Non-native speakers’ self-deprecation towards their English accents

Swedish English and Finnish English assessed by native Finnish and Swedish speakers

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Abstract

This study focuses on the self-assessments of the non-native English accents of Finnish and Swedish native speakers. An online survey with two voice samples was conducted with 63 participants, consisting of 31 Finns and 32 Swedes. The speakers were chosen to represent both Finnish English and Swedish English. The results indicate that English has a lingua franca status in both Finland and Sweden. The groups in general tended to be in agreement with the results of the self-assessments. Any significant negative reaction was not indicated by the results; however, both groups had a tendency to grade their accent lower than the other accent. The Swedish survey group tended to show greater criticism toward their accent than the Finnish group.

Keywords

English as lingua franca, English International Language, non-native accent, differences, attitude, prejudices, accent, Finnish English, Swedish English, Matched guise technique, English language