

NAGY JUDIT

Partiumi Keresztény Egyetem, Nagyvárad (Partium Christian University, Oradea, Romania)

NON/STANDARD AND NON/NATIVE ENGLISH: NORMS, ATTITUDES AND INTELLIGIBILITY

Despite the substantial number of non-native speakers of English, native speakers of prestigious standard varieties have served as benchmarks of intelligible speech for language learners. However, more recently the dominance of the native speaker norm is increasingly questioned or even openly rejected (Jenkins 2000, Nelson 2008). Linguistic attitudes are known to have a major impact on the perception of language use and intelligibility is also affected by attitudinal factors (Rajadurai 2007). Thus, attitudes linked to standardness and nativeness are more than likely to influence intelligibility, even though features of non-native varieties do not necessarily hinder communication, and they may even enhance understanding (Deterding and Kirkpatrick 2006, Munro 2008).

The study aims to map out situated meanings and underlying cultural models associated with the intelligibility, correctness and prestige of non/native and non/standard varieties of English in non-native interactions. The question in the focus of the study is whether standardness, intelligibility or other aspects are foregrounded as prevailing criteria and/or primary objectives for language learners.

Participants are 30 Hungarian-Romanian bilingual English BA students with no extensive sociolinguistic training. Data is collected in focus group interviews each group including 5 participants. Data collection comprises two sessions of focus group discussions concerning linguistic and attitudinal aspects, such as correctness, intelligibility, and appeal; the first session is aimed at mapping participants' overall stance, whereas the second focuses on eliciting attitudes associated with speech samples of different varieties. In order to aid transcription audio recordings are supplemented with video recordings. The transcripts of the recorded discussions are analysed using discourse analysis in order to reveal emergent situated meanings and cultural models.