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THE ROLE OF CELEBRITY IN ATTITUDES TO THE ENGLISH OF NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS
A case study of female Italian ELF users

THOMAS W. CHRISTIANSEN
UNIVERSITÀ DEL SALENTO

Abstract - The nativeness principle is a major factor in attitudes to the use of ELF (see: Seidlhofer 2001, 2011; Jenkins 2007). Aside from issues of identity and the maintenance of an increasingly unjustifiable disparity in status between NES and NNES users of English, the emulation required by the nativeness principle is difficult to justify in the face of the fact that no single NS model of English exists (Seidlhofer 2011) and that research shows that NNES users are, in any case, unreliable at identifying NESs (Christiansen 2014), thus casting doubt over whether such models are as important in practice as conventional wisdom maintains. In this paper, we report on an experiment broadly following the matched-guise test technique (Lambert et al. 1960). In this, we collected NNES ELF users' reactions, in the form of a Likert Scale, to recordings of various speakers, some of whom NES from the inner circle, others highly proficient ELF users from the outer circle (see Graddol 2010). Respondents were presented the same set of six speakers under different randomised guises according to the two parameters of ±NES (Native English Speaker) and ±Celeb (Celebrity), the latter chosen as a feature particularly relevant in the context of models and the motivation for emulation. Respondents, female Italian ELF users, were asked to rate how happy they would be to speak like the persona (whether genuine or invented) in question. The object was to see whether any discernable pattern could be identified in the way that the features of ±NES and ±Celeb interact to affect attitudes to different manifestations of English, and whether a "celebrity effect", in particular in respect to NNES, can be shown to exist as a possible rival to the nativeness principle. In discussion of our results, we identify a possible third parameter namely affinity between respondent and speaker.

Key words: non-standard NES; nativeness principle; attitudes to ELF; celebrity effect.

1.0 Introduction

In this paper, we examine how far English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) users can be seen to adhere to the nativeness principle: the idea that, to speak a language well, NNS (non-native speakers) should try to emulate[1] NSs (native speakers). This would entail that, in all areas of linguistic production (e.g. their grammar, lexis and pronunciation), they should endeavour to sound as much as possible as if they were an L1 speaker of English. In recent years, both within and outside the field of ELF studies, this view has come under increasing scrutiny both for its impracticability and for the fact that it discriminates against non-native English speakers (NNESs)[2] and for its inappropriacy in contexts where English is used as a contact language predominantly among NNESs (see: Firth 1996; Jenkins 1998, 2000; Seidlhofer, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2011). Seidlhofer sums up the arguments for

[1] In psychology and observational / social learning, *emulation* is distinguished from *imitation*. We shall return to this point in Section 4.0.
[2] See for example Graddol (2010, p.83): "When measured against the standard of a native speaker, few EFL learners will be perfect. Within traditional EFL methodology there is an inbuilt ideological positioning of the student as outsider and failure – however proficient they become."

recognising the contribution of NNESs to English – in particular, their right to play an active role in norm making – thus (2005, pp. 339-340):

> Despite being welcomed by some and deplored by others, it cannot be denied that English functions as a global lingua franca. However, what has so far tended to be denied is that, as a consequence of its international use, English is being shaped at least as much by its non-native speakers as by its native speakers. This has led to a somewhat paradoxical situation: on the one hand, for the majority of its users, English is a foreign language, and the vast majority of verbal exchanges in English do not involve any native speakers of the language at all. On the other hand, there is still a tendency for native speakers to be regarded as custodians over what is acceptable usage. Thus, in order for the concept of ELF to gain acceptance alongside English as native language, there have been calls for the systematic study of the nature of ELF—what it looks and sounds like and how people actually use it and make it work—and a consideration of the implications for the teaching and learning of the language.

The notion of the native speaker is a key concept in most strands of linguistics,[3] but in Seidlhofer's eyes, it constitutes little more than a dogma (2011, p.32) because few scholars outside the field of ELF question this orthodoxy or even endeavour to define what constitutes a native speaker in precise terms.[4]

Seidlhofer (2011) notes that the nativeness principle does not only involve emulation of an idealized NES speaker, unwarranted in the context of ELF, where English is a contact language and where most participants are L2, but also that it is usually accompanied by another piece of dogma: that of the existence of a single variety of English constituting the "standard". This standard variety, like the native speaker "turns out to be a very vague concept indeed. And yet it is routinely invoked as a well defined concept" (2011, p.71):

> What seems to underlie that attitudes discussed above [regarding the authority of the native speaker] is the supposition that there is such a thing as *the* English language, a stable entity, an established preserve of its native speakers. (Seidlhofer 2011, p.33)

This supposition is deeply engrained among experts and has found formal sanction in the UK in official documents, such as the 1988 Kingman Report,[5] which contained the phrase "one of the [British] schools' duties is to enable children to acquire Standard English, which is their right" (p. 14). The influential linguist Randolph Quirk, in the same year in which he was knighted and nominated President of the British Academy,[6] extended this monocentric stance towards standards and models in English Language Teaching to EFL (1985, p.6):

> The relatively narrow range of purposes for which the non-native needs to use English (even in ESL countries) is arguably well-catered for by a single monochrome standard that looks as

[3] As Coulmas (1981, p.5 - cited in Seidlhofer 2011, p.32) states: "He [The native speaker] is the one who can legitimately supply data, and his language is what grammatical analyses are meant to account for. Thus nativeness is the only universally accepted criterion for authenticity."

[4] This point is discussed in depth by Cook (1999, pp.185-6) who identifies nine separate characteristics that various applied linguists have attributed to native speakers and then gives some counter examples showing how not only are descriptions for each characteristic incomplete but some of them do not only apply to L1 users. Cook (2007, p.245 – cited by Seidlhofer 2011, p.33) adds "Descriptions of native speaker English are a temporary measure until proper descriptions of L2 users are made."

[5] Department of Education and Science. "Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Teaching of English Language."

[6] "The UK's national body for the humanities and social sciences" (http://www.britac.ac.uk/).

> good on paper as it sounds in speech. There are only the most dubious advantages in exposing the learner to a great variety of usage, no part of which he will have time to master properly, little of which he will be called upon to exercise, all of which is embedded in a controversial sociolinguistic matrix he cannot be expected to understand.

Against such a view, Seidlhofer argues that a simple division of English into Standard – "the variety of the English language which is normally employed in writing and normally spoken by 'educated' speakers of the language." according to Trudgill and Hannah (2002, p.1)[7] – and non-Standard (i.e. every other variety) completely misses the inherent dynamic intelligibility of any language used naturally for communication, above all, as a contact language between people of different linguacultural backgrounds. As Seidlhofer says, (2011, p.48), a monocentric view of a single, immutable Standard English fails to take into account "the encoding potential of English being used variably and without institutional sanction across communities and cultures." Indeed, Widdowson states that the emphasis of ELF is not the *variety* of a homogenous speech community but of the *variations*[8] that spontaneously emerge when members of different communities meet and go about the task of communicating:

> (…) what is clearly evident in the use of ELF is that communicative capability not only does not depend on conformity to Standard English norms – it does not depend on conformity to the norms of any other variety either. And here, too, is the essential distinction between ELF and WE [World Englishes]. The study of ELF considers variability not in terms of variety at all but as the variable use of English as inter-community communication, as communication across communities. Widdowson (2015, p.362)

Because of this fact, and despite the apparent incompatibility between the two concepts, ELF should not be seen as a potential rival to Standard English, or even a model in a traditional sense of a single variety of language to be emulated. Instead, it constitutes a flexible use of English where the focus is not on replicating any particular NES model or fixed Standard but rather on adapting to the specific needs of the speech event engaged in. It could be said therefore that, if ELF is to be considered as a model of any sort at all, it is not at the level of language *usage*, but of *use*:[9] a selection of strategies that may be employed in contexts where participants have different linguacultural backgrounds and may have differing degrees of competence in the contact language. The latter point in particular may warrant using whatever communicative strategies prove most effective, such as accommodation (Giles et al 1991) and translanguaging (García / Li 2014), although such phenomena may also be employed even when not strictly necessary, as a means, for example, of the speaker identifying him or herself with a given group.[10] As Seidlhofer (2011, pp.40-41) concludes:

[7] See also Crystal 1994 who identifies five characteristics of Standard English: it has no territorial base; its defining language features are grammar, lexis and spelling, but not pronunciation; has highest social prestige; understood by a majority of community; only actually used by a minority of community.

[8] Widdowson (2015, p.363). "Variety status is achieved when variations become conventionalized and so settle into what is taken to be a systematic state, in other words, when variation is taken to be regularized to the extent that it constitutes language change."

[9] See Widdowson (1978): *usage* = the ability to produce correct manifestations of the linguistic system; *use* = the ability to use the knowledge of the rules for effective communication.

[10] See Christiansen (2016a) who shows how international ELF users in Italy use Italian expressions within their ELF variations as a means of identification with the culture of the local socio-cultural context; or Christiansen (2016b) who points out that, especially in commercial contexts, sometimes translanguaging is

> It needs to be understood that 'English' does not simply transfer intact from one context to another–the 'E' in *English as a Native Language* is bound to be something different in kind form the 'E' in *English as a Lingua Franca*, and must be acknowledged as such—it is in *this* way that 'language is of crucial importance'. Once *this* happens, it will be obvious that simply being a native speaker of English is *not* an advantage in ELF interactions—if anything, it is more likely to be a drawback because […] it is non-native speakers who often find it easier to use English appropriately in intercultural settings.

The question that we want to address in this paper is not so much *should* ELF users create their own norms and abandon the nativeness principle, but rather whether there are any signs that are in fact doing so. We presume that if the nativeness principle is ever to lose its hold, it will be a relatively long process and will certainly not be something that will happen overnight. To this end, we will report the results of an online survey hosted on Moodlecloud[11] into the reactions of respondents, all female NNES ELF users, to recordings of different female speakers using English. We should make it clear that this consists in nothing more than a pilot study at this stage, given the fact that the nativeness principle and the concepts of celebrity and affinity are determined by diverse sociolinguistic factors that are hard to isolate in a single experiment or survey on this relatively small scale. Consequently, in our conclusions (Section 5.0) we will highlight areas where further studies on a larger scale is necessary to verify some of our results.

The point that we want to examine is whether respondents will inevitably be more favourable towards NES than they are towards NNES as predicted by the nativeness principle: the idea that learners should emulate NSs to speak a language well even when other factors are brought into play, namely celebrity. Studies like that of Jenkins (2007) have shown that, notwithstanding the fact that attitudes towards linguistic features, in particular pronunciation and accents, that differ from those associated with Standard English (e.g. *Received Pronunciation* or RP) tend to be negative, some nonstandard and NNES accents do receive approval by NNESs (see Jenkins 2007, p.187). This shows that loyalty to the nativeness principle cannot be taken for granted.

Adding further evidence for this, Christiansen (2017), details the results of a questionnaire administered to ELF users in different countries, who were asked to rate agreement regarding attitudes to and motivation for learning English (broadly classifiable as either NES-norm oriented, ELF-oriented, or neutral), against a Likert scale. Here, it was found that although statements like "If I could, I would like to speak English so well that people would think that I was born in an English-speaking country" received the highest level of agreement, overall, respondents gave higher scores to the ELF-oriented statements (e.g. "English is not my native language but it is special to me. Using it feels natural" or "When speaking English, I think it is acceptable to use words and expressions from other languages if it helps communication."). Although the statement about sounding as if one had been born an L1 speaker quoted above received the highest score out of any of the statements in the survey (something partly explicable as it encapsulates the essence of the nativeness principle which Seidlhofer has classed as dogma), half of the NS-norm oriented statements were actually met with high levels of disagreement (i.e. "To me, English is a foreign language. It is something that I borrow, not something that I can call my own."; "I

not a symptom of low linguistic competence in the target language but rather an attempt to appear modern, international or sophisticated: a display of linguistic prowess.

[11] The site for respondents external to the Unisalento was https://englishsurvey.moodlecloud.com/

try to hide my national / ethnic origins, when I speak English"), while *every one* of the ELF-oriented or neutral statements received varying degrees of agreement.

Results for the questionnaire showed that respondents held contradictory views (e.g. wanting to sound like a NES without hiding their ethnic / national origins while speaking English) which show that ELF users may be less attached in reality to the nativeness principle than their ability to recite dogma suggests. The fact that ELF users appear to be "in two minds" so to speak regarding the nativeness principle may indicate the beginnings of a shift in attitudes towards that which Christiansen (2017) defines provisionally as *ELFness* – an attitude that involves dropping the nativeness principle in favour of the practical and functional concerns of achieving the communicative goals set by the speakers themselves in a given discourse event where English functions as contact language.[12]

Furthermore, in various experiments, it has also been shown that favourable attitudes towards the nativeness principle are based on the perception of data rather than the data itself. Such views consequently seem to be based more on causal prejudice than rationally thought-out beliefs. Rubin (1992, discussed by Seidlhofer 2011) has shown how the levels of comprehension of NESs (undergraduates at a US university) can be affected by the information they are given about the speaker. He found that, when listening to a recorded lecture accompanied by an Asian-looking lecturer rather than a White one, the undergraduates scored less in comprehension tests on the lecture. This showed that the *perception* of the accent, not the accent in itself, had had a negative effect on the speaker's intelligibility.

Similar results were found by Christiansen (2011) in a different kind of study where respondents were asked to identify the origin of unknown speakers and give them a score for intelligibility. It was found that, not only could many respondents in the sample not reliably identify NESs (casting doubt on the efficacy of the nativeness principle in real contexts),[13] but that they tended to identify those speakers who they found most intelligible as NESs, indicating that this latter concept may in practice be fluid and based not on birth right, so to speak, but merely indicate any user whom the respondent finds particularly proficient or effective, not necessarily only those from the inner circle.

In a more recent experiment (see Christiansen 2018), respondents listened to six short recordings of five NNES ELF users and of one NES speaker and were asked to rate in a general, non-technical, way their English on a seven-point Likert scale (ranging from "the speaker's English is very bad" to "the speaker's English is very good"). Each speaker was identified by origin and occupation / social status. The five NNESs were all identified as celebrities or people of high social prestige (e.g. Jackie Chan, film director and actor; Shakira, singer and song writer; Queen Rania of Jordan) and the single NES was an ordinary person of no special social prestige (i.e. "Kevin, an English teacher from London").[14] It was interesting to see that in this format, the NES only came in number three position as regards how respondents rated his English (after Shakira and Queen Rania).

[12] This may be compared to the *intelligibility principle*, Levis (2005), but is intended as more comprehensive relating not only to pronunciation but also to the adoption of the whole spectrum of features and strategies (e.g. accommodation, translanguaging, creativity and improvisation) associated with ELF variations.

[13] Indeed, the actual NES (who used Standard English and did not speak with a strong regional accent), was only identified as such by 5.42% of respondents (see Christiansen 2011, p.31). By contrast, respondents did prove much more proficient at identifying someone of their own L1 speaking English.

[14] In fact, the same NES recording was used for Christiansen (2011).

To examine further the relative effects of social prestige and the status of being a NES or not, two of the speakers, Donald Tusk (ex Prime Minister of Poland and current President of the European Council) and Kevin were presented to some respondents under different guises or persona. Kevin also went under the guise of Alfonz (a Slovenian English teacher). And Donald Tusk was also presented in three more invented persona: Stuart McInlay (a Scottish MEP); Jerzy (a Polish migrant from Manchester) and Jack (an unemployed man from Manchester). In line with the nativeness principle, Kevin (NES) was awarded higher marks than Alfonz his NNES counterpart. With Tusk however, where the parameter of social prestige was also added, the picture that emerged was more complicated. Overall, the two persona with higher social prestige scored higher than either Jack or Jerzy, and McInlay (NES) received higher ratings than Tusk (NNES). However, with the lower social prestige persona, Jerzy, the NNES, was actually awarded more points than Jack (NES). This indicates that, concerning that which respondents may reasonably have regarded non-standard native varieties of English (as one might suppose an unemployed man from Manchester would use), respondents actually showed a preference for ELF variations (as one might expect a migrant to use). This would indicate that adherence to the nativeness principle on the part of ELF users is not unconditional and depends on whether the NES is perceived as speaking Standard English or not.

In this paper, we will look further into how social prestige or specifically celebrity may affect ELF users' attitudes to the English of specific people, NES and NNES. In the following sections, we will detail the experiment and discuss the results.

2.0 The Experiment

The experiment took the form of a *matched-guise test* technique (Lambert *et al.* 1960) constructed through a survey hosted on Moodlecloud[15] into the reactions of respondents (all NNES – non-native English Speakers) to recordings of different female speakers using English. The point that we want to examine is whether respondents will inevitably be more favorable towards NES than they are towards NNES as predicted by the nativeness principle even when other factors are brought into play, namely celebrity. The latter is of course a hard concept to pin down even though it is so central to popular culture. For the sake of this study, we define *celebrity* as being a relatively well-known person and will include figures from the world of entertainment (Adele, Beyoncé, etc.) and one public figure, namely Queen Rania of Jordan.[16] Inherent in this concept is the idea of prestige, of being a person above the ordinary populace, most importantly in the context of the point under examination here, the kind of person who another person may reasonably look up to, see as a model, and wish to emulate.

2.1 The survey

To examine ELF users' attitudes to the English produced by celebrity NNESs, we set up a short online survey. Subjects were asked to listen to six randomised recordings of different

[15] For respondents from the University of the Salento we used the university's protected Moodle site, others were directed to a mirror external site: https://englishsurvey.moodlecloud.com/

[16] In some contexts, the term *celebrity* has become derogatory. Here, we intend it to be interpreted as neutral and merely as a useful shorthand for a "V.I.P", a public figure or "star" of some sort or another.

female celebrities.[17] Each recording lasted about one minute and was accompanied by an image and key background information about the speaker in question giving an indication of origin (and hence indirectly whether she was NES or NNES)[18] and social status (i.e. whether she was a celebrity or not).

Some of the respondents were given correct information about the speaker; others were misinformed and presented with different invented personae. The parameters between different identities (real and false) for each persona were ±NES (native or non-native English speaker) and ±Celeb (celebrity or "ordinary" member of the public). It was to concentrate on only these two criteria that we chose to use speakers of the same sex and not also include male speakers (cfr. Christiansen 2018).

Respondents were required to assess each recording against a seven-item Likert Scale (ranging from "very unhappy" 0 to "very happy" 7). The specific question that respondents were asked was intentionally simple, avoiding the use of complex concepts or specialist terminology, and designed to elicit their attitude to the sample of English produced by the speaker: "How happy would you be if you spoke English like her?"

Six recordings were used, all extracts taken from various interviews retrieved from YouTube: the English singer-songwriter Adele (real name: Adele Laurie Blue Adkins); the American singer songwriter Beyoncé (real name: Beyoncé Giselle Knowles-Carter); the English singer, dancer, and television personality Cheryl Cole (née Cheryl Ann Tweedy, a name she has officially reverted to, and for a while known as Cheryl Fernandez-Versini); the English actress Emma Watson; the Colombian[19] singer-songwriter Shakira (real name: Shakira Isabel Mebarak Ripoll);.and finally Queen Rania of Jordan (Rania Al-Abdullah, née Rania Al-Yassin).[20]

These are all broadly speaking celebrities: one (Cole) is a singer / dancer, TV personality; three (Adele, Beyoncé, Shakira) are singer-songwriters; one is a film and stage actress (Emma Watson); and one is the consort of a reigning monarch (Queen Rania). Four are NES (Adele, Beyoncé, Cheryl Cole and Emma Watson[21]) and two NNES (Shakira and Queen Rania).[22]

[17] This was done to avoid order bias. On average, each recording was generated by the randomising software incorporated in Moodle 15.5 times, which constitutes the number of people who, on average, heard and graded that particular persona. Within this average, the standard deviation is quite high: 3.32. The recording assessed most was Bettye (Sp2), by 21 respondents: the least, Beyoncé (coincidentally also Sp2), only 8 times. The scores for Beyoncé however showed the lowest standard deviation of all the speakers (only 0.52) showing a high degree of agreement among respondents. By contrast, Adele (Sp1) was generated 11 times (another relatively low figure), a similar frequency to Beyoncé, and her standard deviation was however 1.78. Bettye's standard deviation came between these two figures: 1.28 – see Figure 2 (Section 3.0). It can consequently be concluded that the discrepancy in the number of times each recording was heard did not have a noticeable effect on marks.

[18] Whether the speaker was NES or not was not made explicit because we did not want to encourage respondent bias by alerting them to our object.

[19] Shakira has Italian, Spanish and notably Lebanese ancestry. The latter evident often in her music and dance style.

[20] As can be seen, the various NES accents were either from England or the USA. These were chosen because within these two geographical areas there is perhaps the widest degree of difference between regional varieties, much more so than, say, within Australia or Canada.

[21] Emma Watson was actually born in Paris and was resident there for the first five years of her life. However, her parents are British and English seems to be her only L1. She can speak French but, revealingly, when she has been interviewed in France, it has mostly been in English.

[22] Queen Rania was not originally Jordanian. She was born in Kuwait to Palestinian parents and was educated in English and went to the American University in Cairo. She does not qualify as an inner circle speaker on Kachru's three-circle model (1985) but could be counted among the highly proficient group of

The NES celebrities were chosen to illustrate a range of different NES varieties and pronunciations. Of the four, only Emma Watson (Speaker 4) can be said to use anything approaching RP. Furthermore, her grammar and lexis mostly conform to Standard English. Beyoncé (Speaker 2) uses General American English albeit with elements of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and of Southern US English, especially in her pronunciation. Both Adele and Cheryl Cole (Speakers 1 and 3) use non-standard regional varieties of British English. Adele, from North London, uses mostly Standard English grammar and lexis but has an accent typical way of people her age in London: a mixture of traditional so-called *Cockney*, Estuary English[23] with elements of the emerging variety of Multicultural London English.[24] Cheryl Cole, from Newcastle, uses the traditional *Geordie* variety of the area. Her grammar and lexis is mostly Standard English but her pronunciation is highly distinctive.[25]

As we say above, each speaker was presented in the survey together with three false persona who differed from them as regards the parameters of ±NES and ±Celeb. Each person (real or false) was accompanied by a photo and some limited background information to let the respondent know whether the speaker was NES or Celeb. The images in particular were chosen to show attractive people whether +NES / +Celeb or not, as we wanted to avoid inadvertently adding the parameter of physical attractiveness into the mix – accepting the unavoidable fact that image-conscious celebrities will typically strive to look better than ordinary people.[26] Below, in Tables 1-6, we reproduce the instructions and used for each speaker / persona together with the accompanying background information and the images used (the latter will be particularly relevant for discussion of the results for some of the speakers and when we come to speculate in Section 4.0 and a possible "affinity effect").

In place of the real celebrities – the real speakers (cells shaded on Tables 1-6)—, we invented six fictitious celebrities whose background was similar to that of the real counterpart: e.g. for Adele we invented Ana Barbu, a Moldavian singer-songwriter; and Queen Rania of Jordan was substituted by the fictitious Princess Alexandra, the Duchess of Beverly, whose origin, like Queen Rania's, is not given, it being assumed that respondents would conclude that, from her title and the image used (see Table 6), she was part of the British Royal family.

users in the inner circle of Graddol's revision (2010, p.110), which he seems to attribute to Kachru (see Christiansen 2017, p.78).

[23] See Rosewarne (1994).

[24] See Cheshire *et al* 2014.

[25] Indeed it has been rumoured that Cheryl Cole's career as a judge on US *X factor* (after a successful stint on its British counterpart) was cut short partly because American producers were concerned that viewers would find her accent difficult to understand (see "Why did Cheryl Cole get dropped from American X Factor?", *BBC News* http://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-13558295).

[26] For example, for Speaker 4 (Emma Watson), we used a picture of the real Danish actress Inga Bergstrom to represent the fictitious Czech actress Zlata Slunéčková, and for Emily and Kristýna (the English and Czech factory workers and union officials) we used the same picture (as we did for each pair of –Celeb) of a young woman on a busy production line from a car manufacturer's website (see Table 4).

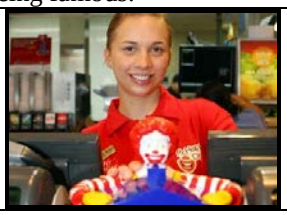
	+NES	-NES
+CELEB		
	Listen to this recording of Adele, the singer-songwriter from England, talking about being famous:	Listen to this recording of Ana Barbu, the singer-songwriter from Moldova, talking about being famous:
-CELEB		
	Listen to this recording of Annie, a fast food worker from England, talking about being famous after being on a talent show:	Listen to this recording of Anna, a fast food worker from Moldova, talking about being famous after being on a talent show:

Table 1
Different Persona for Speaker 1 (Adele).

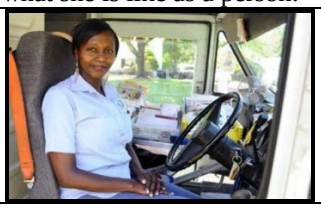
	+NES	-NES
+CELEB		
	Listen to this recording of Beyoncé, the singer-songwriter from the USA, talking about what she is like as a person:	Listen to this recording of Bebel Banos, the singer-songwriter from Brazil, talking about what she is like as a person:
-CELEB		
	Listen to this recording of Bettye, a post office employee from the USA, talking about what she is like as a person:	Listen to this recording of Beatriz, a post office employee from Brazil, talking about what she is like as a person:.

Table 2
Different Persona for Speaker 2 (Beyoncé).

	+NES	-NES
+CELEB		
	Listen to this recording of Cheryl Cole, the singer, dancer, and television personality from England, talking about family and her tattoos:	Listen to this recording of Xenia Wurth, the singer, dancer, and television personality from Switzerland, talking about her family and her tattoos:
-CELEB		
	Listen to this recording of Caitlin, a hairdresser from England, talking about her family and her tattoos:	Listen to this recording of Michelle, a hairdresser from Switzerland, talking about her family and her tattoos:

Table 3
Different Persona for Speaker 3 (Cheryl Cole).

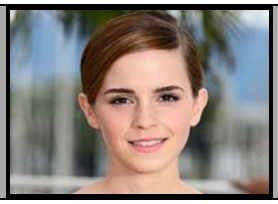
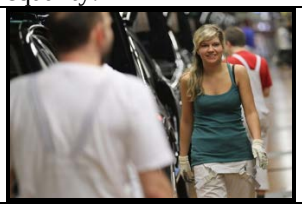
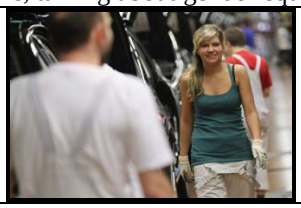
	+NES	-NES
+CELEB		
	Listen to this recording of Emma Watson, the actress from England, talking about gender equality:	Listen to this recording of Zlata Slunéčková, the actress from the Czech Republic, talking about gender equality:
-CELEB		
	Listen to this recording of Emily, a factory worker and union official from England, talking about gender equality:	Listen to this recording of Kristýna, a factory worker and union official from the Czech Republic, talking about gender equality:

Table 4
Different Persona for Speaker 4 (Emma Watson).

	+NES	-NES
+CELEB		
	Listen to this recording of SeeSee Bray, the singer-songwriter from the USA, talking about young people and political activism:	Listen to this recording of Shakira, the singer-songwriter from Colombia, talking about young people and political activism:
-CELEB		
	Listen to this recording of Shelley, a youth worker from the USA, talking about young people and political activism:	Listen to this recording of Laura, a youth worker from Colombia, talking about young people and political activism:

Table 5
Different Persona for Speaker 5 (Shakira).

	+NES	-NES
+CELEB		
	Listen to this recording of Princess Alexandra, the Duchess of Beverly, talking about refugee children:	Listen to this recording of Queen Rania of Jordan talking about refugee children:
-CELEB		
	Listen to this recording of Maggy, a UNHCR aid worker from England, talking about refugee children:	Listen to this recording of Enaas, a UNHCR aid worker from Jordan, talking about refugee children:

Table 6
Different Persona for Speaker 6 (Queen Rania).

One potential problem with using invented celebrities is that respondents would know nothing about them and may thus be indifferent towards them in a way they would not be with a well-known figure such as, Adele, Beyoncé, Shaikra or Emma Watson – all instantly recognisable figures all over the world. However, even among the real celebrities there is an imbalance between those who are better-known and more popular. For

example, Cheryl Cole will probably be known to fewer respondents than the other five, simply because she is not in the public eye as much (Cheryl Cole is a celebrity mainly on British TV, although she had some success internationally as a pop star a few years ago). Our assumption is that the fact that someone is presented as a celebrity will be enough for something we could dub the *celebrity effect* to come into force, whereby respondents are more disposed to say that they would be happy to speak English like them.

The point which this survey intends to ascertain is how far the different parameters affect scores given by respondents. Comparison of the marks for each speaker should reveal what the typical ranking of the four configurations is (i.e. +NES +Celeb, -NES –Celeb, +NES –Celeb, -NES + Celeb). Our expectation is that +NES and +Celeb would receive higher scores than –NES and–Celeb, it remaining open to question whether +NES would take precedence over +Celeb or vice versa. These two possibilities can be set out in alternative hypothesised rankings as is done in Figure 1

Hypothesised Ranking 1		Hypothesised Ranking 2	
1.	+NES +Celeb	1.	+NES +Celeb
2.	+NES -Celeb	2.	-NES +Celeb
3.	-NES +Celeb	3.	+NES -Celeb
4.	-NES -Celeb	4.	-NES -Celeb

Figure 1
Alternative hypothesised rankings for scores according to parameters ±NES and ±Celeb.

Ranking 1 would represent a state of affairs where both the nativeness principle and the celebrity effect influence attitudes to speakers using English but where the nativeness principle is the stronger; Ranking 2 would show that both were important but that the celebrity effect takes precedence. Other rankings are of course possible (the four configurations produce 24 different possible combinations), but, at this stage, we will choose to focus on these two.

2.2 Respondents

In all 82 respondents completed the survey, from different countries (Italy, Japan, Latvia, Spain, and some unidentified), but the majority (71 or 86.59%) were from Italy. There was also a heavy female bias with only 13 of the respondents (15.85%) being male.

The survey design used only female speakers for the reasons outlined in Section 2.1 but this lead to the problem that the question, “How happy would you be if you spoke English like her?” may involve questions of gender identity when addressed to a man, because it could be interpreted as “how happy would you be to sound like a woman [as opposed to a man] when speaking English?” Such concerns are inevitable if respondents are of different genders to the speaker although it had originally been our intention to compare the scores for male and female respondents. We decided against this due to the considerable gender imbalance. A similar consideration regarding nationality led us to concentrate on scores given by respondents from Italy as there were not enough representatives of other nations to permit meaningful comparison (which would no doubt been interesting).

It was therefore decided to only analyse the results of the 62 Italian female respondents, as this was considered a homogenous sample, albeit fairly small. In the next section we report the results of the survey.

3.0 Results

In Figure 2, we give the average scores for each persona / guise of all the speakers, in ranking going from highest to lowest: Emma Watson, Speaker 6 (Sp6) to Ana Barbu (Sp1). It should be borne in mind that when we look at rankings, which we will do so below, we will focus mainly on those within specific speaker groups (i.e. Sp1: Adele, Anna, Annie, Ana Barbu) not between groups. This is because in the former the recording is the same so any differences in marks must be due to extra-linguistic factors, in the latter, we are dealing with different speakers altogether whose marks may legitimately vary.

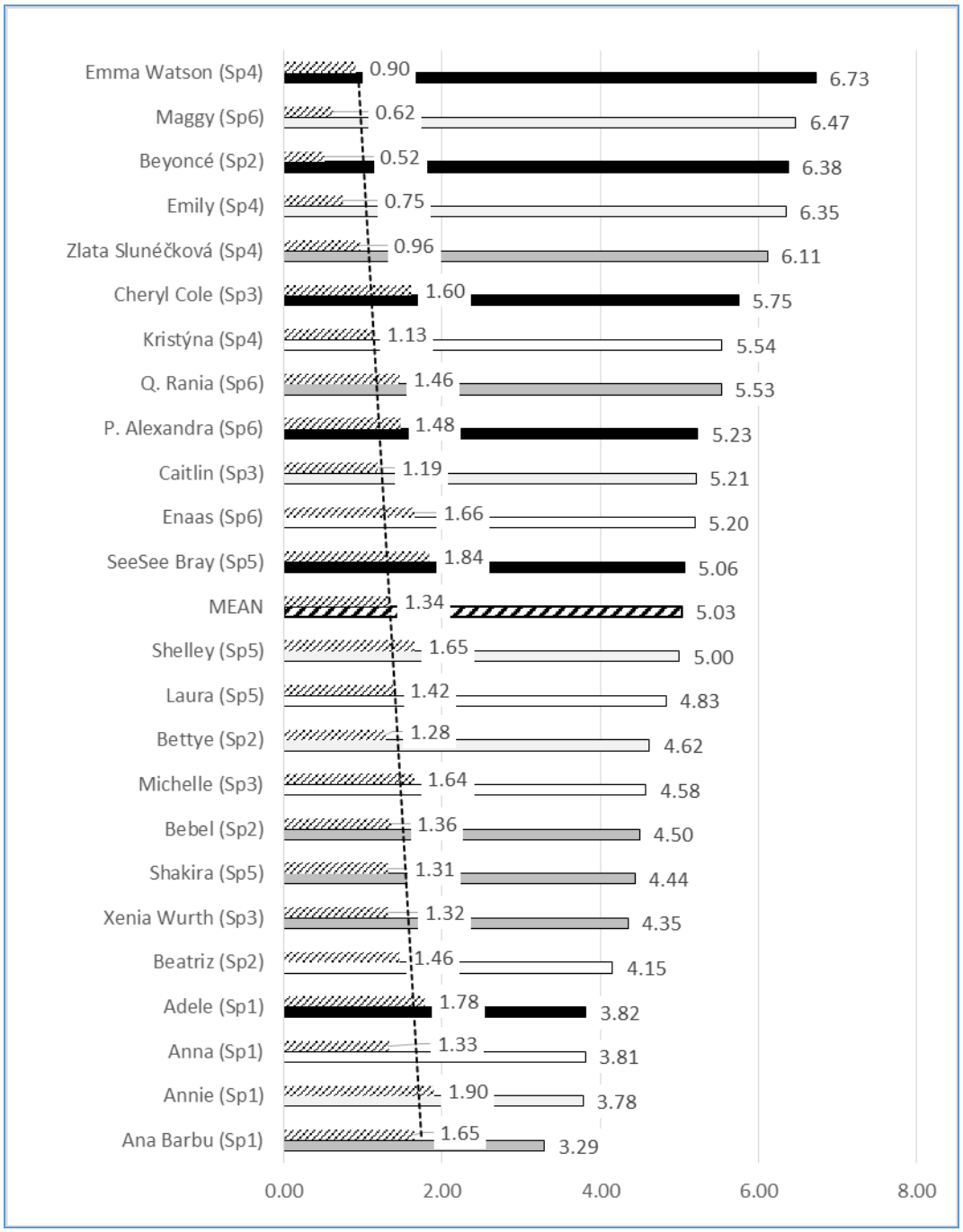


Figure 2
Rankings of mean scores for each persona.

As can be seen, marks range from 3.29 (corresponding most closely with "fairly unhappy") to 6.73 ("very happy"). The scores for +NES +Celeb are shown by black bars, those for +NES -Celeb light grey bars, the bars for -NES +Celeb are dark grey; and, finally, those for –NES -Celeb are white.

On the left, the standard deviation for each speaker is displayed (bar with diagonal lines and no border). The top four highest marks go to +NES, but there are two +NES also in the bottom four, so although speakers presented as +NES do tend to get better marks, this is no guarantee of them scoring higher than –NES. The standard deviations are also interesting. By looking at the trend line for standard deviation (thin diagonal line, no border), one can observe the tendency for there to be more agreement between respondents over speakers who score higher. This shows that there is greater consensus over what type of people respondents would be happy to sound like than over those they would less like to sound like.

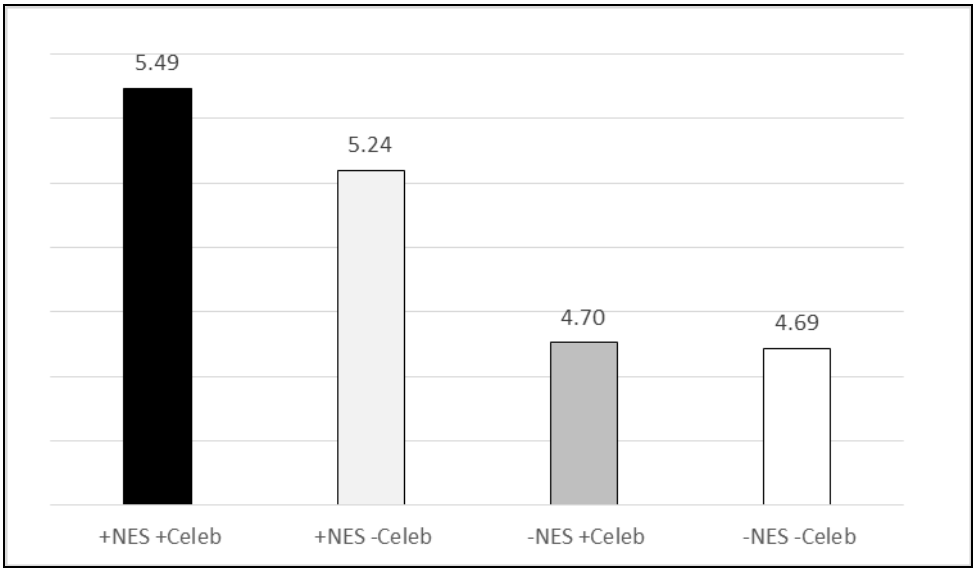


Figure 3
Means scores for category of speaker.

In Figure 3, the differences between the different categories of speakers can be seen. It is obvious that speakers identified as +NES are generally marked higher than those who are not. Overall, taking averages for each category of speaker as a whole, the data confirm hypothetical ranking 1 (Figure 1) where the nativeness principle takes precedence over the celebrity effect.

Examining the two categories where –Celeb is a feature (+NES –Celeb and –NES -Celeb), there is a difference of 0.55 points between NES and NNES (5.24-4.69). By contrast, looking at the two categories where the speaker is –NES (-NES +Celeb and –NES –Celeb) and where it is only the feature of ±Celeb which distinguishes the persona, it can be seen that there is only a difference of 0.1 point (4.70-4.69), indicating that the celebrity effect is of little or no importance when the speaker is presented as a NNES. However, it is interesting to note that it is notably stronger within the category of +NES (a difference of 0.25: approximately half that of the difference attributed to the nativeness principle).

One explanation for the fact that the celebrity effect seems minimal with speakers represented as NNES may be that, in the case of four out of the six –NES +Celeb, the

celebrity was fictitious and therefore not somebody who the respondents were familiar with and could have an opinion about beyond the impression given by photo used to represent them. As pointed out in Section 2.1, in such a case, the fear is that any celebrity effect will be nullified by the lack of recognition of the celebrity in question. In fact, of the –NNES persona, the mean scores for the real celebrities (Queen Rania and Shakira) was 4.98; that for the invented ones, 4.56: a relatively high difference of 0.42. However, if we leave Ana Barbu (Sp1) out of the calculation,[27] because all the persona for that speaker score notably lower than the rest, then the average (i.e. for Sp2, Sp3, Sp4) is 4.99 and the difference a paltry 0.1. This would indicate that familiarity with the celebrity in question did not influence in an important way the celebrity effect.

The data on Figure 3 only give a general picture. As can be seen by examining Figure 2 carefully, at the level of different speaker, there are many differences in rankings of persona. In Figure 4 below, we summarize these by looking at how the order of scores for different categories of persona for each speaker compares: (horizontal axis):

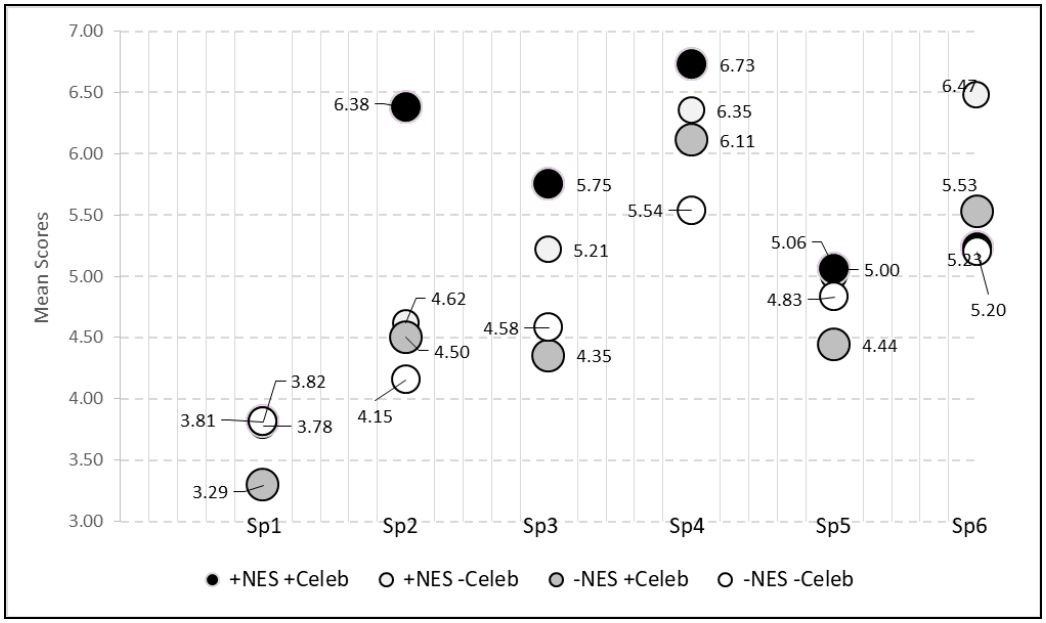


Figure 4
Means scores for each speaker by category of persona.

With Sp2 (Beyoncé) in particular, there is a very noticeable gap between the score for +NES + Celeb (Beyoncé) and the other configurations (which are all bunched closely together between 4.15 and 4.62) – see Table 8 below. It would seem that in this case, the celebrity effect was particularly strong yet did not extend to the other celebrity Bebel (-NES +Celeb). Indeed it is interesting that Bettye (+NES –Celeb) did not appear to benefit from the nativeness principle in a noticeable way as her score was only marginally above that of the two –NES speakers. One may ask whether ethnicity is an issue here, as only the persona in this group of speakers were identified (via the image) as being, like Beyoncé herself, of African / Afro-Caribbean origin. It is possible that, as in Rubin's (1992) study

[27] Indeed, on Figure 2, the invented Bebel (Sp2), the real Shakira (Sp5), and the invented Xenia Wurth (Sp3) come respectively in 18th, 19th and 20th positions with very similar scores (between 4.35 and 4.50). Furthermore, the invented Zlata Slunéčková (Sp4) comes top out of all the –NES –Celeb.

mentioned in Section 1.0, the mainly White European respondents[28] did not associate the trait of +NES so readily with a non-White persona like Bettye: a misconception which Beyoncé's celebrity shielded her from, so to speak. We shall discuss further the issue of ethnicity in Section 4.0 when we look at the wider issue of *affinity*. However, with Sp1 (Adele) we see a similar pattern which we could not so easily put down to negative attitudes towards different ethnicities seeing that the various persona are all White European. Indeed, while the difference between the score for Bettye (4.62) and the average of those for Beatriz and Bebel (4.33) is relatively small (0.29),[29] that for Annie (Sp1) (i.e. 3.78) and the average of Anna and Ana Barbu (3.55) is even smaller, (i.e. 0.22).

In Figure 5 below, we simplify Figure 4 by showing how the various configurations of speaker are ranked for each speaker.

Ranking	Sp1	Sp2	Sp3	Sp4	Sp5	Sp6
1	**Adele +NES +Celeb**	**Beyoncé +NES +Celeb**	**Cheryl Cole +NES +Celeb**	**Emma W. +NES +Celeb**	**SeeSee Bray +NES +Celeb**	Maggy +NES -Celeb
2	Anna -NES -Celeb	Bettye +NES –Celeb	Caitlin +NES -Celeb	Emily +NES -Celeb	Shelley +NES -Celeb	Q. Rania -NES +Celeb
3	Annie +NES -Celeb	Bebel -NES +Celeb	Michelle -NES -Celeb	Zlata S. -NES +Celeb	Laura -NES -Celeb	**P. Alexandra +NES +Celeb**
4	Ana Barbu -NES +Celeb	Beatriz -NES –Celeb	Xenia Wurth -NES +Celeb	Kristýna -NES -Celeb	Shakira -NES +Celeb	Ennas -NES -Celeb

Figure 5
Rankings of configurations of ±NES ±Celeb for each speaker.

In Figure 5, it can be seen that neither of the hypothesised rankings listed in Figure 1 emerge as predominant. Out of the six speakers, two (Sp2 and Sp4) follow the ranking predicted by hypothesised ranking 1, where the nativeness principle is more important than the celebrity effect, but none at all followed that of hypothesised ranking 2, where the celebrity effect takes precedence over the nativeness principle. Instead, Sp2 and Sp4 show a ranking where the nativeness principle is obviously important (the two top scoring persona are both +NES and the +Celeb within the categories of +NES and –NES come above –Celeb). Furthermore, another two speakers (Sp1 and Sp6) display completely different rankings. At other levels, however, there is a measure of uniformity in the ranking. In all except Sp6, +NES + Celeb is ranked first. In four out of the six speakers, the first two places in the ranking are +NES +Celeb then +NES –Celeb, the exceptions being Sp1 and Sp6. In all six speakers, +Celeb –Celeb comes above –NES +Celeb and +NES +Celeb comes above –NES –Celeb, regardless of ranking

[28] In our survey, we did not ask respondents to identify themselves by skin colour or by ethnicity, and nor does the university where most of the respondents were students of collect such data on students (other than a broad classification by nationality). We cannot therefore give objective estimates for the relative proportion of different ethnic groups among respondents. Our own experience tells us that, though diversity is increasing, the vast majority of students tend to be of White European heritage (and mostly Italian at that).

[29] The average different between scores for +NES –Celeb and the –NES speakers for all speakers was 0.54. For Sp3 (Cheryl Cole) the figure was 0.75; for Sp4 (Emma Watson) 0.53; for Sp5 (Shakira) 0.36 and for Sp6 (Q. Rania) 1.11.

The ranking for Sp1 (Adele) is particularly interesting because, not only is this speaker and all its persona marked the lowest of all the other speakers and their persona in the survey (see Figure 2) but the –NES –Celeb persona (Anna) comes in second rather than third or fourth position, as happens with all the other speakers. It is remarkable that Anna scores higher than both her +NES counterpart (Annie) and the celebrity and fellow -NNES Ana Barbu, the latter coming last of all.

In the case of Sp6 (Queen Rania), the highest scores are given to +NS –Celeb (Maggy) and there is a marked difference between the score for this and +NES +Celeb (Princess Alexandra). It would seem that in this case there is no celebrity effect although there seems to be one for Queen Rania (-NES +Celeb), one of the only two –NES in the survey who come in second place (the other being Anna, Sp1). The fact that Princess Alexandra receives lower scores than either Maggy (+NES –Celeb) or Queen Rania (-NES +Celeb) would seem to be more than coincidence because the margins between the scores are so substantial (see Figure 4, where 0.30 separates her average score from that of Queen Rania, and 1.24 from Maggy). Negative attitudes towards royalty in general, perhaps seen as people born into privilege, does not explain it, otherwise Queen Rania could be expected to have received lower mean scores too. It is possible that the respondents are singling out the British "upper class" for special disapproval, perhaps associating their language with "speaking posh", which is something that respondents may well have picked up from the popular culture of English-speaking countries or NESs themselves who typically display this same attitude.[30] With Maggy, by contrast, no such impression of being part of the British Establishment is given.

Looking at the ranking for Sp5, that which is striking is the fact that the real speaker, the –NES +Celeb, Shakira, comes last of all configurations, behind even Laura, her –NES –Celeb counterpart. Animosity towards Shakira as a person on the part of the respondents might explain this: a *notoriety effect* if one likes. To us however, this does not seem at all likely because Shakira is a hugely successful artist in Italy. Something similar could be said about Adele (Sp1) who, although she comes top in the ranking compared to her other guises, does so by a very narrow margin and still comes very close to the bottom of the rankings for all speakers (see Figure 2), despite the fact that all the indications are that she is immensely popular. Mean marks for the various real celebrities in the survey cannot be judged to be a simple measure of their popularity as celebrities, if it were, we would wager that Adele (Sp1) or Shakira (Sp5) would not come so far down the rankings (see Figure 2).

Indeed, if we compare the mean scores given for celebrities correctly identified (e.g. for Sp1: Adele) with the mean scores for their incorrectly identified guises (e.g. for Sp1: Anna; Annie; and Ana Barbu), we see that, while the ranking of three of the celebrities is constant, for the other three there are notable changes; see Table 8 below, where the shading indicates speakers whose position has changed in the ranking.

[30] Anecdotal evidence suggests that those perceived as "sounding posh" face prejudice. See for example: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/men/thinking-man/10520339/Please-dont-judge-me-by-my-posh-accent.html.

Correctly identified	Mean 1	Incorrectly identified	Mean 2	Change in Ranking	Difference (Mean 1 – Mean 2)
Emma Watson (Sp4)	6.73	Emily, Zlata S. ,Kristýna, (Sp4)	6.00	=	0.73
Beyoncé (Sp2)	6.38	Maggy, P. Alexandra, Enaas (Sp6)	5.63	+2	-0.10
Cheryl Cole (Sp3)	5.75	SeeSee Bray, Shelley, Laura (Sp5)	4.97	+2	-0.53
Q. Rania (Sp6)	5.53	Bettye, Bebel, Beatriz, (Sp2)	4.80	-2	1.57
Shakira (Sp5)	4.44	Caitlin, Michelle, Xenia Wurth (Sp3)	4.72	-2	1.03
Adele (Sp1)	3.82	Anna, Annie, Ana Barbu (Sp1)	3.63	=	0.19

Table 8
Difference in scores for each speaker correctly identified versus mean scores incorrectly identified.

As we have already noted from another perspective while discussing Figure 4, Beyoncé (Sp2) is awarded considerably higher marks when identified correctly (there being a difference of 1.57 points between the average scores) and her position in the ranking goes from second from top to third from bottom: a fall of two places. Comparison of the ranking for Cheryl Cole (Sp3) correctly and incorrectly identified shows a very similar pattern with a drop of two places in the ranking but the difference in means is smaller: only 1.03.

Q. Rania (Sp6) is the speaker who has the smallest difference between the means for correctly and incorrectly identified (-0.10, the minus figure indicating that she scores higher on average when incorrectly identified). This small difference is enough to take her up two places from fourth to second position. Shakira also receives a lower average mark when correctly identified but the difference is larger than Q. Rania (-0.53). The main reason for her and Q. Rania's low ranking when correctly identified is that two out of the other three persona are +NES who, from the results for other speakers (see Figure 5), could be expected to score higher.

Shakira, however receives a lower score than even her –NES –Celeb counterpart (Laura). Perhaps, in the case of Shakira (an extremely well-known figure), respondents are more aware of her Latin American background and identify her more as a NNES (i.e. Spanish speaker) than they do Q. Rania (Sp6), of whom they may have heard of but about whom they may not know many specific details. Shakira, indeed, has made a career singing in both Spanish and English and in her early career especially was associated primarily with the Latin music scene singing in Spanish, which is very popular in Italy. Laura may score more highly precisely because respondents are less influenced by the background information, that is to say the fact she is NNES Colombian may be less of a salient feature for them and they consequently less influenced by a strong identification of her with the Spanish language.

4.0 Discussion

As results of the survey show, it is not possible to draw up a simple formula along the lines of either Hypothetical Ranking 1 or 2 (see Figure 1) to explain why respondents would be happier to speak English like certain speakers than others. Instead, it has been

shown that the nativeness principle, the desire to sound like someone identified as a L1 speaker, is often a factor and so to, a lesser degree, is the wish to emulate a celebrity especially when she is a NES. Much, however, would seem to depend on the speaker in question.

At first sight, respondents seem conservative in their attitudes towards ways of speaking English because they show a preference for Sp4 (Emma Watson), in whatever guise, who out of the six speakers is closest to what is considered Standard English with an RP pronunciation.[31] Other NES varieties in the survey, such as the US English, with AAVE and Southern US features, of Sp2 (Beyoncé) and the "Geordie" of Sp3 (Cheryl Cole), are marked highly only when correctly identified, i.e. associated explicitly both with native speaker and celebrity (Figure 4). Remarkably, the London variety of Sp1 (Adele) comes bottom in all its manifestations, even when correctly identified.[32]

Bias against NNES on the part of respondents is not however always as evident as would have been the case had respondents displayed strict adherence to the nativeness principle. Although +NES are ranked first and second in four out of the six speakers, in two (Sp1 and Sp6), that is a third, they do not. It also transpires that the posited celebrity effect is observable only in the case of +NES (see Figures 3 and 5); with –NES, celebrity only seems to influence marks 50 per cent of the time (i.e. Sp2, Sp4 and Sp6).

Perhaps it is illuminating not to focus on why the +Celebs perform so inconsistently within the category of –NES, but to ask instead why certain –NES –Celebs do so well. An important factor may be that, of the four configurations presented in this survey (i.e. +NES +Celeb; -NES +Celeb; +NES –Celeb; -NES –Celeb), the one that respondents can identify most with are the –NES –Celeb, their all being NNES and ordinary women not enjoying the status of celebrity (i.e. like attracts like). With the category of +NES, the issue of identification may not be so important because the respondent does not feel any immediate empathy with either party precisely because of the existence of a NES / NNES divide, so to speak: a simple consequence of adhering to the native speaker principle (see Section 1.0).[33]

Within the category of –NES, there is perhaps a natural sense of identity with the speaker because she and the respondent find themselves on the same side of the NES / NNES divide: they are both NNESs striving to speak a L2. Neither has an inherent advantage over the other and direct comparisons are possible. In this context, the survey question "How happy would you be if you spoke English like her?" asked about a speaker presented as –NES describes a realistic proposition, while when it is asked about someone identified as +NES it becomes something purely hypothetical. This is not to say that respondents will never feel any empathy towards any +NES speaker, but rather that the effects of such affinity will be typically less strong than with NNES respondents where, in the context of a question relating specifically to how happy they would be to speak English like that person, the NES / NNES divide may be foregrounded thereby diluting

[31] According to a British Library project, (see: www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/sounds/find-out-more/received-pronunciation/), RP has evolved into three categories: *conservative*; *mainstream;* and *contemporary*. Emma Watson can be seen as representing a more *contemporary* kind.

[32] It has been pointed out to us that Adele is famous for her singing voice but her natural speaking voice may be largely unfamiliar even to her fans. Emma Watson, by contrast, is instantly recognisable through her normal voice (provided that respondents have seen her films in the original English). The lack of similarity between Adele's two voices may conceivably be a factor in her low marks, even when correctly identified.

[33] In the survey reported in Christiansen (2017) and discussed in Section 1.0, 98 out of 188 (approx. 52.13%) respondents agreed with the statement: "I will never sound like a native-speaker of English but I still feel confident using it."

any *affinity effect*, to coin a term. Therefore, if the affinity effect is weaker with both the +NES speakers, then the feature of ±Celeb may become relatively more important. Conversely, if the affinity effect is stronger with –NES, then any celebrity effect may be diminished.

This could also explain the case of Sp5 (Shakira); the respondents may mark Laura (-NES –Celeb) higher than Shakira (-NES +Celeb) herself because they feel that they have more in common with the youth worker than the world famous singer / songwriter. Here then the affinity effect may be seen to trump the celebrity effect, so to speak.

If such a thing as an affinity effect does exist then it needs to be explained why, in two of the speakers – Sp2 (Beyoncé) and Sp4 (Emma Watson) – it does not seem to come into play. In trying to understand why, we must look at what is special about the two –NES –Celeb persona used for these speakers and at what distinguishes them from the others in the survey. In both cases, it must be the way that the –NES +Celeb is described and represented that estranges the respondent from the persona in some way and reduces affinity.

In the case of Sp2 (Beyoncé), as we have noted (Section 3.0), all the persona are presented, like Beyoncé herself, as African or Afro-Caribbean in heritage, and it is just possible that at least some of the mainly White respondents to this survey may have felt less affinity with a Black woman, perhaps as an example of "colourism".[34] Against this hypothesis is the consideration that, if such a thing were a factor, we would have expected Beyoncé herself to score much lower than she did; in the ranking of celebrities correctly identified, she comes in second place to Emma Watson (see Table 8), and Adele (with a relatively light complexion) is in last place indicating that colourism is unlikely to be a factor.

Having touched upon the issues of ethnicity, skin colour and their possible effect on affinity, we might also ask whether other similar problematic factors may play a part: for example, attitudes to particular nationalities or even to different creeds. For instance, it might be wondered whether Enaas (Sp6 –NES –Celeb) gets a lower score because she could be supposed to be a Muslim while most of our respondents in all probability are Christian.[35] Against this idea, however, is the fact that there is no evidence of such prejudice directed at Q. Rania herself.

Such digression obviously risks opening up a Pandora's Box of alleged prejudices, which if recklessly made, may even be seen as defamatory towards respondents, all of whom generously volunteered to take part. Furthermore, speculation about such concerns, however legitimate,[36] is futile without proper research or experiments that are carefully designed to isolate and observe such views (something we did not originally attempt to do

[34] Prejudice against people because of their different (usually darker) complexions – see Jones (2001). In respect to this, it is perhaps relevant that, in the photo used to represent Beyoncé, her hair is fair and her skin colour is a slightly lighter shade than any of her invented persona (see Table 3).

[35] Of course, this is an assumption on our part, as we did not ask our respondents to declare what their religion was. However, in the South of Italy, Christianity (in its Roman Catholic form) is the dominant, but not exclusive, religion. Furthermore, saying someone is from Jordan does not automatically mean that they are Muslim (although some misinformed respondents may believe this to be so – others may possibly not even know where Jordan is so this consideration may be over their heads, so to speak).

[36] *Othering* – "[…] the simultaneous construction of the self or in-group and the other or out-group in mutual and unequal opposition through identification of some desirable characteristic that the self/in-group has and the other/out-group lacks and/or some undesirable characteristic that the other/out-group has and the self/in-group lacks." (Brons 2015, p.70) – is however a well-documented phenomenon in philosophy and psychology. Prejudice of all kinds should be opposed and it is by studying such phenomena that we may learn how to combat them most effectively.

in this current study and unfortunately cannot do retrospectively in an improvised manner).

It is also perfectly possible that ethnicity, colour or creed are not the real cause of a lack of affinity but rather that it is the profession that respondents cannot identify with (e.g. being a post office employee and driving a mail truck as Beatriz is pictured doing in the image used to represent her – see Table 3). Such a thing would perhaps also be true of Kristýna (-NES -Celeb Sp4), the factory worker and union official, whose occupation may be one that the respondents could not easily see themselves doing.[37]

Attitudes to gender roles may also play a large part in whether respondents can associate themselves or not with a persona of a certain occupation. Although sexual equality is enforced by law and promoted in most professions in Italy as elsewhere in Europe (and great progress has undeniably been made in recent years), engrained traditional sexist attitudes to the different kinds of jobs considered suitable for men and women persist. Some respondents may find it harder to identify with a woman doing a job that they subconsciously would expect a man to do (e.g. driving a mail truck or being a union official on a production line). This would explain why Michelle (-NES -Celeb Sp3) seems to benefit from the affinity effect and gets higher marks than Xenia Wurth (-NES +Celeb); as a hairdresser, she is perhaps in a line of work that the female respondents may associate more with women in general and consequently also with themselves.

An affinity effect could also account for the anomalous ranking of Anna (-NES –Celeb) for Sp1 (Adele). It is just possible that the young NNES fast food worker is precisely the kind of person respondents (mostly university students) can very readily identify with,[38] which explains why she scores even higher than Annie her +NES counterpart.

With Sp6, it is harder to sustain that an affinity effect explains the ranking. Enaas, the young UNCHR worker (represented, like Maggie, by a picture of a concerned-looking young woman carrying a small child in her arms – see Table 6), the –NES –Celeb with whom the respondents should perhaps feel most affinity, actually scores fewest points. By contrast, Q. Rania (+NES +Celeb) is marked and comes second in the ranking for this speaker.

Notwithstanding these complications, we think that the affinity effect is an interesting idea to explore further, not least because it would seem coherent with factors stimulating the desire to emulate, which is an area of psychology where much is still open to debate. To pick one theory, according to Over and Carpenter (2012), who focus on children, emulation occurs because subjects are firstly motivated to use others to learn about the world. Secondly, they are motivated to identify with the person being emulated. Finally, they are sensitive to social pressures that encourage particular ways of doing things. The native speaker principle, of course, would fit in with all three, which contributes to its tenacity: to learn about the world from others (and, in the case of language, who better than a NS? it may be believed); to identify with the person being emulated (the subconscious desire perhaps to become a NS); and from sensitivity to social pressure (in this case, the dogma of the native speaker principle itself and of the idea of a single Standard). Both the celebrity and posited affinity effects could however also be

[37] Again, in the South of Italy there is little heavy industry and moreover it can be assumed that most respondents are students of languages, a course of study that does not typically lead to employment on a car production line.

[38] The south of Italy suffers from persistent youth unemployment, even among graduates. Many young people still have to migrate and / or find jobs often, at least initially, in sectors like the fast food industry.

accommodated within this scheme: the former to identify with the person being emulated to become more like them in every respect (not just linguistic); the latter, to learn about the world from other people (who better to learn from than someone who shares the same experiences and background as your own?). In this last case, as we noted above, the affinity effect may potentially have the edge over any native speaker principle because the desire to emulate something that one cannot technically become (a NS), would seem weaker than a real sense of identity based actual similarity.

Furthermore, in psychology and observational / social learning, a distinction is made between *imitation* and *emulation*. The former involves replicating the actions of the model as an ends in itself. The latter focuses instead on the environmental effects of the actions that the model carries out, see Tomasello (1996, p.321fn): "[…] in emulation learning the learner observes and understands a change of state in the world produced by the manipulations of another – which may be its only way of learning that such a change of state is possible. On some occasions the individual will then want to produce that same change of state for itself." The focus of emulation, as opposed to simple imitation, is on the desire to achieve some goal and on the realization that copying the actions of another is a way to learn how to do it for themselves, which implies in practice, experiments with apes and human children have shown, not merely duplication of what has been observed but adaptation and improvisation. The same is true of language, which can also be seen fundamentally as a set of tools: the emulation inherent in language acquisition (both first and second) is not naturally focused on slavish replication but rather on learning how to use language as an instrument to achieve desired outcomes. From this perspective, other than the social approbation of adhering to the dogma of the nativeness principle, ELF users have little to gain from imitating NES rather than emulating them and developing their own norms more appropriate to their specific needs.

To return to Sp6, we would venture that various factors contribute to make the ranking for Sp6 so difficult to account for; as mentioned in Section 3.0. Maggy benefits from an affinity effect despite being a +NES (it is perhaps her representation as a UNHCR aid worker rescuing children that contributes to her scoring highest out of all the +NES – Celeb persona and second out of all the persona – see Figure 3). For P. Alexandra, the celebrity effect is markedly diminished by negative attitudes on the part of respondents to her perceived way of talking. Q. Rania, by contrast, enjoys a strong a celebrity affect which turns out to be larger than any affinity effect due to Enaas. As can be seen by the fact that these three persona's mean scores are so closely clustered (between 5.20 and 5.53 with only 0.03 points separating P. Alexandra and Enaas - see Figure 4), a delicate chemistry may determine which factors affect respondents' attitudes to specific speakers and how far they do so in relation to each other.

What is important at this stage and in the context of the experiment reported in this paper is to emphasise how, although it cannot be shown that the celebrity effect has a consistent effect on attitudes across the NES / NNES divide, this experiment has established that factors other than the nativeness principle have to be taken into account when looking at ELF user's attitudes to different manifestations of English, even though at this stage we are still some way from identifying a precise set of factors or understanding how they all interact. The fact that the nativeness principle can be shown not have a monopoly of influence on ELF users' attitudes is important. If other factors such as the celebrity or affinity effect also play a role, however small, there is scope for changes in their relative importance, as we have seen is the case with various speakers such as Sp1 or Sp6, and thus there is real potential in the long term for a change in the strength of the native speaker principle as a whole.

Reactions to Sp1 (Adele) in particular, are interesting in this respect. She uses the lexis and grammar of the standard NES variety of British English but with a strong London accent, which, as in its Estuary English version in particular, is growing in influence in the UK and some see it as a future rival to Standard English and, in particular, RP (see Rosewarne 1994). Interestingly, with the higher score for Anna than for Annie, we have the same effect as reported with Jerzy and Jack in Christiansen (2018) discussed in Section 1.0. Anna's coming above Annie may, as with Jerzy and Jack, be attributable to a marked preference for a perceived ELF variation over a non-standard NES variety that respondents, for whatever reason, take exception to, however it is worth noting that the NES non-standard variety of Sp3 (Cheryl Cole) is, on the whole, well received.[39]

5.0 Conclusion

Discussion of the differences in attitudes to non-standard varieties that we have undertaken in Section 4.0 shows that the opinion of NESs and NNES ELF users, as represented by respondents in this survey, are diverging rather than converging and that ELF users are not keen to copy this particular kind of English even when they associate it with such a popular celebrity as Adele. Viewed in the light of respondents' stated reluctance to sound like P. Alexandra (Sp6) – given that an upper class accent is usually, but perhaps over simplistically,[40] equated with RP – this may seem ironic. RP has nonetheless steadily decreased in currency among NESs. In the early 1970s it was estimated that only 3% of people in the UK used it (Trudgill 1980), and among NESs its prestige seems to be decreasing (see Jenkins 2007, p.81).[41]

Looking at the wider picture, this suggests that it is possible that, as the English of the typical NES inevitably evolves away from traditional standards and models, ELF users will be less inclined to continue to emulate NESs as dictated by the nativeness principle in its purest form (i.e. any NES is better than any NNES). Indeed some celebrity NNESs like Q Rania (Sp6) may be perceived as speaking something closer to standard English than do NESs like Adele, Beyoncé or Cheryl Cole and it must be noted that, bearing in mind our discussion in Section 1.0 about the fluid nature of language and the myth of (singular) immutable models, that which constitutes the "standard" is very much a matter of opinion and perspective. Indeed, the label *Standard English*, like labels such as *well-mannered*, is something that could be highly subjective and applied to very different things over time and space and in different contexts – exactly as the label *native speaker* seemed to be attached consciously or unconsciously by the respondent to any speaker that he or she found proficient in Christiansen (2014).[42]

[39] In a 2014 YouGov survey of attitudes of people in Britain to different regional British accents, Geordie came sixth out of the ten most attractive, Cockney ninth. Obviously, results in surveys such as these, however, often do not reflect attitudes to the accent itself but to the way people from areas where the accents are based are stereotyped – see Giles (1970). We think it unlikely that our respondents would be subject to the same prejudices that a NES from Britain may be regarding regional varieties of English.

[40] "Speaking posh" can certainly be equated with the *conservative* kind of RP (see fn above).

[41] However, it remains attractive: in the 2014 YouGov cited above (fn), RP was ranked second (after Southern Irish).

[42] See also Graddol's (2010, p.110) coining of the term *functionally native* for highly proficient users, which he seems to attribute to Kachru (1998), but would appear to be his interpretation of a different, related concept: a classification of languages not speakers (see Christiansen 2017).

Standard English may then survive, thrive even, as English becomes more global, but it may come to mean quite different things to people. Over time, results here and elsewhere (Christiansen 2011, 2014, 2017) suggest that many ELF users may feel stimulated to emulate the kinds of influential NNESs used in this study, be they celebrities or other people they feel a particular affinity with, and this may include some NESs. In the long run, however, such a situation may be unsustainable as standards based on models rely on universally shared attitudes, needs and goals: something difficult to achieve with a lingua franca used all over the world by hundreds of millions of people in contexts where English has become not only international but, even more significantly, *translocal.*[43]

As this experiment shows, two thirds of the speakers (12 out of 18) scored on average above 5.0 ("fairly happy") – see Figure 2 – so respondents are tolerant of a variety of different models. The top three ranked persona produce fairly different variations of English: Emma Watson (Sp4) Standard English, contemporary RP accent; Maggy (Sp6) a highly proficient NNES speaking an internationalised Standard English with something approaching a mainstream RP accent; and Beyoncé (Sp3) speaking General American with a Southern US / AAVE accent. The evolution of a new principle based not on emulation of a single model but on pragmatic strategies, such as a core approach (Jenkins 1998, 2000, 2002) or general intelligibility (see Levis 2005) is thus a distinct possibility. However, much more research is necessary in order to establish the existence of any trends leading to this outcome or to identify them in terms that are more precise.

Different types of dedicated longitudinal studies, each focussing on different parameters and on different types of respondents would certainly be required to monitor both continued adherence to the nativeness principle, and its possible evolution or demise, or whatever else may come to replace it.

Bionote: Thomas Christiansen is an associate professor in English Language and Translation at the Università del Salento (Italy) and Director of the University Language Centre. He has taught in various positions at various universities in Apulia (Italy), the UK, and Poland. He completed his PhD in textual linguistics at Salford (UK). He has researched into various areas of linguistics including systemic linguistics and functional grammar, varieties of English, ELF, teaching English, language testing, and analysis of different corpora, including spoken discourse. He has also worked as an expert consultant for Cambridge Assessment English for many years.

Author's address: thomas.christiansen@unisalento.it

[43] "English is a translocal language, a language of fluidity and fixity that moves across, while becoming embedded in, the materiality of localities and social relations. English is bound up with transcultural flows, a language of imagined communities and refashioning identities" (Pennycook 2007, pp.5-6).

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