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**ENGLISH VARIETIES IN EFL LISTENING MATERIALS: A
SOLUTIONS COURSEBOOK ANALYSIS AND THE DESIGN OF
SUPPLEMENTARY WORKSHEETS**

MA thesis

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ABSTRACT

This thesis studies how English varieties are represented in the listening materials of the *Solutions* coursebook series and how learners could become more familiar with a wider range of English accents. It begins by outlining the global use of English, the role of accent variation in listening, and previous research on how varieties are presented in teaching materials. The study then analyses 308 listening tracks from three coursebooks at pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate levels and reveals a clear dominance of British English, with only limited inclusion of other varieties. In addition, supplementary worksheets introducing American, Australian and Indian English were developed. Finally, feedback from three practising teachers is summarised, showing how such materials could support learners in becoming more confident when listening to different accents.

Keywords: English varieties, EFL listening, coursebooks, World Englishes, teaching materials

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AmE – American English

AusE – Australian English

EFL – English as a foreign language

ELF – English as a lingua franca

ELT – English language teaching

CanE – Canadian English

CB – Culture Bank

IndE – Indian English

L1 – first language

L2 – second language

WE – World Englishes

INTRODUCTION

In today's multilingual world, English is used as a shared language by a large and ever-growing number of speakers, and for the majority of its users it is not a first language. Although exact figures vary, Ethnologue (2025) estimates that around 370 million people speak English as a first language and about 1.12 billion as an additional one. In other words, English today is far more often a non-native language than a native one, whether as a lingua franca, in education, or professional and academic settings (Mukherjee & Hundt 2011: 2). English has therefore become a natural choice for communication between people who do not share a first language. As English has spread and been used by people in many different regions and communities, it has developed into a language with a wide range of accents and ways of speaking (Siemund et al. 2012). Anyone who listens to English in everyday communication hears it in many different accents, and each one tells something about the speaker's linguistic background.

The ability to understand spoken English is therefore essential. For most learners, spoken English is something they deal with primarily through listening, where meaning has to be worked out in real time and differences in pronunciation often become more noticeable. Research on second language (L2) listening shows that familiarity with the accent strongly affects how easily it is understood, and regular exposure to different varieties helps listeners adapt better to unfamiliar accents and improves overall intelligibility (Derwing & Munro 2005; Field 2008; Ur 2024). If the aim is to communicate successfully in international settings rather than to imitate a single native-speaker norm, as has often been argued (Jenkins 2006: 174-175; Mukminien 2012), then this makes the type of spoken input learners hear especially important.

Coursebooks play a central role in shaping this input, as for many learners they are the main source of structured listening practice. Several scholars (Baratta 2019; Galloway & Rose 2015; Matsuda 2012; Modiano 1999) have highlighted, however, that global English teaching

materials typically expose learners to only a small number of standard accents, most often British or American English, even though most English interactions worldwide take place between non-native speakers. Moreover, Gray (2010: 1) notes that coursebooks present a selected version of language use rather than a direct reflection of it. If students only ever hear a limited range of accents, unfamiliar ones can become intimidating, and they may not develop the listening strategies needed for communication outside the classroom. This is also relevant in the Estonian context, where the National Curriculum for Basic Schools emphasises communicative and sociolinguistic competence as well as the ability to understand authentic spoken texts (Põhikooli riiklik õppekava 2014).

Some earlier BA and MA theses in University of Tartu have already touched on questions related to pronunciation and English varieties. Teder (2023) found that English teachers in Estonia nowadays do tend to prioritise intelligibility in pronunciation teaching, but they are still looking for methods to work with this in their lessons. From the learner perspective, Melnik (2019) shows that learners' awareness of English varieties is closely linked to their previous exposure to them. This connection between awareness and input is also visible in the study by Laiuste (2025), which shows that English as a foreign language (EFL) learners tend to combine features from different varieties in their speech, which reflects the mixed input they receive, as well as the limited attention paid to varieties in their lessons. These studies look at teachers, learners and spoken English, but they leave aside the listening materials that actually shape the input or how additional materials could be developed for teaching. This becomes especially clear in classroom practice. In the author's own lessons, learners have sometimes treated one spelling or pronunciation model as the only correct one and reacted with genuine surprise when they realised that another option was equally acceptable. This highlights how strongly study materials, as well as previous exposure, shape what learners expect English to be and how it should look and sound.

The starting point of this thesis is the question of what kind of spoken English is present in the listening materials of the *Solutions* coursebook series and how learners could become more familiar with different varieties of English. If English is used as a shared language in multilingual settings, learners need to be able to understand different ways of speaking it. This makes it necessary to look more closely at the listening materials coursebooks currently offer and at how more variety could be introduced in ways that are practical for teachers. The aim of this thesis is to analyse how English varieties are represented in the listening materials of three different *Solutions* coursebooks and to design worksheets that introduce learners to a wider range of accents. The *Solutions* series was selected as it is familiar to the author from everyday teaching practice and also includes a large amount of listening material, which meant there was enough data for the analysis. In addition, the materials are easily accessible through the Oxford Learner's Bookshelf platform, which made it possible to review and analyse the recordings in a systematic way. This study focuses on the following research questions:

1. Which English varieties are represented in the listening materials of the *Solutions* coursebook series?
2. What patterns can be observed in the distribution of these varieties across the materials?
3. How can additional listening materials be developed to broaden learners' familiarity with different English varieties?

In this study, English varieties are understood as recognisable ways in which the language is used in specific linguistic and cultural contexts. Accent refers to how these differences are heard in pronunciation. This distinction reflects common approaches in research on World Englishes (WE) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), where English is seen as a language that belongs to its users rather than to a single standard (Jenkins 2006: 158–160).

The study grows directly out of classroom practice. It analyses the listening materials of the *Solutions* coursebook series and develops additional worksheets to address the gaps

identified in the analysis. The coursebooks, published by Oxford University Press, follow a largely British English model. The aim is to bring the diversity of English more clearly into the learning environment and to help learners feel more confident when listening to different accents. The supplementary worksheets introduce American, Australian and Indian English in order to broaden learners' exposure to varieties that are either only briefly represented or entirely absent from the analysed materials.

To the author's knowledge, a similar study focusing on the representation of English varieties in EFL listening materials has not previously been carried out in Estonia or within the Department of English Studies at the University of Tartu. In addition to analysing coursebook materials, the study also includes designing supplementary listening worksheets, showing one possible way of introducing learners to a wider range of English varieties in the classroom.

The thesis consists of two main chapters. After the introduction, the first chapter presents the theoretical background and discusses the global use of English, accent variation in listening, the role of teaching materials, and an overview of the varieties that later serve as the basis for the worksheet design. The second chapter contains the empirical part of the study. It describes the analysis of the listening materials in the *Solutions* series, the design of the additional worksheets, and finally the feedback collected from three practising English teachers. The thesis ends with a conclusion that brings the main findings together and reflects on what they mean for classroom practice.

1. ENGLISH VARIETIES IN EFL: FROM GLOBAL USE TO CLASSROOM PRACTICE

This chapter is based on the understanding that English today exists in a wide range of established varieties and is used by speakers with very different linguistic backgrounds. It reviews key research on English as a global language, with a focus on World Englishes, English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), and different models describing the spread and development of English. Since coursebooks often determine what kind of English is heard in the classroom, the chapter also looks at how this diversity is – and is not – reflected in teaching materials. The final sections outline the basic principles of EFL materials development and provide an overview of the main pronunciation features of American, Australian, and Indian English, which form the basis for the coursebook analysis and the supplementary worksheets developed in this thesis. The chapter is organised into six sections that explore these topics step by step.

1.1 English as a global language

The spread of English around the world, mainly shaped by colonial history and later by globalisation, has led to the development of many different varieties of the language (Crystal 2003; Kachru 1991). English is no longer used in the same manner across the world and has taken different forms depending on sociocultural contexts. As McArthur (1998, as cited in Bieswanger 2008: 31) aptly notes: “No other language has ever been put to so many uses so massively by so many people in so many places.” This reflects the remarkable extent to which English has come to exist in many different forms across different communities. When it began to be used by speakers in a wide range of settings for different purposes, it became clear that these forms could no longer be fully explained through a single native-speaker model. Over time, these forms became increasingly shaped by local contexts and communicative needs. This idea forms the basis of the concept of World Englishes (WE), which recognises that multiple

English varieties are widely used and linguistically valid (Jenkins 2006). From this perspective, English is understood as a global language shaped by its users around the world, rather than belonging only to traditional English-speaking countries (Jenkins 2006: 161; Kachru 1991: 178–179).

Several models have been proposed to describe this global spread and development of English. A commonly used model is Braj Kachru's three-circle model (see Figure 1), which distinguishes between Inner Circle countries, where English is spoken as a first language and has traditionally been seen as the norm-setting variety; Outer Circle, where English has an important institutional and historical role, for example in education, administration, or the media as a result of colonialism; and Expanding Circle, where English is learned as a foreign language and mostly used for international communication (Kachru 1991: 178–179). This model usefully shows that most English users today live outside traditional native-speaker communities and mainly use English to communicate with other non-native speakers. As Jenkins (2006: 163) points out, this situation challenges the continued dominance of British and American English as the main teaching models. For many learners, English is primarily used for international communication and is not tied to a single national variety.

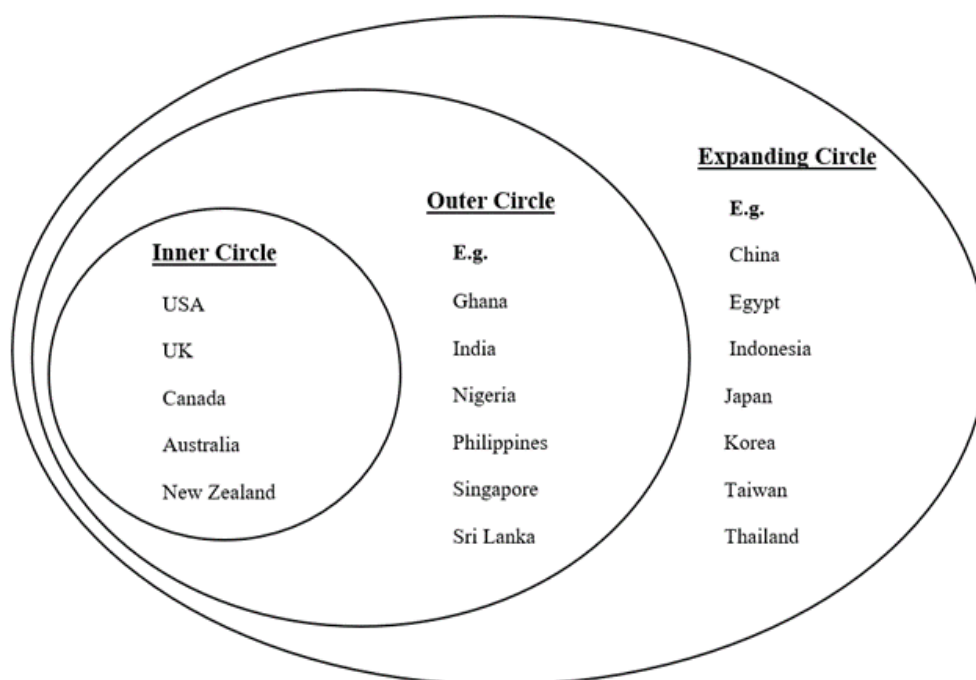


Figure 1. Kachru's three circles of English (adapted from Kachru 1991: 179).

At the same time, the three-circle model has been seen as somewhat too clear-cut for the way English is actually used today. As Lindqvist and Soler (2022: 126) point out, considering how multilingual and international present-day life can be – people might live in one country, work in another and study in a third – it is not always possible or even necessary to place them into one single circle. Furthermore, because the model is organised only around countries, it mainly describes standardised forms of English, and other forms that exist in the same settings, such as pidgins and creoles, remain outside its focus. That said, the model still works well as a basic starting point when teaching or discussing the globalisation of English.

With this in mind, scholars have also suggested alternatives for describing the global diversity of the English language. For example, McArthur's (1987) well-known Wheel Model (see Figure 2) places different varieties geographically around a shared centre. This way of organising the varieties gives them a more equal visual status and moves the focus away from the idea that one variety stands above the others, an approach that is also central to the present study. The model also makes it easier to see a wide range of Englishes at once, including both

more familiar and less well-known varieties. This can be especially useful in English language teaching (ELT), where it can be used to raise awareness of how widely English is used and how many different forms it can take. It also helps show that major varieties such as British, American or Australian English are only general labels, and that there is further variation within them. At the same time, it should be noted that, like any model, it simplifies a more complex reality, where the boundaries between varieties are not always clearly defined.

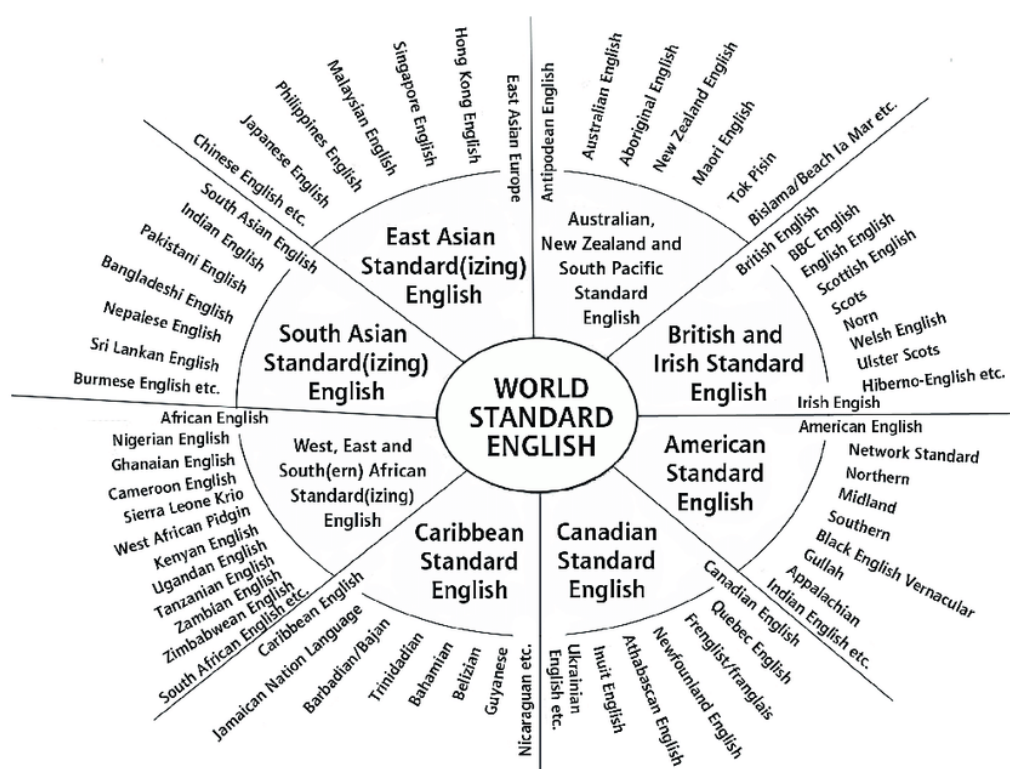


Figure 2. McArthur's wheel model (adapted from McArthur 1998: 97)

The diversity of English described above is also the result of long-term historical developments in specific communities. Schneider's (2003) dynamic model draws attention to this by describing how English gradually becomes part of local life and develops its own locally meaningful forms (Schneider 2003: 255). It explains why these varieties can be treated as established forms of English rather than as recent deviations from British or American norms.

The five-phase model begins with the foundation phase, when English is first introduced in a new setting and used mainly by a small group of speakers. This is followed by a period of exonormative stabilisation, in which local users look to external norms, typically British or American English, as the main reference point. During the third, nativisation phase, which Schneider (2003: 247) describes as the most vibrant and important, English starts to take on local features as it is used in everyday communication between different language groups. In the phase of endonormative stabilisation, local forms of English become more widely accepted and are recognised as part of the community's own identity. In the final stage, the variety becomes more internally diverse and begins to show the regional and social differences among its speakers (Schneider 2003: 254–255).

Similarly to McArthur's wheel, this model provides a useful framework but presents language development as relatively linear. In reality, however, English use is often more complex and at times messier, particularly in multilingual and international settings. Development does not always follow clear stages but tends to be more fluid, with different stages overlapping, as also suggested in research on WE and ELF (Jenkins 2006). At the same time, the model can be used to situate the three varieties discussed in this thesis. American English and Australian English are regarded as phase five varieties, as they are fully established and internally diversified (Schneider 2007: 73, 291). Indian English, in turn, is generally described as being in phase four. It has its own recognised norms and a secure place in public life. However, it is used as a second language by only part of the population, which distinguishes it from the fully internally diversified phase 5 varieties (Schneider 2007: 161).

This historical perspective also provides a basis for understanding present-day communication in English. Closely related to the concept of WE is English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), which refers to the use of English as a shared means of communication between speakers with different L1s. As Jenkins (2006: 159–160) points out, ELF is mainly used among non-

native speakers and is therefore not based on native-speaker norms as the primary model. Instead, communication in ELF often involves speakers with different L1s, which means that learners are likely to hear a wide range of accents and ways of speaking. Given that a large proportion of global English communication takes place in such contexts, teaching goals based on native-speaker standards become increasingly difficult to justify (Jenkins 2006: 163; Modiano 1999: 4). Learners do not need to aim for a single correct model. Instead, they need to develop the ability to understand different ways of speaking and respond effectively.

1.2 The impact of accent variation on listening comprehension

Listening comprehension plays a central role in language learning, as it provides learners with exposure to spoken language in everyday situations. However, understanding spoken English can often be challenging for learners, particularly when they hear unfamiliar accents. Previous research (Field 2008: 42; Jenkins 2006: 166) shows that learners tend to understand speech more easily when it matches the accent they have been most frequently exposed to in the classroom, usually British or American English. At the same time, limited exposure to accent variation can make it more difficult for learners to understand unfamiliar accents (Derwing & Munro 2005; Field 2008; Jenkins 2006). Learners who are taught mainly with one standard variety often struggle to understand speech by speakers with different pronunciation patterns, even when the language itself is grammatically simple (Derwing & Munro 2005: 383). These findings suggest quite clearly that issues in understanding spoken English do not only stem from not knowing enough vocabulary or grammar but are closely affected by one's familiarity with different accents.

The impact of this limited exposure can also be seen in classroom practice. Bieswanger (2008) describes from his own teaching experience how students who had studied English for many years reported feeling frustrated in real-life encounters because some speakers sounded

“so strangely” and that their “school English” did not enable them to take part in conversations (Bieswanger 2008: 28). What they experienced was clearly not a lack of vocabulary or grammar, but an unexpected gap between the English they had learned and the English they had heard. Reactions like these are a good reminder that listening and spoken language are much more than just what is learnt from a coursebook.

Research shows that regular contact with different English accents can significantly improve learners’ listening skills. Research by Derwing and Munro (2005, 2015) suggests that increased exposure to different forms of spoken English can help learners become more comfortable with accent variation and support listening comprehension. Field (2008: 92) similarly emphasises that listening materials should include a range of spoken English forms in order to help learners build stronger and more realistic listening skills. From this perspective, the goal of listening instruction is intelligibility, understood as successful understanding across different accents rather than the use of a single correct pronunciation model (Jenkins 2006: 166). This view also aligns with ELF research, which considers communication across accents as a normal and expected part of global English use.

Learners’ attitudes toward different accents can also influence listening comprehension. Matsuda (2012: 75) shows that learners often see native speaker accents as more correct or higher in status, while being less accepting, less positive about non-native accents, which can influence how willing they are to engage with different speakers. It has also been suggested that English varieties are linked to different social perceptions and values which can further affect learners’ listening behaviour. For instance, according to a recent study conducted in Finland, young adults often associate British English with schooling and American English with media and leisure, reflecting distinct social attitudes toward these accents (Kivelä 2020). Thus, such attitudes can influence how learners approach listening to different speakers, again highlighting the importance of regular inclusion of accent diversity in listening materials.

1.3 Representation of English varieties in ELT materials

Although English is now used globally, teaching materials in ELT classrooms still tend to focus on a limited range of standard native-speaker varieties. Many coursebooks and listening materials primarily present British or American English, while other varieties are either absent or only briefly mentioned. Matsuda (2012: 168) notes that most globally used textbooks still promote native-speaker norms as the ideal model, reinforcing the idea that British or American English represents the most legitimate form of the language. This tendency is also connected to the global textbook market, where materials are often designed for wide international use. As a result, they present simplified and selective representations of language use that do not fully reflect how English is used in real-life communication (Gray 2010).

Recent coursebook analyses further illustrate this pattern. Lindqvist and Soler (2022), examining English coursebooks used in Swedish upper-secondary schools, found that British and American English still dominate, with relatively limited representation of other varieties. A more recent comparative study (Çam & Salı 2025) of global textbooks used in Türkiye reports similar results, showing that materials tend to focus on inner-circle speakers and standard forms of English, while the diversity of English use worldwide remains only marginally represented. Although these studies do not focus specifically on listening materials, they do highlight a tendency for coursebooks to present a rather one-sided picture of English.

This becomes especially clear in listening materials. Baratta (2019: 252) points out that Inner Circle English is often treated as the main model for teaching, which limits learners' exposure to other varieties. Studies on listening comprehension show that this can make it more difficult for learners to understand a wider range of speakers and may also reinforce the idea that non-native varieties are less valid (Derwing & Munro 2005; Field 2008). At the same time, some materials now include a wider range of accents and speakers. However, as Matsuda (2012: 72) notes, these are often treated as additional elements and included mainly as interesting

cultural details, and Englishes beyond BrE and AmE are rarely used as part of regular language practice.

Similar ideas come up in classroom-based research by Davydova et al. (2013), who describe how teaching materials on English varieties were developed and tested in real classrooms. They found that learners can usually recognise familiar differences, like British and American English, but have more trouble when it comes to less familiar accents (Davydova et al. 2013: 87–88). This suggests that learners do not get enough regular exposure to different varieties, and that targeted materials could help them become more aware of how varied English actually is in real-life use.

Overall, previous research quite consistently shows that many EFL coursebooks do not fully reflect how English is used around the world. Cultural diversity is sometimes included, but accent diversity often remains limited, and many materials still focus mainly on British and American English. This gap between classroom materials and real-world English use also highlights the need to examine listening input more closely.

1.4 Listening materials and real-world English

Researchers in materials development often stress that learners should be exposed to English as it is used outside the classroom. According to Harmer (2007: 273), authentic material is ‘... language where no concessions are made to foreign speakers,’ referring to language as it occurs in real-life. Tomlinson (2011: 10, 14-15) similarly describes authentic materials as real conversations, media content, and everyday language that were not originally created for teaching purposes. He suggests that hearing natural speech helps learners understand how English works in real situations, not just in carefully simplified textbook examples. In practical terms, this means that listening materials should not only present slow, over-enunciated recordings spoken by British or American speakers, but also include a variety of voices, accents,

and everyday situations that learners can relate to. However, Harmer (2007: 274) also points out that the distinction is not always clear, and some materials may include both authentic elements and parts that have been adjusted for the classroom. Ur (2024: 103) further notes that fully authentic audio materials are often not suitable for classroom use due to unfamiliar or inappropriate vocabulary, unclear pronunciation or overlapping speech. This balance between authenticity and classroom accessibility becomes particularly relevant when looking at coursebook listening materials, which often aim to be clear and accessible, but may at the same time move away from the kind of variation and naturalness found in real-life communication. Interestingly, CEFR oral comprehension descriptors for B1–B2 learners refer not only to “standard language” but also to “familiar varieties” (Council of Europe 2020: 48–53). This also raises the question of how different varieties become familiar to learners in the first place. One possible answer is regular exposure to a wider range of natural, spoken English both inside and outside the classroom.

At the same time, natural speech can be challenging for learners, as spoken language is often fast paced, spontaneous, contains reduced or unclear forms, and does not present words as clearly separated units. In addition, listening is particularly demanding because speech is temporary and happening in real time, which means that learners cannot rewind and check what they have heard (Field 2008: 27; Ur 2024: 8). For this reason, working with authentic listening materials can be challenging for learners if they are not adequately supported. Tomlinson (2011: 5) also points out that when learners work with realistic language, they need clear tasks and teachers’ support so that the material feels manageable rather than overwhelming. Matsuda (2012: 18) agrees that learners may initially feel unsure when encountering unfamiliar English varieties, but that gradual structured exposure and reflective activities can help build confidence over time. Thus, the listening material must be introduced in a supportive and organised way as not to intimidate learners.

Engagement also plays an important role in listening activities. Tomlinson (2011: 5) criticises listening materials that rely heavily on repetitive drills and artificial language practice, which rarely resemble the way people actually communicate and often fail to engage learners. Instead, he argues for tasks that focus on meaning and encourage learners to listen with a purpose. Rose et al. (2020: 82) make a similar point, emphasising that listening activities should sound like real communication rather than carefully scripted classroom exchanges. For example, tasks might involve identifying the main idea in a spontaneous conversation, noticing how pronunciation differs between speakers, or discussing the cultural context behind what is being said.

Scholars understand that coursebooks alone cannot cover the full range of the English language. Tomlinson (2011: 14) points out that supplementary materials help teachers to address gaps in existing resources and adapt content to learners' needs, especially in areas such as language variety. When coursebooks mainly present standard British or American English, supplementary materials and listening tasks can be used to introduce learners to other varieties and more realistic language use.

1.5 Materials development in ELT

Since the present study also involves the design of supplementary listening materials, it is important to briefly consider some of the principles behind materials development in EFL teaching. In language teaching, materials are often adapted or supplemented in order to better support students' needs and classroom goals. Although coursebooks provide structure and support for both teachers and learners, they may not always fully match the needs of a particular learner group. As a result, teachers often adapt existing materials or create their own activities in order to better suit their classroom context, learners' needs and interests, as adapting and

supplementing materials is widely considered a natural part of language teaching (Howard & Major 2005: 101–102; McDonough & Shaw 2003: 73–75).

One of the main advantages of teacher-created materials is flexibility, as supplementary activities can be adjusted according to learners' language level, classroom context and interests. Effective materials should also connect to learners' experiences and encourage meaningful use of language (Howard & Major 2005). In addition, supplementary materials can help address areas that coursebooks cover only briefly or not at all, especially when teachers want to include topics, listening materials or English varieties that are more relevant to their learners. In the present study, this flexibility makes it possible to design activities that focus more directly on accent variation and listening awareness.

Learner engagement is also an important consideration in materials development. Materials should encourage active participation and meaningful use of language rather than relying mainly on mechanical exercises (Howard & Major 2005; Richards 2006). In listening activities, tasks involving discussion, prediction and personal responses can help learners engage more actively with the content and feel more confident participating in classroom interaction.

Still, creating effective materials is not always easy. In addition to being engaging and relevant, materials also need to be clear and manageable in practice. Instructions should be understandable and tasks logically organised, particularly when learners are working with unfamiliar language features or accents (Scrivener 2011; Ur 2024). Materials should also fit within the available lesson time and be suitable for learners with different proficiency levels. As McDonough and Shaw (2003) point out, activities that seem effective in theory may not always work equally well in real classroom situations, particularly if they are too difficult or unclear.

Overall, creating materials means finding a balance between what works well in theory and what is actually practical in the classroom. Supplementary materials can help teachers address gaps in coursebooks and introduce topics or language features that might otherwise receive little attention. In the present study, the worksheets were created to complement the *Solutions* coursebook series and provide learners with more exposure to different varieties of English through listening and discussion-based activities. The following section gives a brief overview of the three selected varieties and some of their more prominent features.

1.6 Phonological and distinct features of American, Australian and Indian English

In order to support the design of the supplementary listening materials, it is first necessary to outline the most recognisable pronunciation features of the selected varieties. The aim of this section is not to provide a detailed phonological description of the varieties but to highlight a small number of characteristic features that are clearly audible and useful for recognition. The focus is on pronunciation features that help learners notice differences between accents and feel more confident when interacting with English speakers of different backgrounds.

The following paragraphs give a brief overview of the main pronunciation features of General American English (AmE), General Australian English (AusE) and General Indian English (IndE) that are relevant for the present study, and these features are illustrated in Table 1 below. It should be noted that the descriptions focus on more general or widely recognised forms of these varieties and do not attempt to cover the full range of regional variation within each.

AmE is likely one of the most widely heard varieties of English and plays an important role in global media, entertainment and online communication. Because of this strong presence, many learners are already somewhat familiar with the variety, although it is not always

explicitly taught in the classroom. Introducing its most noticeable features can help learners be more aware of the differences between AmE and BrE.

General American is a rhotic variety, which means that the /r/ sound is always pronounced, in all positions, for example in *car* [kɑɹ], *teacher* ['ti:tʃəɹ] and *first* [fɜɹst]. Another frequently mentioned feature of AmE is the intervocalic realisation of /t/ as a voiced flap [ɾ], so that words such as *better* and *city* may be heard by learners as ['berə] and ['sɪɹi]. Yod dropping is also common, which means that words such as *tune* and *student* are pronounced [tu:n] and ['stu:dənt] instead of [tju:n] and ['stju:dənt], as can be heard in BrE. (Avery & Ehrlich 1992: 42; Wells 1982: 207).

Another important feature of AmE concerns vowel mergers and distinctions. The vowels in the LOT and PALM lexical sets are typically merged into /ɑ/, so that words such as *job* and *palm* are both pronounced with the vowel /ɑ/, realised as [dʒɑb] and [pɑm]. In BrE, however, these words contain different vowels, typically [dʒɒb] and [pɑ:m]. In addition, unlike many forms of BrE, AmE generally does not distinguish between the TRAP and BATH vowels, meaning that words such as *dance* and *bath* are pronounced with /æ/ rather than /ɑ:/ (Wells 1982: 132–133).

As for intonation and rhythm, General AmE is considered a stress-timed variety, and its intonation typically involves noticeable pitch variation, with stressed syllables standing out more prominently than unstressed ones (Avery & Ehrlich 1992: 91–92).

General Australian English is a non-rhotic variety, which means that the /r/ sound is not pronounced unless it is followed by a vowel, as in *car* [kɑ:] and *teacher* ['ti:tʃə] (Cox & Fletcher 2017; Wells 1982). One of the most recognisable features of AusE lies in the vowel quality. The KIT vowel in words such as *sit* [sɪt] and *fish* [fɪʃ] is typically more central, which gives these common words a distinct sound. The diphthong in the FACE vowel also has a more open starting point, so that words such as *day* [daɪ] and *name* [naɪm] are realised quite differently from, for

example, BrE. In the PRICE vowel, the diphthong often begins further back, and words such as *time* [tɔɪm] and *my* [mɔɪ] contribute to the distinct overall quality of the accent (Cox & Fletcher 2017: 70; Wells 1982).

In AusE, another commonly noticeable feature in connected speech is the intervocalic /t/, which is frequently realised as a voiced flap [ɾ], as in *better* ['berə] and *water* ['wɔ:ɾə]. This is shared with AmE and may make the consonant difficult to identify for some learners who expect a clear /t/.

AusE is often also associated with distinctive intonation patterns, which contribute to the recognisable overall quality of the accent. In informal speech especially, AusE may sound more rising or questioning to listeners unfamiliar with the variety, even in statements rather than direct questions. These prosodic features are considered an important part of the characteristic sound of AusE (Cox & Fletcher 2017: 75).

In addition to pronunciation and intonation features, AusE is also known for its distinctive vocabulary and colloquial expressions, such as the frequent word *mate*, which reflects the informal and friendly tone often associated with AusE. This variety also makes frequent use of shortened forms with *-ie* (e.g. *barbie*, *mozzie*) and *-o* endings (e.g. *arvo*, *servo*), which are closely associated with informal communication (Peters 2007: 76). Some of these features were also incorporated into the supplementary materials to give learners a broader picture of the variety.

General Indian English has several pronunciation features that are immediately noticeable in listening. The vowel in words such as *day* and *table* is often realised as a long monophthong, so that they may be heard as [de:] and ['te:bəl], which gives the speech a more even and stable vowel quality (Nihalani et al. 2004: 209). The /r/ sound is pronounced in all positions and is typically clearly articulated, for example in *car* [ka:r] and *teacher* ['ti:tʃər]. Another frequent feature is the realisation of the sounds /θ/ and /ð/ as dental stops [t̪] and [d̪],

so words such as *think* and *this* sound something like [tɪŋk] and [ðɪs] (Schneider 2007: 91). In addition, many varieties of IndE feature retroflex consonants, where the alveolar stops /t/ and /d/ may be realised as retroflex [ɖ] and [ɗ], influenced by the phonological systems of Indian languages. This can be heard in pronunciations such as *certificate* [səʈɪfɪke:ɖ] and *London* [lɒndɒn] (Gargesh 2004: 237). Another characteristic feature of IndE is the reduced distinction between /v/ and /w/, as both may be realised as a sound close to [v], which affects words such as *wine*, *vine* and *very* (Nihalani et al. 2004: 210).

The rhythm of IndE also has a distinctive and recognisable sound. Unlike stress-timed varieties such as BrE and AmE, IndE is often described as more syllable-timed, meaning that unstressed syllables are usually pronounced more fully and with less vowel reduction. As a result, the speech may sound more even and steady, with syllables carrying a more similar length and prominence (Nihalani et al. 2004: 219; Gargesh 2004: 241). These prosodic features strongly shape the overall rhythm and flow of the variety. The most common pronunciation features of the three varieties are summarised in Table 1 for ease of comparison:

Table 1. Selected pronunciation features of the three varieties (based on Avery & Ehrlich 1992; Cox & Fletcher 2017; Gargesh 2004; Nihalani et al. 2004; Schneider 2007).

Feature	AmE	AusE	IndE
Rhoticity (<i>car</i>)	rhotic [kɑː]	non-rhotic [kɑ:]	rhotic, often realised as a tap [ɾ] [kɑːɾ]
Intervocalic /t/ and stop consonants (<i>better</i>)	realised as flap [ɾ] [ˈberə]	realised as flap [ɾ] [ˈberə]	[t] is retained, retroflex articulation [ˈbeɖər]
FACE (<i>day</i>)	diphthong [deɪ]	more open diphthong [dæɪ]	long monophthong /eː/ [deː]
PRICE (<i>time</i>)	diphthong [taɪm]	starts further back [tɔɪm]	full diphthong [taɪm]
/θ/ and /ð/ (<i>think</i>)	fricatives [θɪŋk]	fricatives [θɪŋk]	dental stops [t̪], [d̪] [t̪ɪŋk]
/v/ – /w/ contrast (<i>wine/vine</i>)	maintained [waɪn] – [vaɪn]	maintained [wɒɪn] – [vɒɪn]	/w/ realised as [v] [vaɪn] – [vaɪn]

Unstressed vowel (<i>about</i>)	strong reduction [ə'baʊt]	strong reduction [ə'bæʊt]	full vowels retained [a'baʊt]
Intonation/rhythm	stress-timed, wide pitch movement	rising, friendly intonation patterns	syllable-timed tendency, more even rhythm
LOT / PALM (<i>job/palm</i>)	merged /ɑ/ [dʒɑb] – [pɑm]	distinct vowels [dʒɔb] – [pa:m]	varies between speakers
TRAP / BATH (<i>dance, bath</i>)	merged /æ/ [dæns] – [bæθ]	distinct vowels [da:ns] – [ba:θ]	varies between speakers

The research discussed in Chapter 1 presents English as a language that exists in many forms and is shaped by the speakers who use it in different parts of the world. It also shows how important it is for learners to become familiar with this variation in listening, while at the same time suggesting that the range of accents offered in many coursebooks remains rather limited. This creates a noticeable distance between the diversity of English in real-world communication and the input learners typically encounter in the classroom. With this background in mind, the next chapter examines how English varieties are represented in the listening materials of the *Solutions* coursebook series and introduces the supplementary worksheets developed in response to the findings.

2. ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH VARIETIES IN THE *SOLUTIONS* SERIES AND DEVELOPMENT OF SUPPLEMENTARY WORKSHEETS

This chapter looks at the listening materials in three *Solutions* (3rd edition) Student's Books, focusing on the range of accents and varieties learners are exposed to through listening tasks. More specifically, the chapter addresses the three research questions presented in the introduction by examining which English varieties are represented in the materials, what patterns emerge in their distribution, and how supplementary materials could be designed to broaden learners' exposure to different accents. The chapter begins with an overview of the material and the approach used to analyse it. It then presents the results of the coursebook analysis, identifying patterns in the distribution of accents and the types of listening input. Based on these findings, it also highlights gaps in the materials and introduces the supplementary worksheets developed in this study, along with a description of their design and purpose. Lastly, it summarises teachers' feedback on the three piloted worksheets and discusses the main findings of the study.

2.1 Data and research design

The material analysed in this chapter consists of the listening tasks in the *Solutions* (3rd edition) *Pre-Intermediate*, *Intermediate* and *Upper-Intermediate* Student's Books (Falla & Davies 2017), published by Oxford University Press. This particular series was chosen for practical reasons, as these are the coursebooks the author regularly used in her own teaching. Instead of analysing other, unfamiliar English materials, the series provided an opportunity to take a closer look at the listening input her students actually encountered in their everyday lessons. This kept the analysis closely linked to classroom practice and allowed the worksheets to address areas where the listening input could be broadened. *Solutions* Workbook listening materials were not included to keep the scope of the study manageable.

All audio was accessed through the Oxford Learner's Bookshelf online platform. In total, 308 listening tracks were examined: 109 in Pre-Intermediate, 106 in Intermediate, and 93 in Upper-Intermediate. All recordings were listened to in full and reviewed several times. Notes were made on the topic of each task, the accent used, and whether the accent matched the cultural or geographical context. In recordings that differed from standard BrE, specific pronunciation features were also noted, such as rhoticity, vowel quality, or the realisation of certain consonants, which helped to identify and illustrate the variety. The final distribution of accents was compiled into a summary table (see Table 2 in section 2.2.2).

As many tasks required students to listen to the same recording more than once, the repeated audio tracks were counted as a single track in order to avoid inflating the total number. In addition, several listening tasks consisted of several short segments (e.g. Speaker 1, Speaker 2), where different speakers were presented one after another within the same recording. For the purposes of this analysis, each task was treated as a single unit instead of being divided into smaller parts. This decision was made in order to keep the unit of analysis clear and manageable, as counting each speaker separately would have greatly increased the number of data points and made the overall distribution difficult to interpret. If at least one segment in a task included a variety other than BrE, the whole task was classified under that variety. Individual speakers and their varieties were still noted during the listening process, so they can be referred to in more detail in Section 2.2. Two audio tracks were excluded from the analysis because they did not contain spoken language but consisted only of music or sound effects.

The analysis follows a qualitative and descriptive approach commonly used in the analysis of teaching materials (Creswell 2014; Richards 2001). This approach makes it possible to look closely at how English varieties are actually presented in the listening materials and how often they occur. In line with basic principles of qualitative content analysis, the study involved identifying categories and recurring patterns in the material (Mayring 2014).

The pronunciation features outlined in Chapter 1 and summarised in Table 1 were used as a general guide when identifying varieties that were not explicitly indicated in the materials, particularly in cases where the task description or context did not clearly indicate the variety used. The identification of accents also involved some degree of personal judgement, which is difficult to avoid in this type of analysis, but was supported by the use of phonological features and careful listening for consistent patterns. The table itself focuses on the three selected varieties, and other accents were identified based on overall pronunciation, intonation and recurring phonological features.

The study did not involve the collection of personal or sensitive data, and therefore formal ethical approval was not required. The only participants were three practising English teachers who voluntarily piloted the worksheets in their classes and provided written feedback. Their anonymity has been maintained, and their comments presented in a summarised form in Section 2.3.3.

2.2 Representation of English varieties in the *Solutions* listening materials

This section presents the results of the coursebook analysis, focusing on the range and distribution of English varieties in the listening materials. It first explains how the different varieties were identified, then gives an overview of how they are distributed across the three coursebooks. Finally, it looks more closely at the main gaps that emerge from the analysis.

2.2.1 Criteria for identifying the varieties

In order to determine which variety of English was used in each listening track, the recordings were examined based on three main criteria: pronunciation features, lexical clues, and contextual information. Pronunciation was the main point of reference, while vocabulary and contextual details were used as additional indicators. The phonological features outlined in Section 1.6 and summarised in Table 1 were also relied on during the listening process.

The most reliable clues came from pronunciation. Particular attention was paid to common features such as rhoticity, vowel quality and the realisation of certain consonants. For example, in the pre-intermediate coursebook (Unit 3A, Ex. 3), speakers in a short film dialogue use clearly rhotic pronunciation in words such as *horse* [hɔ:ɪs], together with flapped consonants in words such as *pretty* ['prɪɾi]. Similar features appear in the pre-intermediate coursebook (Unit 5C, Ex. 7), where the interviewee initially sounds close to AmE due to rhotic pronunciation, flapped consonants in words such as *charity*, and vowel features such as the PALM lexical set in words like *job* and *project*. However, upon more careful listening, the speaker repeatedly pronounces the word *about* closer to [ə'bout], a feature often associated with Canadian English. Although the task itself does not mention the speaker's background, additional information about the speaker was checked separately and later confirmed that he is a Vancouver native, which supports the classification of the variety as CanE.

Similar identification issues appeared elsewhere in the materials. In pre-intermediate Unit 4A (Ex. 4, Speaker 1), a speaker discussing extreme winter weather conditions uses clearly rhotic pronunciation in words such as *drivers*, *cars* and *everywhere*, alongside intervocalic flapping in words such as *electricity*, realised as [ɪ,lɛk'trɪsəɾɪ]. The LOT lexical set is also realised with the North American /ɑ/ vowel, which can be heard in the phrase *a lot of ice*. Together, these features strongly suggest a North American variety. Although the speaker was classified as AmE in the present analysis based on the predominance of North American pronunciation features, contextual clues such as metric measurements (Celsius, centimetres) and references to heavy snow and ice may also point towards CanE. However, this remains difficult to confirm with certainty.

Another recording initially appeared to resemble AusE, due to the quality of the FACE vowel in phrases such as *I'll finish it later* and *take a closer look*. However, the speaker consistently used strongly rhotic pronunciation and features associated with regional North

American speech, including expressions such as *bye darlin'*. The discussion of tornadoes also suggests a North American setting, possibly pointing towards a Midwestern regional accent. In the present analysis, however, the speaker was classified more broadly as AmE. These examples illustrate how identifying the varieties often required careful consideration of several factors, including pronunciation, vocabulary and contextual clues, rather than relying on any single feature alone. They also demonstrate how regional variation within English varieties can make accent identification more complex when analysing the listening tracks.

One identifiable example of AusE appeared in the upper-intermediate coursebook (Unit 1A, Ex. 5, Speaker 4), where the speaker explicitly identifies himself as Australian. Several pronunciation features characteristic of AusE could be heard, including distinctive vowel quality in words such as *they* [ðæɪ], *Australia* [ə'stræɪliə] and *day* [dæɪ]. The speaker also used non-rhotic pronunciation in words such as *Liverpool* ['lɪvəpu:l] and *retire* [rɪ'taɪə]. In addition, the BATH lexical set vowel could be heard in *passed away* [pa:st ə'weɪ], which further supports the identification of the speaker as AusE.

Task descriptions also played a role in the analysis, as they sometimes introduced the topic or setting before listening. References to locations, public figures or cultural topics occasionally helped suggest which variety might be expected and were therefore considered as supporting contextual clues during the identification process. For example, in the upper-intermediate coursebook (CB 4, Ex. 6), the task introduces an interview with a Māori speaker before the recording begins. In this case, the contextual information already suggested that the recording would feature a non-BrE variety, and New Zealand English pronunciation features, such as the raised KIT vowel, could also be clearly heard during listening. This kind of background information made the identification process more straightforward and provided useful support when analysing the audio tracks.

2.2.2 Distribution of the varieties across the coursebooks

This section presents the distribution of English varieties across the three coursebooks. The main patterns at each level are described below, and Table 2 summarises the number of listening tracks by variety.

In the *Solutions* pre-intermediate level, 109 listening tracks were analysed. Of these, 102 use standard or near-standard BrE, accounting for over 93% of the listening input. Only a small number of recordings included other varieties: five tracks in AmE and one in CanE. Culture Bank (CB) 1 (Ex. 4) included five non-native English speakers with noticeable non-standard features in their pronunciation. Some sounded closer to German or Slavic accents, although this could not be confirmed. The speakers' backgrounds were not specified, and the task did not provide additional context that would have helped identify them more precisely. No examples of Indian English, African English, or other varieties typically associated with the Outer Circle were found at this level. Thus, the pre-intermediate coursebook offers a large amount of listening material, but the range of English varieties is very limited, with BrE used in most recordings and other accents appearing only rarely.

The *Solutions* intermediate level contains 106 unique listening tracks. The overall distribution of accents is similar to the pre-intermediate book, with BrE dominating in almost all recordings. AmE appears three times: once in the Exam Skills Trainer 2, once in Unit 4A (Ex. 9, speaker 4), and once in CB 5 (*Benjamin Franklin*). In the B2 Exam Skills Trainer (Ex. 4), one speaker is identified as Chinese. CB 1 also includes speakers with Nigerian, Jamaican and Pakistani backgrounds, as revealed in the content.

Overall, BrE remains the main variety in the intermediate book, while other varieties appear only sporadically. Compared to the other two levels, this coursebook shows the least variation, with only six recordings featuring varieties other than BrE.

The *Solutions* upper-intermediate book includes 93 listening tracks. Of these, eight feature varieties other than BrE. AmE appears more frequently than in the previous levels, including three recordings in U3 and additional examples in CB 3 and CB 5. Unit 3E is specifically dedicated to AmE as a separate variety and focuses on differences in pronunciation and vocabulary.

Apart from six AmE tracks, only one other variety is clearly represented at this level: a short interview with a speaker of New Zealand English in CB 4. One additional recording in Unit 6A (Ex. 7) includes a non-native speaker whose linguistic background could not be clearly identified. So while AmE is slightly more visible in this coursebook, the range of English varieties again remains limited and British-centred.

To give an overview of how varieties are distributed across the three coursebooks, Table 2 summarises the listening tracks by variety:

Table 2. Summary of listening tracks by English variety across the *Solutions* series

Coursebook level	Total tracks	BrE	AmE	CanE	AusE	NZE	Other varieties
Pre-intermediate	109	102	5	1	0	0	1
Intermediate	106	100	3	0	1	0	2
Upper-intermediate	93	85	6	0	0	1	1
Total	308	287	14	1	1	1	4

It is important to keep in mind that some listening tracks included multiple speakers with different linguistic and ethnic backgrounds. For example, the intermediate coursebook (Culture Bank 1, Ex. 4) featured speakers connected to Nigerian, Pakistani and Jamaican backgrounds within the same recording, and pronunciation features associated with these varieties could also be heard in the speech. Since the present analysis focused primarily on complete listening tracks rather than on individual speakers, separating each speaker into a different category would have

artificially increased the total number of tracks in the distribution table. Such recordings were therefore grouped under “Other varieties”.

2.2.3 Gaps in the representation of English varieties

Examining the three coursebooks, one pattern stands out very clearly: British English predominates in the listening materials. This is not particularly surprising, given that the series is published by Oxford University Press, but it is still worth questioning what this means for learners. Even then, the type of English used in the recordings is mostly very standardised and carefully articulated. In general, the BrE used throughout the three coursebooks often resembles Received Pronunciation (RP). This is reflected in the delivery of the recordings, which are typically clearly enunciated and contain almost no hesitation or overlapping, unlike everyday conversations, which are more spontaneous and less predictable. Furthermore, Bieswanger (2008: 31) points out that in England, RP is spoken by only a small minority – less than five percent – and in everyday life in the UK, English is actually spoken in many different regional accents. As a result, students are exposed to a narrow version of spoken English, which does not reflect the kind of language they are likely to hear when they use English outside of the classroom. This is worth noting, as exposure to diverse, real-world language use has already been highlighted as an important part of language learning (Tomlinson 2011: 14).

Another noticeable pattern is the mismatch between the topic of the recordings and the variety used. Many listening tasks focus on entirely American topics, such as Wall Street, Helen Keller, Benjamin Franklin, Alcatraz. These contexts inevitably create an expectation that the audio will be in AmE. However, in many cases, the recordings are still delivered in BrE. Sometimes the inconsistency appears even within the same unit. For example, one recording related to Alcatraz is presented in AmE, while other tracks on the same page and topic remain in BrE. A similar pattern can be seen in the intermediate coursebook, where one recording about

Benjamin Franklin is in AmE, while the next one switches back to BrE. It is not clear why even relatively short units shift between varieties, and this lack of consistency may make it harder for learners to make sense of what they hear. It makes the use of varieties feel uneven and unpredictable, and risks creating unnecessary confusion for learners who are still developing awareness of different Englishes. A similar case appears in the pre-intermediate book in U4F, which is about paragliding in Australia, and in Unit 8F, which focuses on the Somerton Man case in Adelaide. Given the Australian setting, the use of AusE would feel like a natural and expected choice. Instead, all the related audio in both units remains in BrE, missing a chance to align the variety more closely with the context.

A further issue is how other varieties are included. For example, AmE, AusE and CanE audio appears only occasionally and is not introduced or explained in any systematic way. In several listening tracks, speakers using different varieties appear alongside BrE speakers without the materials drawing attention to the accent variation. For example, in the pre-intermediate book (Unit 5C Ex. 7) the CanE speaker can only be carefully identified through pronunciation, and the task itself does not mention their background. This means that even though the variety is present, it is easy to miss. Instead of helping learners notice and understand different accents, these examples may simply pass by without being recognised, again missing an opportunity to introduce and raise awareness of linguistic variation.

In addition to inconsistencies in the choice of varieties, some recordings also combine features that are not typically associated with the same variety. In some tracks that otherwise sound American, speakers occasionally use vocabulary more typical of BrE, such as *to phone* (pre-intermediate Unit 4C Ex. 3) and *wash basin* (pre-intermediate CB 6 Ex. 5). In another recording (pre-intermediate Unit 4A, Ex. 4), a speaker with predominantly North American pronunciation features refers to measurements using metric units, which may suggest CanE rather than AmE, although this cannot be confirmed, as neither the task description nor the

content provides additional contextual clues. For example, in pre-intermediate CB 6 (Ex. 5), a speaker talking about Alcatraz and using clearly AmE pronunciation also uses metric measurements instead of the imperial system more typically associated with AmE.

Some smaller pronunciation details that do not fully match the expected variety were also noted. For example, one AmE speaker (intermediate Unit 4A Ex. 9) places the stress in the word *decor* on the first syllable rather than the last, in a way that sounds closer to BrE. This detail does not prevent understanding, but it does make the variety less consistent and, at times, slightly confusing from a learners' perspective.

In some recordings, the accents also sound somewhat exaggerated or performed rather than fully natural. For example, in one radio interview (upper-intermediate CB 3 Ex. 4–5), the AmE speakers repeatedly place noticeable emphasis on and lengthen the word *Boston*. In addition, the same male voice appears elsewhere in the coursebook series in recordings that sound British, which may suggest that some accents are performed by recurring voice actors. As a result, learners may not always hear fully natural-sounding examples of the variety, despite the importance of authentic listening input in language learning.

At the same time, the coursebooks also included some more explicit attempts to introduce learners to different English varieties and linguistic backgrounds. For example, Culture Bank 1 (Ex. 4), titled *Ethnic minorities in Britain*, featured speakers connected to Nigerian, Pakistani and Jamaican backgrounds within the same listening track. Although some speakers showed only limited features associated with these varieties due to long-term residence in Britain, the task nevertheless exposed learners to a wider range of English accents and cultural backgrounds in a meaningful context. Similarly, the upper-intermediate coursebook included a separate unit (U3E) focusing on AmE, which introduced some pronunciation and vocabulary differences more explicitly. These examples suggest that the materials do make

occasional efforts to broaden learners' awareness of English variation, even if such representation remains relatively limited overall.

Overall, the listening materials in the *Solutions* coursebooks present a rather narrow and carefully controlled version of spoken English. BrE clearly dominates across the three coursebooks, and even this is usually heard in a highly standardised and scripted form. The listening materials do include some variation, but it remains limited and inconsistent, lacking a clear pedagogical focus. Non-BrE varieties appear only occasionally and are usually not used in meaningful ways that would connect the topic to the listening. As a result, learners do sometimes hear different accents, but they are often not given enough support or context to recognise and understand these varieties. These findings also highlight the need for supplementary materials that could help learners become more familiar with different ways of speaking English and pay more attention to accent variation in listening.

2.3 Design of the supplementary materials

This section describes the design of the supplementary materials developed in response to the coursebook analysis. It first outlines the main principles behind the worksheet design and then describes the worksheet creation process in more detail.

Drawing on the analysis in the previous section, three varieties were selected for the supplementary worksheets: American English, Australian English and Indian English. The selection was based on what is realistic and manageable in a classroom setting. Introducing too many varieties at once could be overwhelming for learners and would also have made the study itself more difficult to manage. The three selected varieties were intended to help learners become more familiar with different ways of speaking English beyond the British English model used in the coursebooks, while still feeling reasonably accessible and recognisable. They

were also chosen because learners are relatively likely to encounter these varieties in international media, travel and online communication.

AmE was included even though it is an Inner Circle variety, as it plays a major role in learners' everyday exposure to English. Many students regularly hear AmE through films, social media, video games and other online content, but this exposure is relatively random and usually not discussed in class. This can lead to situations where learners notice differences between BrE and AmE but are not entirely sure how to interpret them. Bringing AmE more clearly into the classroom helps make these differences easier to notice and understand, while also creating a better balance alongside the British model used in the coursebooks.

AusE was selected because it is almost completely absent from the analysed materials, despite being a well-established Inner Circle variety. At the same time, it also has a clear real-life relevance. Australia is a popular destination for many Estonians, whether for travel, work or longer stays, which makes some awareness of the variety useful. Since AusE is also not frequently heard in everyday media, it may sound less familiar at first. Introducing it in a more structured and supportive way can help learners become more comfortable with it and reduce that initial sense of unfamiliarity.

Finally, IndE was included because it is one of the most widely used varieties of English yet completely absent from the coursebook audio. It is also an Outer Circle variety, which adds a different perspective compared to the more familiar British and American models. In addition, the Indian diaspora is large and globally widespread, which means that learners are likely to encounter this variety in places such as Western Europe or North America. Designing additional material for IndE gives learners a chance to hear a variety that may sound quite different at first. At the same time, it has several distinctive features, which can make it especially interesting to listen to and helpful for noticing how varied English can be. Including IndE broadens the overall picture of the language.

As part of the overall design, the worksheets are based on short YouTube videos that feature speakers of the selected varieties in different contexts. The AmE worksheet is built around a news clip about a man who has an emotional support alligator, which makes the topic unusual and memorable for learners. The AusE worksheet uses a television interview featuring colloquial language, and the IndE worksheet is based on a street interview conducted in Mumbai, where locals share their opinions on Indian English. Overall, the aim was to use materials that feel realistic and slightly different from typical coursebook listening, while still remaining suitable for classroom use, which is also emphasised in materials development research (Field 2008; Howard & Major 2005; Tomlinson 2011). BrE was not included as a separate worksheet, since it already functions as the baseline variety throughout the coursebooks and is therefore already familiar to learners through the coursebooks themselves.

The worksheets were not designed to match specific coursebook units and are intended to be used more flexibly alongside different topics. For example, the American and Australian English worksheets can be used when units focus on the United States or Australia, but the accompanying listening materials still mainly use BrE. Since India and Indian English are not represented in the coursebooks, the corresponding worksheet can be used more independently alongside broader topics such as tourism or holidays. The design of these worksheets and the principles behind their structure are discussed in more detail in the following section.

2.3.1 Design principles

The worksheets were designed to introduce learners to selected English varieties in a more structured and meaningful way, while also drawing on principles commonly emphasised in materials development and listening pedagogy (Field 2008; Howard & Major 2005; Tomlinson 2011). The overall aim was to create materials that would introduce learners to less familiar varieties of English in a way that still felt manageable and accessible in a real classroom

setting. Each worksheet is built around a short video and combines listening, discussion and vocabulary activities together with a focus on a few noticeable pronunciation features of the variety. The tasks follow a clear sequence, beginning with a short pre-listening activity before moving on to more detailed listening and a short follow-up discussion. Similar kinds of step-by-step listening activities are also described in Davydova et al. (2013), Harmer (2007) and McDonough et al. (2013).

An important part of the worksheet design was to help learners actively notice differences between English varieties. Instead of focusing only on comprehension questions, the activities also guide learners to pay attention to pronunciation, vocabulary and other features that make each variety distinctive. This approach also grew directly out of the coursebook analysis, where different accents were sometimes present but rarely explained or discussed in a more systematic way. It was important to also keep in mind that the linguistic features needed to be explained in a way that does not require any specific linguistic knowledge (Davydova et al. 2013: 90). For this reason, the worksheets aimed to explain features in simple terms rather than relying too much on linguistic terminology.

The decision to use video rather than audio-only recordings was also intentional. Ur (2024: 8) notes that visual input such as facial expressions, body language and surroundings can support listening comprehension and help learners follow spoken language more easily. This was especially important since some of the selected varieties might initially sound unfamiliar to learners. The chosen videos also included spontaneous speech and more natural language use in order to expose learners to English as it is used outside carefully simplified textbook contexts (Harmer 2007; Tomlinson 2011). At the same time, all three videos were kept relatively short - under three minutes, as shorter recordings help learners stay focused and make listening activities easier to manage in the classroom (Field 2008; Ur 2024).

Selecting suitable video materials proved to be one of the most time-consuming parts of the worksheet design process. Authentic listening materials are widely available online, but many, if not most, clips were not fully suitable for teaching. Some videos contained inappropriate language, unclear pronunciation or speech that was too fast for learners, while others were either too long, too short or unlikely to engage teenage learners. In some cases, the clip lacked distinctive pronunciation features and vocabulary commonly associated with the variety. Choosing the final materials therefore involved balancing authenticity, learner accessibility and classroom practicality.

In addition to the worksheets themselves, edited transcriptions of the videos were also included. Although most of the videos already contained automatically generated subtitles, the transcriptions were reviewed and corrected where necessary in order to make them clearer and easier to use. The transcriptions were intended as optional support material that could help learners revisit unfamiliar vocabulary or speech patterns after listening and provide additional support when working with less familiar varieties.

The worksheets were created for EFL learners in approximately grades 7 and 8 and were designed to complement the *Solutions* coursebooks analysed in this study, while still remaining flexible enough to be used in other classroom settings. In several cases, units connected to American, Australian or other English-speaking contexts still relied mainly on BrE listening materials. The worksheets were therefore designed to give learners exposure to varieties that more closely matched the cultural topics being discussed, while also functioning as independent listening activities. Their design was guided by both the Estonian National Curriculum for Basic Schools and the CEFR descriptors for B1–B2 learners, which emphasise communicative competence, listening skills, and learners' ability to cope with spoken language in real-life situations (Põhikooli riiklik õppekava 2014; Council of Europe 2020: 48–53). The CEFR descriptors also refer not only to “standard language” but to “familiar varieties”, highlighting

the importance of gradual exposure to different kinds of spoken English, especially when learners are working with less familiar accents or speech patterns. With these principles in mind, three supplementary worksheets were developed for the present study. The worksheets are presented in the appendices, and their structure and content are described in more detail in the following section.

2.3.2 Structure and content of the worksheets

The three supplementary worksheets (Appendices 1–3) follow a similar overall structure. They are designed to guide learners through the listening process while also drawing attention to the English variety. The tasks follow the familiar pre-, while- and post-listening framework (Field 2008; Harmer 2007) and use listening as a way of helping learners notice how English is pronounced differently across varieties.

Each worksheet begins with a pre-listening stage (task 1), where learners' prior knowledge of the topic is activated. They are encouraged to think about the variety they are about to hear and discuss in pairs. Everyday practice shows that students tend to be more willing to share with a classmate rather than with their teacher. Thus, pair discussion provides a low-pressure environment for learners to express their thoughts and ideas before listening. In the IndE worksheet, for instance, learners are asked whether they have encountered this variety before and what they expect it to sound like. In the AusE worksheet (see Appendix 2), a short vocabulary task is included, with expressions such as *mate* and *bloke*. These warm-up tasks help learners become more familiar with key words and ideas before listening and make the input easier to follow. As Harmer (2007: 271) also points out, this kind of preparation supports learners in engaging more confidently with listening tasks. The goal is to introduce the topic gently and not to intimidate learners as the varieties, especially AusE and IndE, can sound unfamiliar at first.

The while-listening stage moves from general understanding to a more detailed focus on how the speakers sound. Learners first listen for the gist, identifying the speakers and what they are talking about. This helps them get an overall sense of the recording before moving on to more specific details. The instructions gently remind that students do not have to understand everything immediately. After that, the tasks guide them to listen again and pay closer attention to specific features of the speech. In the IndE worksheet (see Appendix 3), for example, learners describe the speed and rhythm of the speech and comment on how clearly words are pronounced. They are also asked to point out, in their own words, anything that sounds different from what they are used to, and to give examples. In the AusE worksheet, learners first work with informal expressions from the video and then listen again, this time focusing more on pronunciation, including vowel sounds and the use of words like *mate*. In the AmE worksheet (see Appendix 1), learners are guided to notice features such as connected speech and sound reduction, which can often make spoken AmE harder to follow. This gradual shift from general understanding to more detailed listening is typical of listening activities (Harmer 2007: 271-272). Here, however, the tasks also encourage learners to pay attention to how the language sounds and to describe what they notice in their own words.

A central part of all three worksheets is the focus on noticing specific features of each variety. After the first round of listening for gist, learners are then introduced to a few characteristic features in simple terms and are then asked to find examples in the recording. In the IndE worksheet, for example, attention is drawn to clearer pronunciation and the fact that sounds are less reduced, and learners are asked to point out where in the audio they can hear this. In the AusE worksheet, the focus is more on informal vocabulary and pronunciation, while in the AmE worksheet learners notice features such as rhoticity and sound reduction. This choice was made on purpose, as the coursebook analysis showed that different accents are sometimes present, but they are rarely explained. As a result, learners might hear variation

without really thinking about it or understanding what makes it different. By pointing out a few key features and asking learners to look for them, the worksheets make these differences more visible and easier to talk about. The aim is simply to help learners start noticing patterns and feel more comfortable when they hear them again, instead of teaching each variety in detail.

2.3.3 Teacher feedback

The final stage of the study consisted of collecting feedback on the worksheets from three practising English teachers who piloted the worksheets with grades 7-8 in an Estonian middle school. The AmE and AusE worksheets were tested once, in grades 7 and 8, respectively. The IndE worksheet was tested twice, once with 7th graders and once with 8th graders. All teachers regularly use the *Solutions* series and are thus familiar with the general lack of representation of varieties. They received the worksheets electronically, along with a short explanation of the aim of the study, and were asked to comment on clarity, difficulty level, usefulness, time, audio choice and to give general suggestions (see Appendix 4). Their written responses were then summarised into common points and observations. Since the aim of this stage was mainly to gather practical classroom impressions of the worksheets rather than conduct in-depth interviews, written feedback was considered sufficient for the purposes of the present study. Open-ended teacher feedback is commonly used in small-scale qualitative research to provide practical insight into how new materials might work in the classroom (Dörnyei 2007: 141). The feedback highlighted several interesting observations related to learner engagement, task difficulty, and the overall usability of the worksheets in the classroom.

First, the teachers noted that the activities were generally clear and easy to follow. For AmE and AusE worksheets, instructions were described as concrete, logical and fully understandable, both for the students and the teachers. With the IndE worksheet, a few students in grade 7 were initially confused by some of the task instructions, but the stronger students helped their classmates by explaining them in simpler terms, so the teacher did not intervene.

In terms of task difficulty, the answers varied. During the testing of the AmE worksheet, the 8th graders expressed that task one (warm-up questions), and tasks five and six (pronunciation features) could have been more challenging, likely because students were already quite familiar with this variety through films and online content, so the introductory discussion and pronunciation-focused activities felt somewhat redundant. However, their teacher also noted that this is a strong language group and for an average level group the tasks are entirely suitable.

With the IndE materials, one group had difficulty identifying specific features of the speech. The video had to be played for a third time before learners began to notice these details. Tasks that required learners to describe what sounded different from what they were used to were especially challenging for this group. This may also partly reflect the fact that learners did not always have the vocabulary needed to describe pronunciation differences very precisely. At the same time, the worksheets were not designed to test linguistic terminology, but rather to encourage learners to notice and talk about what sounded different in their own words. These differences suggest that the materials may benefit from some differentiation, for example by including both simpler and more advanced versions of certain tasks. It must also be noted that IndE is the least familiar of the three varieties and some difficulty was therefore expected. With the AusE worksheet, the students rated the overall difficulty 5/10, which again suggests that the tasks could benefit from having two versions: an easier and a more challenging one. Designing the materials without knowing the students and their proficiency level proved difficult, and the overall approach may have been somewhat cautious.

The timing of the worksheets was generally suitable and accurate for classroom use. The initial estimation was 35-40 minutes, and most groups were able to complete the activities within that timeframe. AusE worksheet was finished in 30 minutes, whereas the IndE worksheet

needed more time, since additional explanations and examples, as well as repeated listening were required. AmE worksheet took 40 minutes to complete.

The feedback also highlights the importance of engagement. Students responded particularly positively to activities that involved interaction or a more active use of language. For example, in the AusE worksheet, the task where students experimented with pronunciation and tried to imitate expressions such as *mate* or *G'day* was described as especially enjoyable, and students were eager to take part. This high level of engagement may also support better retention of the content. Similarly, pair discussions in the pre- and post-listening stage (task 1 and tasks 6-7), were generally well received, as learners felt comfortable and eager sharing their ideas with a partner.

The chosen video materials also played an important role in maintaining interest. Teachers noted that the videos were engaging, appropriately paced, and not too long, which helped keep students focused. The AmE worksheet video, which talked about an emotional support alligator, sparked students' interest and created a lively class discussion. With the IndE worksheet video, learners reacted with humour and curiosity to certain moments, asking additional questions about the accent and their way of speaking. Similarly, the video in the AusE worksheet made students realise that there are many varieties of English and it raised several questions. Learners became curious not only about how English sounds in different countries, but also about the reasons behind it. With AusE and IndE worksheets, questions started to come up about why English is spoken in these countries and why it sounds so different from the varieties they are used to. This suggests that the worksheets could be expanded with a brief overview of the historical background of the varieties to provide learners with more context, helping them understand not only how different varieties sound, but why they sound different in the first place. This idea is also strongly supported by Jenkins (2006:174), who believes that

less proficient learners should get more exposure to different WE varieties, while more-advanced learners should also discuss the spread and development of English.

Overall, the feedback suggests that the materials function well in the classroom and help raise awareness of English varieties. At the same time, differences between groups highlight the need for flexibility, particularly in terms of task difficulty and support. Furthermore, as two teachers reported that students became interested in the notion of English varieties and asked about the historical implications, some background information could be added to create a better picture for the students.

2.4 Discussion

The findings of the present study suggest that the representation of English varieties in the three analysed *Solutions* coursebooks remains somewhat limited, particularly in listening activities. While the materials occasionally include references to different English-speaking cultures and speakers from various backgrounds, the listening input still focuses mainly on standard British English. Similar tendencies have also been noted in earlier studies conducted in Sweden (Lindqvist & Soler 2022), Türkiye (Çam & Salı 2025) and Germany (Davydova et al. 2013), where researchers found that coursebooks tended to include only a relatively narrow range of English varieties despite the increasingly international role of English. The analysed *Solutions* materials nevertheless do attempt to introduce learners to different English-speaking cultures, including American, Australian, New Zealand and Canadian contexts. However, these cultural references were not always reflected in the listening activities themselves. Even when other varieties could occasionally be heard, little attention was drawn to them in the tasks or activities. As a result, learners were exposed to different accents but not necessarily encouraged to notice or reflect on them in a more meaningful way.

One of the more practical aims of the study was to explore how supplementary listening materials could be used to introduce learners to a wider range of English varieties in a classroom-friendly way. The worksheets focused on helping learners notice accent variation and become more familiar with different ways of speaking English. At the same time, the materials were designed to stay clear and manageable for learners while still including more natural and authentic speech. The worksheet design process also showed how difficult it can be to balance authenticity, clarity and classroom practicality when working with real-world listening materials, especially without knowing the learners' exact language level or previous experience with different accents in advance.

The worksheets also highlighted how important support and clear task structure can be when learners work with less familiar accents. For this reason, the activities combined listening tasks with visual support, guided questions and discussion-based exercises that encouraged learners to engage more actively with the materials. The use of video materials was especially helpful, as facial expressions and body language can make unfamiliar accents easier to follow (Ur 2024: 8). Teacher feedback also indicated that the worksheets helped raise learners' awareness of accent variation and encouraged them to pay more attention to differences between varieties. The study also suggests that broader exposure to English varieties does not necessarily require major changes to existing coursebooks, as relatively small supplementary activities can already help draw attention to accent variation in meaningful ways.

Developing the supplementary worksheets also highlighted how little practical classroom material is available for introducing different English varieties more explicitly. Although learners are likely to hear different accents through media and online communication, classroom listening activities do not always guide them to think about this variation in a more systematic way. Creating the worksheets therefore involved experimenting with approaches that are still relatively uncommon in everyday EFL teaching, especially in the Estonian context.

Since there were few directly comparable studies or classroom materials to rely on, several decisions regarding the selection of varieties, task structure and level of support had to be worked out during the design process itself.

As with most small-scale studies, there are a few limitations worth keeping in mind when interpreting the findings. The analysis focuses on three levels of a single *Solutions* coursebook series, which means that the results reflect this particular set of materials rather than EFL coursebooks more broadly. Moreover, although the identification of English varieties was guided by phonological features and repeated listening, some recordings still required a degree of interpretation, particularly when the accent features were less noticeable. In addition, the evaluation of the supplementary materials remains relatively limited in scope, as feedback was collected from three teachers and four learner groups. While this provided useful practical insight into how the worksheets functioned in the classroom, the results cannot fully predict how the materials would work in other teaching settings or with different learners.

The selection of American, Australian and Indian English also represents only a small part of the much wider range of English varieties discussed in the theoretical framework. Future materials could expand this range further by including Englishes from the Outer and Expanding Circles. For example, widely used varieties such as Nigerian or South African English could receive more attention in ELT. Another possible direction in the European context would be to incorporate Euro-English into ELT, which is increasingly recognised to have its own distinguishable features and lexis (Forche 2012). Exploring such varieties could offer an even more complete picture of how English is used globally and encourage discussion about different accents and attitudes towards them.

Lastly, from a more sociolinguistic perspective, future research could also examine why certain accents are more commonly represented in EFL materials than others and how this may shape learners' attitudes towards different ways of speaking English. Exploring these questions

further could help learners and teachers develop a broader and more balanced understanding of the many ways English is spoken around the world.

CONCLUSION

In the classroom, English is often presented in a clear, structured and predictable way, which helps learners build confidence and follow what they hear. Outside the classroom, however, learners are likely to encounter a much wider range of accents and ways of speaking than coursebooks typically present. This can make real-life listening unexpectedly challenging, even for learners with a generally good grasp of grammar and vocabulary, particularly when they are not used to hearing unfamiliar accents (Derwing & Munro 2005; Field 2008).

Looking at this more broadly, it becomes clear that the kind of English learners are exposed to in the classroom does not always match the way the language is used outside it. As discussed in Chapter 1, English is a global language and, as a lingua franca, is mostly used between speakers with different language backgrounds (Jenkins 2007). At the same time, widely used Inner Circle (Kachru 1991) varieties such as BrE and AmE continue to play an important role in teaching, which makes them a natural starting point for learners. However, as the analysis in the study has shown, teaching materials often present a more limited and highly standardised version of spoken language, which does not fully reflect the present-day use of English (Harmer 2007; Rose et al. 2020; Tomlinson 2011). This study therefore set out to examine how English varieties are represented in the listening materials of the *Solutions* coursebook series and how this representation could be expanded with the help of supplementary materials.

The study addressed the following research questions: a) Which English varieties are represented in the listening materials? b) What patterns can be observed in their distribution? and c) How can learners' exposure to different varieties be expanded? To answer these questions, 308 audio tracks across three *Solutions* coursebooks were analysed. In response to the findings, three supplementary worksheets were developed to introduce learners to a wider range of English varieties in a more structured and manageable way.

The analysis revealed that the listening input across the three coursebooks is overwhelmingly dominated by BrE, accounting for approximately 93% of all tracks. While the materials were generally well-structured and suitable for learners, they offered a relatively narrow picture of spoken English. Other varieties, such as AmE, AusE and CanE, appeared only occasionally and without a clear pattern or pedagogical focus. As a result, learners were exposed to some variation but were not encouraged to notice or reflect on it. This highlights the importance of helping learners become more comfortable with variation without presenting it as something unusual or exceptional.

In response to these findings, this study also explored how the range of English varieties in listening materials could be expanded in a practical and classroom-friendly way. Three supplementary worksheets focusing on AmE, AusE and IndE were therefore developed and later piloted by three practising English teachers. The feedback suggested that the materials were generally clear, engaging and suitable for classroom use, while also highlighting the importance of flexibility in task difficulty and support. The selected varieties were chosen for practical reasons and because they offered learners exposure to accents that were either absent or only minimally represented in the analysed materials. While this selection does not aim to represent the full diversity of World Englishes, it offers a manageable introduction to variation and encourages learners to become more aware of the different ways English is used around the world.

The worksheets encourage learners to notice differences in pronunciation and usage and give them an opportunity to engage with varieties of English they may not encounter regularly in the classroom. In this sense, they function as an introduction to variation rather than a comprehensive overview of World Englishes. Even relatively small additions of this kind can make a meaningful difference, helping learners feel more confident when encountering

unfamiliar accents and remain open and curious about the many ways English is used in real-life communication.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Worksheet on American English variety

Worksheet: American English

Level: B1.1–B1.2 learners

Aim: To help learners recognise features of American English and develop confidence in understanding different English accents.

Audio source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FBg-EDqdw8>
(2:45)



1. Before listening, discuss with a partner:

- Have you heard American English before? Where?
- What do you think it sounds like?
- Do you think it will be easy or difficult to understand? Why?

2. Watch the video. Do not worry if you do not understand every word. Focus on the general idea.

- Who are the people in the video?
- What is the story about?
- What makes this situation unusual?

3. Look at the expressions from the video. What do they mean?

drop your jaw

don't try this at home

crocodile tears

poses no threat

4. Listen to the video again. Focus on how the speakers sound.

- How would you describe the speed and rhythm of the speech?

- How are the words pronounced? Are they clear, or do some sounds blend together?

.....

- Do any words sound different from what you are used to? Give examples.

.....

5. American English often has some distinctive pronunciation features. For example:

- the /r/ sound is always clearly pronounced (e.g. car, bird)
- the /t/ sound in words like *better* may sound like a soft /d/
- some sounds become weaker or shorter when people speak naturally

Think about the video. Did you notice any of these features? Give examples.

.....

6. Look at the words below. First, say them in your usual way.

better water car bird later

Now think about how these words sounded in the video. Try saying them again in a similar way. The aim is not to copy the accent perfectly, but to notice how pronunciation can differ.

Which words sounded most different (if any)?

.....

Was it easy or difficult to say the words in a different way? Why?

.....

7. Work with a partner or in a small group. Discuss the questions below.

- What do you notice about how American English sounds?
- Would you feel confident understanding or speaking with someone using this variety? Why/why not?

Transcription

When it comes to pets, no country in the world comes close to the United States. Dogs are America's favorite, followed by cats, fish and birds. CBS's Steve Hartman goes on the road with a pet that didn't quite make the list. When you see an alligator coming down the street towards you, it's only natural to either drop your jaw or panic that he'll drop his. But alligator expert Joe Henney says his alligator poses no threat. "I've never met an alligator that will not bite you. You fool around the head like this, they're instinct is to grab you. He does not do it. You can reach in or rub his tongue, he refuses to close his mouth. We don't know why." Yeah, there you go. Wally was found in a pond at Disneyworld. He had to go. And since in Florida it's illegal to relocate alligators to another spot in the wild, Joe agreed to take him in. Today, Wally lives on Cheetos and chicken legs in Joe's house near Hershey, Pennsylvania, without a cage. "Good boy." At this point, I should probably say what should go without saying: Don't try this at home. Joe says there may not be another alligator on the planet as gentle, and certainly no other. It's cuddly. I don't think I'd be here right now, if this was just another guy with an alligator. Not that there's a whole lot of those out there. But there's a special bond between you two. "Very special. He is my emotional support alligator." You heard right, emotional support alligator. A few years ago, after Joe lost some people close to him, he says he fell into a deep depression, and about that same time he says Wally began behaving differently. More affectionate, almost like he sensed his depression. "I laid on the couch and I wake up, he'd be laying on my head, and I knew it was for a long period of time, because I had this whole jaw print on my face." You don't wake up when you have an alligator on your face? "I was so depressed, I did not." It also marked a new chapter in their relationship. Joe started bringing Wally everywhere, from the doctor's office to the drive-through. "You can pet him." He's been to a splash park and was even ring bearer in a wedding. They are together day and, yes, night too. And as a result, Joe says his depression is dramatically improved. "I'll get lonely until they get there and he seems to sense that stuff and he'll come up and go give me hug and makes me feel loved." He may be an alligator, but I can attest those are not crocodile tears. Steve Hartman on the road near Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Appendix 2 – Worksheet on Australian English variety

Worksheet: Australian English

Level: B1.1–B1.2 learners

Aim: To help you recognise features of Australian English and become more confident listening to it.

Audio source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9QCgqQdmr0M>
(2:12)



1. Before listening, look at the words and expressions below. You will hear some of these in the video. Match them with their meanings. Which of these do you hear in the video?

- | | |
|-----------|------------------------|
| 1) mate | a) underwear |
| 2) bloke | b) Australian (person) |
| 3) aussie | c) barbeque |
| 4) jocks | d) afternoon |
| 5) barbie | e) man |
| 6) arvo | f) friend |

Have you heard any of these words before? Have you heard Australian English before?
Where? (for example in films, social media, travel)

.....

2. Watch the interview with the Aussie hero Daniel McConnell. The speakers use informal Australian English. Do not worry if you do not understand every word. Focus on what is happening and how the speaker reacts. Answer the questions:

- What happened at the shop?

.....

- How did Daniel react?

.....

- What kind of person does Daniel seem to be? Why do you think so?

.....

3. Have a look at these sentences from the video. They include informal Australian English. What do they mean?

- “Don’t be a hero, mate!”

.....

- “Nah, it’s not going on like that.”

.....

- “I had nothing on, bar my jocks.”

.....

Which words or expressions are different from standard British English?

4. Watch the video again. This time, focus on how the speaker sounds.

- Find examples of informal words or expressions:

.....

- The word “mate” is used several times. What does it mean in this context?

.....

- Listen carefully to the pronunciation. Do any words sound different from British or American English? Give examples.

5. Think about how the speaker sounded and answer:

How would you describe the speed of the speech? (fast, slow, natural)

Are all words clearly pronounced or do some sounds blend together?

Do some vowels sound different from what you are used to? Give examples.....

What feature did you find most noticeable?

6. Work with a partner. Read the phrases below out loud. Try to notice and, if you feel comfortable, experiment with some of the pronunciation features you heard in the video (vowel sounds, rhythm, informal tone)

G’day mate!

No worries, mate.

I’ll see you this arvo.

Let’s have a barbie this weekend.

I might see you outside later.

It’s a nice day today.

He’s a good bloke.

How are you going, mate?

Which words or sounds sounded most different?

.....

7. Australian English often includes informal language and a friendly tone. Discuss the questions below with a partner or the whole class.

- What does the frequent use of “mate” suggest about how people communicate in Australian English?
- Based on what you heard, would you feel confident understanding or speaking with someone using this variety? Why/why not?

Transcription

What happened? Oh, well, It's really quite funny. I was in bed sleeping at 2 o'clock this morning; my wife comes in and says, "Oh! The shop's been, uh, someone ran into the shop." And I said "uh, what?" So, I jumped down the bed and all I had was my undies on, and I've walked out the front and I seen out the car smashed and I seen the bloke walking back to the car. And so I've walked outside and I said, "what are you doing, mate? Like, "you can't be leaving the scene." And he goes, "don't be a hero mate!" And I said, "I'm not trying to be a hero, but the police are coming!" And he just decided he'd scoot up the road, and I just said, "nah, it's not going on like that mate." So I jumped in my car, and I started chasing him up the road. And then he went down a side street, and then the police were coming, and I flashed them and sent them off in the direction him. But mate all I had was my jocks on. I was chasing him up the street, and I'm just, like, "mate!" Like... 'Cuz you told me that this is your mate shop. Yeah! And you didn't want him to get away. Yeah, nah, nah! It, well, my mate's mum's had this shop for, like, 40-odd years. And, uh... Look at it! Look at it! Whoa! It's a mess, isn't it? Beyond a mess! Like, words, words can't explain how it is mate. Like... Now, Daniel, you've managed to put some pants on in the meantime. Yeah, mate! That's good to hear. Do you feel like a hero? Not really. It's just something you got to do for the community, mate. It's like, you look after your mates and your mates will always look after you. There you go. Good attitude! There you go guys: Daniel, quite the Australian hero here this morning. As for the owners of the fish and chip shop, well they are insured but there is a big mess to clean up this morning. Oh, wouldn't you like to live next door to Daniel? Aussie of the day! Yeah, thanks a lot. Cheers! What Daniel needs to realize - Daniel, if you can hear me - you know all good superheroes wear their jocks on the outside, so it kind of fits the brief. Pardon the pun. Yeah, but I had nothing on, bar my jocks! Yeah, Lisa. Well you missed that bit of the uniform, but that's okay. You're a hero in our eyes. Well done, Daniel! Yeah, cheers. Thanks a lot guys. Goes to show what you can achieve in your underwear. Yeah. Thank you very much, Jessica Miller. We'll check in with you again shortly.

Appendix 3 – Worksheet on Indian English variety

Worksheet: Indian English

Level: B1.1–B1.2 learners

Aim: To help you recognise features of Indian English and develop confidence in understanding different English varieties.

Audio source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJgoTcyrFZ4>
(watch until 2:30)



1. Before listening, discuss with a partner:

- Have you heard Indian English before? Where?
- What do you expect it to sound like?
- Do you think it will be easy or difficult to understand? Why?

2. Watch the video until 2:30. Do not worry if you do not understand every word. Focus on the general idea. Answer the questions:

Who are the speakers? Do they sound confident when speaking English? Why/why not?

.....

What are they mainly talking about?

.....

3. Listen to the clip again carefully. Focus on how the speakers sound. Answer the questions:

How would you describe the speed of speech? What is the rhythm like?

.....

How are the words pronounced? Are they clear, or do some sounds blend together?

.....

Does anything sound unusual or different from what you are used to? Give an example.

.....

4. Indian English often has some distinctive pronunciation features. For example:

- words are pronounced more clearly (each part of the word can be heard)
- sounds are not reduced as much (words do not become ‘weaker’)
- some sounds are pronounced differently, such as /t/ and /d/ sounding similar, and /v/ and /w/ sounding similar.

Did you notice any of these features? Give examples:

.....

5. Look at the words below. First, say them in your usual way (e.g. British or American English).

better today very water student

Now think about how these words sounded in the video. Try saying them again in a similar way. The aim is not to copy the accent perfectly, but to notice how pronunciation can differ.

What differences do you notice?

.....

Which words were easiest or most difficult to say differently? Why?

.....

6. Work with a partner or in a small group. Discuss:

- Was the video easier or more difficult to understand than you expected? What made it so?
- Would you feel confident speaking to these speakers in English? Why/why not?
- Why do you think it is important to hear different varieties of English?

Transcription

Hey everybody, it's Sheetal from Information Boss. Did you know that English is a very widely spoken language in India? In fact, whenever we do the street interviews viewers always wonder that why people are answering in English and not in Hindi. So what do Indians think about this? Are they actually aware of how their accent sounds? Let's hit the streets of Mumbai to find out. If you had to take a guess, what percentage of Indian population can speak fluent English? Only 40, 40 % maybe. If you go into any colleges or school, no one speaks in Hindi at all.

Because everything is written in English itself. So I think that 70 to 80% might know English. English is, I think far more important than Hindi right now for Indians. So yeah, I think 40 to 45 % around people speak fluent English. I guess around 75% of Indian people can speak English fluently. Most of them are from South India because they are like, they are much more educated than the people living in North India, that's my opinion. And my - I am myself South Indian and so... By the way, Indian English does have a particular accent. Do you agree with that? Yeah, I think it does. It's actually proper English. So it's not accented, it's, it's proper English. Simple. Yes, pretty much, but it, it has nothing but any problem with any people and such because that is the way we talk. So for you it is normal right, your accent? Yes, it's normal. As an Indian person, were you aware that foreigners often make fun of the Indian English accent? Yeah. It is actually, or like, when, I have not personally encountered the situation, but my, I have cousins who live in the US, they speak that, you know, US accent of English, but still they get judged. Like this person looks Indian, and you know people, I don't know why. It's basically racism, and it's just senseless to me, basically. Yes I was, but after I went to United States I thought they spoke wrong English, so I made fun of their English. So it doesn't make any difference to me. I think our accent is better than the US, because they, I think they are like not that good. It looks like they're spitting, sorry. Sorry, not offensive, it looks like they're spitting and I think our accent is better, yeah. No. No. I think they need to learn English from us, it is like when we hear them, we find it funny...

Appendix 4 – Feedback questionnaire for teachers

Feedback questionnaire for teachers

1. How clear do you find the instructions? Were there any parts that might be unclear for students?
2. How appropriate is the difficulty level for learners in grades 7–8?
3. How engaging do you think the worksheets would be for students?
4. Do the tasks help learners notice differences between English varieties? How?
5. What do you think about the balance between listening, discussion, and other activities?
6. What kind of support would students need to complete the tasks?
7. What do you see as the main strengths of the worksheets?
8. Were there any tasks or parts that might be difficult or less effective?
9. Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL

ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND

Merilin Espenberg

English Varieties in EFL Listening Materials: A *Solutions* Coursebook Analysis and the Design of Supplementary Worksheets

Inglise keele variandid EFL kuulamismaterjalides: „Solutionsi” õpikuarja analüüs ja täiendavate töölehtede koostamine

Magistritöö

2026

Lehekülgede arv: 68

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Käesolev magistritöö uurib, kuidas inglise keele erinevad variandid on esindatud „Solutionsi” õpikuarja kuulamismaterjalides ning kuidas õppijate kokkupuudet erinevate aktsentidega oleks võimalik laiendada. Töö teoreetiline osa annab ülevaate inglise keele globaalsest kasutusest, aktsendivariatsiooni mõjust kuulamisoskusele ning varasematest uuringutest, mis käsitlevad keelevariantide esitamist õppevahendites.

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Märksõnad: inglise keele variandid, EFL kuulamine, õppematerjalid, kuulamismaterjalid, maailma inglise keeled

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