TO TARGETED SELECTION GUIDE

The following core competencies relate directly to the competencies listed in the employability section of the questionnaire. A detailed explanation is given of each competency, followed by possible questions that may be asked to test for the respective competencies.

Core competency	Definition	Possible questions to test for the competency
Problem assessment	Securing relevant information and identifying key issues and relationships from a base of information; relating and comparing data from different sources; identifying cause-effect relationships.	Describe a complicated problem you had to deal with on your job. We can sometimes identify a small problem and fix it before it becomes a major problem. Give me an example of a time you were able to identify a small problem before it became a big one.
Judgement/problem-solving	Committing to an action after developing alternative courses of action that are based on logical assumptions and factual information and that take into consideration resources, constraints and organisational values.	Describe a problem you've recently been asked to solve. What did you do? What alternatives did you consider?

Communication	Expressing ideas effectively in individual and group situations (including non-verbal communication); adjusting language to the characteristics and needs of the audience.	This dimension is observable, i.e. from the manner in which the candidate answers the questions posed in the interview.
Coaching	Facilitating the development of others' knowledge and skills; providing timely feedback and guidance to help them reach their goals.	Describe a recent time you coached someone. Give an example of a situation in which you successfully reinforced the performance of someone who worked for you. Tell me about a time you provided feedback to someone after they performed poorly.
Quality orientation/attention to detail	Accomplishing tasks through concern for all areas involved, no matter how small; showing concern for all aspects of the job; accurately checking processes and tasks; maintaining watchfulness over a period of time.	Tell me about a time you found quality defects in work outputs. What was wrong? How did you notice it?

Teamwork/collaboration

Working effectively with team/work group or those outside the formal line of authority (peers, senior managers) to accomplish organisational goals; taking actions that respect the needs and contributions of others; contributing to and accepting the consensus; subordinating own objectives to the objectives of the organisation or team.

Interacting with others can be challenging at times. Have you ever had any difficulty getting along with peers/team members/others at work? Tell me about a specific time this happened. How did you handle the situation?

Technical/professional knowledge

Having achieved a satisfactory level of technical and professional skills/knowledge in job-related areas; keeping abreast of current developments and trends in area of expertise.

Describe a situation in which you were able to help out a peer or team member. What technical training have you received? Can you give me an example of how you have applied this training?

Even though we all try to be an expert in our area of work, it's impossible to know and understand everything. Tell me what aspect of your work/technical field you are still working to master.

APPENDIX III: SPEAKER PASSAGES

Speaker 1:

Distracter Passage 1 (Afrikaans-English)

Good morning everyone. My name is... and I am here to apply for the position of Cinema Manager. I finished matric in 1999 at Transvalia High School and spent the year after that travelling in America.

To pay for this trip I spent my standard nine and matric year working at my father's restaurant as a waiter. Unfortunately, this is the only real work experience I have but I think that I learnt a lot from this, especially about people and how different they all are. This is something I came across a lot while travelling in America.

The clientele at the restaurant were all very different. I quickly found out that you have to deal with everyone differently. For example the younger people are much more laid-back compared to the older ones and it was often easier to please them although they hardly ever left good tips. They didn't have much money I suppose.

I do think that I got some managerial experience from my father though. He has owned the restaurant for almost ten years and through the years I've gotten to know the ins-and-outs of his job. I've come to realise that it's not always easy keeping staff and clientele happy. I think the most important thing in this case is to treat people with respect and understanding, as your equals rather than your subordinates. We all have a job to do and it's a lot easier when everyone works together.

Anyway, your position sounds like something I would find both challenging and rewarding and I think I have the abilities to do it.

Speaker 2:

Test Passage 1 (Mesolect BSAE)

Hi, my name is... I completed matric in 1995. following this I worked as a cashier at the Pick n' Pay supermarket in Three Rivers until the end of 1996 when I was promoted to supervising cashier, a position that I've held until today. During this time I managed to study part-time through Intec College, taking subjects in accounting and management. Because I work with money I thought that some financial skills would help me do a better job. I got my diploma at the end of 1999.

Having worked in a cross-cultural environment I think that I am very good at accommodating the needs of others. I think of myself as a people person and have good human relations. In the past I have always tried to create a friendly and caring work environment because I think that people work better in this kind of situation. You can't always insist on results and productivity without building morale as well. And of course it is always important to build a sense of loyalty and team spirit, especially when you realise that the tasks need to be divided among the staff so that people can pull it together.

Although I must admit it was sometimes hard keeping everyone happy all of the time. I have realised that you can't always keep everyone happy. I've had to make some difficult decisions and I do not always like this responsibility. There was this one incident when there was this mix-up with the banking money. It always came up short. Naturally, no one could go home until the problem was sorted out. There were one or two that protested but I just insisted that they stay along with the rest of the cashiers. It would not have been fair otherwise. I've learnt that it doesn't take a lot of effort to be a difficult boss. This makes me a little sad. I've always wanted to be a person who handles everything with patience, understanding and respect.

Speaker 3:

Test Passage 2 (Resp. English)

Good morning, my name is... and I am a graduate of the Vaal Triangle Technikon where I received a diploma in Business Management. Following this I was unable to find a job so I was forced to do a number of odd jobs for almost two years. Mostly I did waitering jobs. Eventually I was given a job as a full-time waiter at Debonairs. I held this job for two years before they promoted me to supervisor last year.

I've been supervising for almost a year and have found it quite stressful at times, especially when it comes to dealing with difficult customers and suppliers. I remember a specific incident when one of our suppliers failed to deliver his goods on time. After numerous attempts to sort this out with the orders clerk and the manager, the situation did not improve. Eventually after weighing all my options and consulting with my manager, I made the decision to terminate our contract with this particular company. If the situation had continued in this way the restaurant could have run into serious shortages which would have jeopardised the quality of our service. The whole thing frustrated me though. This doesn't need to happen if everyone would just do their job and make a little effort at being organised. I'm a very organised person. I plan my work carefully so that every detail is handled in an orderly manner and each project is completed on time. It really bothers me when people's lack of planning puts me under pressure.

That is why I encourage my staff to work hard, be organised and to help each other out when the work load gets a bit much. If everyone pulls their weight the work will get done much quicker. This way everyone is happy and the overall atmosphere at work is more relaxed and friendly.

Speaker 4:

Distracter Passage 2 (Mesolect BSAE)

My name is... and I have just obtained my diploma in Marketing from the Vaal Triangle Technikon. Because I've been studying full-time for the past three years I have very little work experience. Two years ago I worked as a waiter for the Spur for six months to save up some money to go on holiday.

At the moment I am desperately looking for a job, and am willing to try almost anything. I thought about doing my B-Tech but decided against it because I am really sick of studying. I want to go out and get some work experience.

Although I have no managerial experience, I do consider myself a good leader. In standard nine I was invited to go on a leadership camp and this gave me some knowledge of what you need to be a good leader. I was also on the House Committee at the Technikon for three years running which helped me to develop some leadership skills as well.

I also enjoy interacting with people. I am an outgoing person and have a large circle of friends. At Technikon we did group work on a regular basis so I learnt to interact and work with people. But I must admit that I sometimes prefer to work on my own. It all depends on the situation. Sometimes I like doing things myself, and sometimes I enjoy delegating stuff to others. It all depends I suppose.

Speaker 5:

Test Passage 3 (Extreme SAE)

Hello, my name is... and I am a graduate of Wits Technikon where I completed a diploma in Management. While I was studying I worked part-time at Bump, a popular night-club in Johannesburg. I started off as a bartender to earn extra money as a student. When I finished studying I was promoted to assistant manager, a job which I have held for the last two years.

In this position I have obtained experience in supervising casual staff. I also handle some of the marketing for the club. The nightclub industry is very competitive and you have to keep up with the latest trends. This means that you have to keep in touch with our clientele and need to know what they want. The best way to do this for me, is to keep in touch with our casual workers because they are more in tune with what's trendy and what's not.

I have a very good relationship with my staff members although it was difficult for them to accept me as their supervisor at first because I was a little younger than the other managers they had. I think there was some initial resentment from their side. I decided to cope with this by taking a more co-operative approach encouraging them to give me feedback. This helped me to understand their needs a little better, although it is still difficult to keep them all happy, especially when you have to divide up their shifts equally. But I would rather put in the extra effort here because it is important to keep your staff happy otherwise their work quality deteriorates.

Speaker 6:

Test Passage 4 (Acrolect BSAE)

Hi ladies and gentlemen, my name is... and I have been working for the Emerald Casino in Vanderbijlpark for the past two years. I started working for them after I finished matric in 1996. Initially I worked on the gaming tables. In 1998 the casino offered to fund my further education by sending me to Damelin where I completed a course in management and accounting. Following this they employed me as supervising cashier putting me in charge of all the cash-ups and casual staff members.

In a casino you work long hours, often having to stay up until 4AM. It is easy to get tired and irritable under these circumstances. It is easy for tempers to flare up among the casual staff as they also work long hours and are quite often tired. They sometimes feel that each works harder than the other and that they don't get enough time to get their work done properly. It is so easy to make mistakes under these circumstances. I once had to deal with a cashier that was short over R1000-00 on her balance. This was quite a serious matter as the casino would have to carry the loss. I realised that I would need to be firm which is not always easy. I was careful to let her know that this was just a training session. I had no intention of firing her over this mistake, as terrible as it was. I just wanted to be certain that something like this would never happen again. Fortunately, this kind of thing has not happened again and I've realised the importance of open communication and constructive feedback. There is a lot of camaraderie between the staff members which I encourage. Everyone works well together and this makes their environment better.

Speaker 7:

Distracter Passage 3 (Respectable SAE)

Hello everyone, my name is... and I have just finished matric at General Smuts High School in Vereeniging. I originally wanted to study Business Management at university but didn't get exemption so I have decided to go and find a job in this line instead, which is quite scary because I've never had a job of any kind.

I still think that I have some good leadership qualities though. I was a prefect in matric and think that strict discipline is important. You wouldn't believe how difficult it is to maintain discipline in schools these days. The kids run wild. If I'd been the headmaster I would've been stricter. He was far too nice, preferring to speak and reason rather than discipline. I could never make any decisions on my own. No matter how small the issue everything had to be approved. In this job I'd like the authority to make decisions on those things that affect my job.

I also have good planning and organisational skills. In matric I organised a lot of events from sport to entertainment all of which went off without a hitch.

Speaker 8:

Test Passage 5 (Afrikaans-English)

Good morning everyone, my name is... and I have a diploma in management from Pretoria Technikon. After getting my diploma in 1996 I started working for Travel Tours in Vanderbijlpark as supervisor of the travel consultants. As my supervising and administrative duties started increasing I decided to do an accounting course through Damelin College. I think that this helped me a lot as far as the financial and administrative matters are concerned, although I enjoy working with people much more than with numbers.

In some ways it is not always easy but I think I handle the situation well. It's not easy handling so much responsibility, especially when you feel that you are not prepared for it and you just feel that all the work is being dumped on you.

Being a small company we all worked closely together and often have to put in extra hours, especially during peak season, which is mostly July and December. I try not to be too authoritative and prefer co-operation rather than conflict. A friendly atmosphere is always better than a tense one. If I do have a problem with one of my people then I would rather go and speak to them about it first to see if we could work things out. Not doing this would make matters worse and the chances of their work improving won't be great. Sometimes it's necessary to take disciplinary measures though. It's definitely not the favourite part of my job but if someone isn't pulling their weight it's necessary.

But I think that I am pretty good at handling a diverse group not only in terms of the staff that work under me but also in terms of the customers that come into the shop. These range across cultures and ages. It is very important to keep communication channels open, give regular feedback and encourage mutual respect.

Speaker 9:

Test Passage 6 (Basilect BSAE)

Hello everyone, my name is... I finished standard eight in 1987 after which I joined the army and did four years of military service. In the army I got the opportunity to further my education. I got my matric in 1991, having done business economics as a subject I became interested in business management, so after matric I did a three year diploma in management through Intec College. I finished this diploma course in 1995. When I left the army the next year I started working for Shoprite Checkers in Soweto as a supervisor, a job that I've held for the past four years. Being a supervisor meant that I also had to improve on my financial skills so my manager decided to provide some in-service training, teaching me some basic accounting skills.

The Checkers branch in Soweto is always very busy so I am very good at working under pressure. I have a lot of experience dealing with both customers and staff. In many ways they are both important to the company as a whole. Customers are important because they are often the ones that buy your product making sure that you continue making profits. You also need your staff to make sure that everything runs smoothly so that the customers can buy all the things that they need. Of course I must always see to it that there are enough products on the shelf. I also try to keep a variety of products on my shelf so that the customers have the freedom to pick and choose.

I have a very good relationship with all my workers. Because we come from similar backgrounds it is easy for me to relate to their way of life. Life can sometimes be very hard for them. That is why I try to encourage them to improve themselves in their work and in education. Training is a very important part of this. Once a month I'll hold a training session, teaching my staff how to improve their work performance. I've also organised for some of my workers to finish their schooling through correspondence. Shoprite Checkers has agreed to pay for this. I prefer to think of ourselves as a team and it is very important to support and encourage your workers.

APPENDIX IV: QUESTIONNAIRE

Respondent No:

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Thank you for participating in this study. Your co-operation is appreciated in this regard. We are investigating the current employment procedures and policies of personnel agencies and companies in the Vaal Triangle area and we require your responses in this regard. **Please remember that your confidentiality and anonymity will be ensured at all times.**

Please fill in the following questionnaire fully.

Personal particulars

- Age:

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- Gender:

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- Race:

White	Black
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- Home language:

Afrikaans	
English	
Zulu	
Sotho	
Tswana	
Sepedi	
Swati	
Venda	
Tsonga	
Ndebele	
Xhosa	
Other	

We would like you to give your personal evaluation of two South African population groups. Africans/blacks and Westerners/whites. Please think in terms of a particular group rather than of the best or worst members of the group. Then RATE the group on a scale of 1 – 5, by marking the appropriate box with a cross (X), keeping the characteristics in mind.

AFRICANS/BLACKS in general are...

Fair	1	2	3	4	5	Unfair
Reliable	1	2	3	4	5	Unreliable
Dishonest	1	2	3	4	5	Honest
Boring	1	2	3	4	5	Interesting
Wise	1	2	3	4	5	Foolish
Worthless	1	2	3	4	5	Valuable
Cruel	1	2	3	4	5	Kind
Good	1	2	3	4	5	Bad
Lazy	1	2	3	4	5	Hard-working
Pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	Unpleasant
Unfriendly	1	2	3	4	5	Friendly
Cowardly	1	2	3	4	5	Brave
Hygienic	1	2	3	4	5	Unhygienic
Ungrateful	1	2	3	4	5	Grateful
Loyal	1	2	3	4	5	Disloyal

WESTERNERS/WHITES in general are...

Fair	1	2	3	4	5	Unfair
Reliable	1	2	3	4	5	Unreliable
Dishonest	1	2	3	4	5	Honest
Boring	1	2	3	4	5	Interesting
Wise	1	2	3	4	5	Foolish
Worthless	1	2	3	4	5	Valuable
Cruel	1	2	3	4	5	Kind
Good	1	2	3	4	5	Bad
Lazy	1	2	3	4	5	Hard-working
Pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	Unpleasant
Unfriendly	1	2	3	4	5	Friendly
Cowardly	1	2	3	4	5	Brave
Hygienic	1	2	3	4	5	Unhygienic
Ungrateful	1	2	3	4	5	Grateful
Loyal	1	2	3	4	5	Disloyal

You will hear nine speakers on tape/read nine passages. Please fill in the following questionnaire fully after you have heard each speaker/read each passage. There are a total of nine speakers/passages so you will be issued with a total of nine questionnaires. Please make sure that you fill in a separate questionnaire for each speaker heard/passage read. Also make sure that you fill in the correct passage number.

The following questions aim to test the employability of each speaker. In this case the candidate is applying for the post of Cinema Manager at a local Ster Kinekor cinema. After you have listened to the relevant speaker/read the relevant passage, try to determine the suitability of the candidate. There is a five-point scale between two opposing points. Mark the space that you feel is most appropriate to your perception of the speaker with a cross (X).

Evaluation of applicant's potential to perform

Competencies	High			Low	
Technical Skills	5	4	3	2	1
Problem-solving	5	4	3	2	1
Conflict-management	5	4	3	2	1
Coaching	5	4	3	2	1
Decision-making	5	4	3	2	1
Communicating	5	4	3	2	1
Team Management	5	4	3	2	1
Interpersonal	5	4	3	2	1
Empowerment	5	4	3	2	1
Quality Awareness	5	4	3	2	1

Applicant's work interest and career direction

	High			Low	
Interest in company	5	4	3	2	1
Interest in position	5	4	3	2	1
Clarity of career goals	5	4	3	2	1

Interview result

	Hire		Marginal		Reject
Recommendation for hire	5	4	3	2	1

The next set of questions aims to test your perception of the speaker's personality. After you have listened to the relevant speaker/read the relevant passage, try to determine what each person is like according to the personality characteristics listed. There is a five-point scale between two opposing points. Mark the space that you feel is most appropriate to your perception of the reader, with a cross (X).

What do you think of this person?

Educated	1	2	3	4	5	Uneducated
Honest	1	2	3	4	5	Dishonest
Unfriendly	1	2	3	4	5	Friendly
Selfish	1	2	3	4	5	Generous
Unintelligent	1	2	3	4	5	Intelligent
Reliable	1	2	3	4	5	Unreliable
Attractive	1	2	3	4	5	Unattractive
Polite	1	2	3	4	5	Impolite
Worthless	1	2	3	4	5	Valuable
Hard-working	1	2	3	4	5	Lazy
Pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	Unpleasant
Unfair	1	2	3	4	5	Fair
Ungrateful	1	2	3	4	5	Grateful