

Ragnhild Bjørnhaug

## Language Choice in Music

A Sociolinguistic Study on Motivations behind  
Language Choice in Pop Music in Norway

Master's thesis in English Linguistics

Supervisor: Annjo K. Greenall

Co-supervisor: Brit K. Mæhlum

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Faculty of Humanities  
Department of Language and Literature



## **Abstract**

English songs are currently dominating the charts according to the most played songs on Norwegian radio stations and several popular playlists on Spotify in Norway (Spotify, n.d.; Spotifycharts, n.d.; Gramo, 2019). This fact might generate issues related to language choice in relation to choosing English or Norwegian by Norwegian artists. The present study is an exploratory and content driven study, and aims to investigate artists' motivations for language choice in music and the audiences' beliefs about these choices. Also, the study aims to uncover reasons for why English and Norwegian are considered to be good languages to use in music. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, more specifically interviews and surveys, the research gathers information from various perspectives and investigates whether the artists' motivations and the audiences' beliefs regarding these motivations are similar or deviating. The present study has provided a great amount of information on the topic, which is one that we do not yet know much about in Norway. The research uncovered a large number of perspectives and findings, however, the main findings regarding motivations for language choice in music are found to be related to the importance of chances of success and popularity, linguistic advantages like perceived suitability of languages with regard to flow and catchiness, the artists' ability to express authenticity and identity, inspiration from musical references, and the importance of communication with the audience. The study also found an increase in recognition and rise of Norwegian in music, described here as a 'Norwegian wave'. These findings were mentioned often and eagerly by both groups of informants. The results from the study highlight a majority preference for English lyrics due to international popularity and increased artist opportunities. Many informants also demonstrated positive attitudes towards the use of English in pop music overall. However, the use of Norwegian in music is considered to hold advantages related to indexing authenticity and identity of artists, and it might be reasonable to believe that attitudes towards Norwegian music are in the process of shifting into a more positive direction. This might be due to the increasing popularity and acceptance of Norwegian-language music.



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## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 Research Questions</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>1.2 Structure of the Thesis</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>2 Theoretical Background</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>2.1 English as a Global Language</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>2.2 Linguistic Imperialism</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>2.3 English in Europe</b> .....	<b>6</b>
2.3.1 English in the Nordic countries .....	7
2.3.2 English in Norway .....	8
2.3.3 Domain Loss .....	8
<b>2.4 Language Ideologies and Attitudes</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>2.5 Language and Indexicality</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>2.6 English in Popular Culture</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>2.7 English in Music and Music in English</b> .....	<b>11</b>
2.7.1 Music in English in Europe .....	12
2.7.2 English Music in Norway .....	12
<b>2.8 Language Choice in Music</b> .....	<b>13</b>
2.8.1 General Motivations for Language Choice .....	13
2.8.2 Specific Motivations for Choosing English .....	14
<b>2.9 Previous, Similar Studies</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>3 Method and Materials</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>3.1 Choice of Methods</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>3.2 Qualitative Research Method</b> .....	<b>22</b>
3.2.1 Sampling Participants .....	22
3.2.2 Participants .....	22
3.2.3 Interview .....	23
3.2.4 Challenges .....	24
<b>3.3 Quantitative Research Method</b> .....	<b>24</b>
3.3.1 Participants .....	24
3.3.2 Questionnaire Design .....	24
3.3.3 Survey .....	24
3.3.4 Challenges .....	25
<b>3.4 Validity, Reliability and Generalizability</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>4 Analysis</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>4.1 Analysis 1: Interviews</b> .....	<b>29</b>
4.1.1 Motivations anchored in Authenticity and Identity .....	29
4.1.2 Impact of International Ambition and Chance of Success and Popularity on Language Choice .....	32
4.1.3 Motivations behind Language Choice related to the Songwriting Process and Lyrics .....	36
4.1.4 Language Choice Impacting Communication with the Audience .....	40
4.1.5 Impact of Perceived Language Competence on Language Choice .....	42
<b>4.2 Analysis: Survey</b> .....	<b>44</b>

4.2.1 Gender and Age of Participants .....	45
4.2.2 Listening Habits of Participants.....	45
4.2.3 Motivations behind Language Choice in Norway (reported by the Participants).....	46
4.2.4 The Participants' Attitudes towards English vs. Norwegian music .....	48
4.2.5 Opinions on if and why English is a better Language for Pop Music in Norway .....	53
<b>5 Discussion .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>5.1 Motivating Factors for using English .....</b>	<b>58</b>
5.1.1 Ambition relating to International Recognition and Audience .....	58
5.1.2 Linguistic Advantages.....	60
5.1.3 References in Music .....	61
<b>5.2 Demotivating Factors for using English .....</b>	<b>61</b>
5.2.1 Authenticity and Identity .....	61
5.2.2 Semantic Bleaching: Distance .....	62
5.2.3 Proficiency and Focus on Text.....	62
<b>5.3 Motivating Factors for using Norwegian .....</b>	<b>63</b>
5.3.1 Authenticity and Identity .....	63
5.3.2 Communication with the Audience .....	63
5.3.3 Proximity .....	64
<b>5.4 Demotivating Factors for using Norwegian .....</b>	<b>64</b>
5.4.1 Limited Commercial Opportunities of Norwegian .....	64
5.4.2 Demanding Songwriting Process.....	65
5.4.3 Norwegian less Trendy and Cool.....	65
<b>5.5 A Norwegian Wave in Music? .....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>6 Conclusion .....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Figures and Tables</b>	
<b>Figure 1: Age of Participants .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Figure 2: Listening Habits of Participants.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Figure 3: Potential Motivations for using English .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Figure 4: Potential Motivations for using Norwegian .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Figure 5: Attitudes towards English-language Pop Music by Norwegian Artists .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Figure 6: Attitudes towards Norwegian-language Pop Music.....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Figure 7: Advantage of English compared to Norwegian in Pop Music .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Table 1: Motivating and Demotivating Factors for using English and Norwegian suggested by both groups of Informants. ....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Table 2: Motivating and Demotivating Factors for using English and Norwegian unique for the two groups of Informants. ....</b>	<b>58</b>





# 1 Introduction

English is extremely noticeable in the Norwegian society and an important part of Norwegians' everyday life. Although having no official status in Norway, English is everywhere. If you turn on the TV, there are multiple English movies and TV-shows streaming, and advertisements are crammed with English words. Likewise, being in the city or at the mall, you are surrounded by even more advertisements, as well as restaurants and shops that use loan words, or English in their product descriptions or names. Also, if you pass a group of youths talking, there is a high probability that their speech contains some type of slang or words from English. Last but not least, if you turn on the radio, an English song will most likely be heard within a few minutes.

English surrounds us in the Norwegian society and is prominent in several domains. Throughout this thesis I investigate the position of English in Norway, more specifically its position in pop music. I present motivations that can be involved in the choice of language by Norwegian artists, identifying attitudes towards English and Norwegian in pop music both by artists and their audience, and how these potentially affect musical artists in their choice of language.

The issues related to language choices in music seem to be something Norwegian artists are conscious of. On the talkshow 'Lindmo', the Norwegian artist Marion Ravn informs the viewers that after a career of singing in English, her ideas started to come into her head in Norwegian. However, she admits that her music in Norwegian became too personal, and used a long time adapting to it (NRK, 2021). On the talkshow 'God Kveld Norge', the Norwegian artist Knut Marius Djupvik explains that when he uses English, he sacrifices the lyrics for the music, and describes that he wants to stand on the stage and mean what he is singing, and therefore wants to sing in Norwegian (TV2, 2020). Nonetheless, undoubtedly, English dominates in Norwegian pop music, and is highly noticeable within this area of culture. As an example, in the digital music service Spotify, the playlist "Top 50 Norway" within the pop music genre, includes only four songs in Norwegian (Spotifycharts, n.d.). In Spotify's own playlist "It's Hits Norway", only five out of fifty songs are sung in Norwegian, while the others are exclusively English (Spotify, n.d.). However, the songs in these playlists are continually changing depending on which songs are the most frequently listened to by the Norwegian users on Spotify. The musical artists behind songs in these playlists are widely international, however artists from Great Britain and the United States dominate the charts. Also, radio channels in Norway give us an indication of the unequal distribution between Norwegian and English songs, as only eight out of the 100 most played songs in 2019 were in Norwegian (Gramo, 2019, p. 4-5). Nonetheless, many of the songs in English are indeed performed by Norwegian artists; in fact, eight songs in "Top 50 Norway" and nine songs in "It's hits Norway", as well as 32 of the 100 most played songs on the radio in 2019 are written, or performed by Norwegian artists (Spotify, n.d.; Spotifycharts, n.d.; Gramo, 2019, p. 4-5). This clearly shows that English is a popular language within Norwegian pop music both on streaming services like Spotify, and on the radio. In fact, pop music is one of several English dominated domains in Norway (Johansson & Graedler, 2002, p. 85). Thus, it seems that English might be advantageous in pop music. While motivations for language choice may be governed by commercial considerations, they are also governed by ideologies and attitudes.

Language ideologies can provide an explanation and understanding of how language use differ, as well as uncover beliefs about language (Irvine & Gal, 2000; Rosa & Burdick, 2006). According to Perullo and Fenn (2003), language ideologies can motivate language choice both in music and in everyday situations, and are described as general and socially structured notions, that “underlie social life” (p. 20). Similarly, language attitudes are related to language ideologies, and can be described as positive or negative attitudes towards language, which can influence and motivate choice of language due to predictions of responses and reactions of language use (Garrett, 2010, p. 21; Graedler, 2014, p. 295). The consideration of language ideologies and attitudes, and their influence on motivations for language choice are central aspects of this thesis.

### **1.1 Research Questions**

In this thesis, I present research on motivations behind language choice. I investigate the position and status of English in the Norwegian pop music industry, and research attitudes towards English and Norwegian, looking at how these potentially influence language choices made by Norwegian artists. My research questions are:

1. What motivates Norwegian artists’ language choice in music?
2. What are the Norwegian audience’s beliefs about artists’ motivations behind language choice in music, and what do they think are good reasons for choosing English vs. Norwegian in pop music?

The aim of this thesis is to acquire better knowledge about motivations behind the use of English and Norwegian in Norwegian pop music. In fulfillment of this aim, this thesis consists of a collection of two different types of data – interview and survey data, which are analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively, respectively. The qualitative data consists of interview materials from six Norwegian pop artists, who were asked about their motivations behind language choice in music. The artists are categorized into three groups, depending on their language choices in released music: one group consists of two artists that have only released songs in Norwegian, another two that have only released music in English, and a group that have released music in both Norwegian and English. In the quantitative study, a subset of the ‘Norwegian audience’, particularly the listeners of pop music, were asked to respond to a survey. The questions aimed at extracting information about their beliefs on motivational aspects in language choice in music, attitudes towards the use of English and Norwegian in music, as well as their preferences and listening habits in music. I chose to include a survey in order to obtain information from another perspective, considering whether motivations presented by the artists and the audience are similar, or differ with regard to motivations for language choice. The survey adds valuable perspectives on motivations for language choice in pop song lyrics, as well as attitudes towards music in English and Norwegian in Norway.

### **1.2 Structure of the Thesis**

In chapter 2, I present a theoretical background on relevant topics. In chapter 3, I present the materials and method of the research. In chapter 4, the results from the methods are analyzed. In chapter 5, I discuss the results together with theory and previous research. In chapter 6 and the final chapter of the thesis, I present a conclusion.







## 2 Theoretical Background

This chapter gives an overview of theory on English as a global language. It covers the spread of the English language; the position of English in the world, Scandinavia and Norway; and introduces concepts like language ideology, attitudes, and the indexicality of language. Additionally, this chapter presents research on the position of English in popular culture and music, and on motivational aspects related to language choice in music.

### 2.1 English as a Global Language

English is considered a global language, and is used as a lingua franca, meaning “a language that is adopted as a common language between speakers whose native languages are different” (Pearsall & Hanks, 1998, p. 1073). English is an important medium of communication within many domains in the global sphere, both for native and non-native speakers of English (Crystal, 2012, p. 29-30). This includes fields such as politics, economics, business, commerce, academia, media, technology, sports, and popular culture and entertainment world-wide (Johansson & Graedler 2002; Phillipson, 2003; Crystal, 2012; Galloway, 2017; Pennycook, 2017).

The influence of English increased after the ending of the Second World War (Graedler, 2014, p. 292), and is the most learned second language after this period (Peterson, 2020, p. 131). The reasons why English became a global language are due to historical, political, financial and cultural processes, together with it being the language used by the majority of the population in nations considered superpowers, like Great Britain and the United States (Crystal, 2012, p. 10). English has become a second language and/or the official language in many countries across the world. And due to the high levels of proficiency of English globally, it is argued to be the best tool for international communication (Galloway, 2017, p. 2). English is probably the most widely spoken language in the world, with 1.35 billion speakers either as a native language or a second language (Szmigiera, 2021), and is claimed to have more non- native speakers than native speakers (Galloway, 2017, p. 2). The expansion and spread of English is considered to be unique, and is claimed to be strengthened due to modern technology and communication, making the language become very important and accessible in the global sphere (Phillipson, 2003, p. 5, 40).

Kachru (1985) presents the ‘Three Circle Model’, which can be used to describe the spread and development of English. The model recognizes “types of spread, the patterns of acquisition and the functional domains in which English is used across cultures and languages” (Kachru, 1985, p. 12). The circles are labelled the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle. The Inner Circle refers to regions where English is the native language, while the Outer Circle refers to regions where English is the second language. In the Outer Circle countries, English is used as a second or additional language, and usually refers to previous colonized regions, where people often learn and use English parallel to having another native language. In these countries, English is used in specific official settings, like taught in school, and used in administrative contexts. The Expanding Circle refers to regions where English is the foreign language, and usually not an official language (Kachru, 1985, p. 12-13). In these countries, English is used as an additional language mainly for international contexts, and as a contact language (Kachru, 1985, p. 13-14). Accordingly, English fulfils different functions in the three circles. However, according to Kachru (1985), the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle cannot always be “clearly

demarcated from each other; they have several shared characteristics, and the status of English in the language policies of such countries changes from time to time" (p. 13-14). This is the case in several European countries, like the Scandinavian countries, which are categorized as belonging in the Expanding Circle and where English is considered a foreign language, but where English is no longer 'foreign', as it has become an important part of the everyday lives of individuals (Johansson & Graedler, 2002, p. 37). According to Berns (1995, p. 6), English serves as a second language in several settings in European countries.

## **2.2 Linguistic Imperialism**

The power and status of English has resulted in a dominant position of the language in several domains, and is described as a type of linguistic imperialism, where "the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages" (Phillipson, 1992, p. 47). These include structural inequalities related to institutions and financial distributions, and cultural inequalities such as ideological properties, like attitudes (Phillipson, 1992, p. 47). Linguistic imperialism can be explained by how, and to which amount a language becomes privileged, through for instance political processes, and how its status remains high in several communities (Phillipson, 1992). The linguistic imperialism of English can be described by the dominance of English, including the promotion of English in political and educational contexts, and its consideration as being a privileged language, according to ideologies and advantages associated with the language (Phillipson, 1992, p. 47).

Even though some characterize the development and spread of English as critical, and as a type of linguistic imperialism, Crystal (2012) presents other views on global English. He does not view it as a type of imperialism, but does recognize some challenges related to global English. Nonetheless, Crystal (2012) emphasizes that a global language can serve as a lingua franca, opening up for international affairs and cooperation, opportunities to communicate with people world-wide, favored by domains like business and academia, where English can be considered a way to become internationally attractive and available. Also, modern culture and the media, like television and music, have contributed to the wide spread English. And learning English can create opportunities both individually and collectively. In this way, English holds its status as a prestigious and favorable language, as the importance of English has increased the last decades, and because the language is very important in a global perspective (Crystal, 2012). Therefore, according to Crystal (2012), English is considered a resource, advancement and development, rather than a type of imperialism and a critical way to expand, like Phillipson (1992) might indicate.

## **2.3 English in Europe**

English can be described as a "key language" In Europe (Berns, 1995, p. 6). The influence of English in European contexts comes to expression in the life of individuals in terms of education, employment, public and private life, as well as in the media and in popular culture (Phillipson, 2003). English is an obligatory subject in school, and is also considered an advantage in many domains and contexts like business and academia (Phillipson, 2003). According to Hoffmann (2000), "the learning of English for Europe's schoolchildren is different from learning any other foreign language because of the presence of English in their environment in the form of pop songs, youth and drug cultures, and, most importantly, television and the Internet" (p. 14). Therefore, the influence of English in

European countries is massive, and can be found and used in many domains, both in public and private life (Phillipson, 2003).

### **2.3.1 English in the Nordic countries**

English is also essential in the Nordic countries, including Norway. Commonly, the Nordic countries are exposed to large amounts of English input, and the use of English is frequent (e.g. Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2014). Generally, children in the Nordic countries are obligated to learn English and are exposed to the language early on, through social media, pop music and television - even before learning English at school (Phillipson, 1992, p. 59). When starting school, English is the first foreign language learned (Linn, 2016, p. 201). Nonetheless, English has no clear official status in the Nordic countries even though the exposure to English is considerable (Phillipson, 1992; Linn, 2016).

It is well-known that people from the Nordic countries have very good proficiency in English (Weston, 2017, p. 89-90). Indeed, according to the English Proficiency Index (EPI), a ranking of countries having very high proficiency in the "Global Ranking of Countries and Regions" (Education First, 2020, p. 6) the Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Norway and Denmark) are placed second, third and fourth, while the Netherlands occupies the first place. According to Hoffmann (2000), the high ranking of English proficiency in some European countries is a result of multiple things; "[i]n Scandinavia, Belgium and the Netherlands the English language has acquired a higher profile than anywhere else in Europe, due to their relatively small size and their dependence on international trade and collaboration" (p. 8). This might influence the proficiency of English in these countries.

Phillipson (1992) argues that English functions, and could be considered a second language in the Scandinavian countries; "[u]nquestionably the number of domains where English is becoming indispensable in Scandinavia is increasing constantly. In a real sense, English can be regarded as a second language rather than a foreign language in the Nordic countries" (p. 25). Similarly, Weston (2017) argues that "Scandinavia has embraced English perhaps more closely than any other region in the world" (p. 89). According to Weston (2017, p. 90), there are several reasons behind the acceptance and embracement of English in Scandinavia. These include cultural connections between Scandinavia and the Anglophone countries, as well as the spread of television and film from these countries, and historical processes such as migration and partnership in the Second World War (Weston, 2017, p. 90). English holds a valuable position in the Scandinavian countries, and can be the result of the high proficiency of English in Scandinavia (Weston, 2017, p. 105). In addition, the Nordic countries practice subtitling alternatively to dubbing on movies and TV shows, which can be considered to provide great influence of the English language. According to Phillipson (2003) this can be described as "a powerful bilingual experience" (p. 87), as the subtitles are in one language, and the sound in another, most often English. The Nordic practice of subtitling differs from those in for example Germany, where dubbing is the main procedure (Weston, 2017, p. 90).

According to Preisler (1999), the influence of English in Denmark spread through different channels, classified into categories of above and below. Influence from above refers to attitudes and proficiency acquired through professional contexts, like the educational system and business, where English is considered to be an advantage, due to its importance in international contexts and processes (Preisler, 1999, p. 225). The influence from below,

on the other hand, refers to the use of English in less formal contexts. In these context, English words and expressions enter the Danish language, like through music, sport, movies from Anglo-American sub-cultures due to its high status and importance on the cultural arena (Preisler 1999, p. 231). Similarly, Phillipson (2003, p. 89) describes the spread and influence of English as a result of top-down processes, where English spread through professional contexts like academia and business, and bottom-up processes, like cultural forms like music, movies, and sports. According to Phillipson (2003), "part of the explanation for the strength of the popularity of English is the synergy between top-down and bottom-up processes" (p. 89). This can explain the spread and influence of English in several domains across the world, including in Norway.

### **2.3.2 English in Norway**

Although English has no official status, it does have a noticeable position in the Norwegian society. It plays a significant part in the everyday life of Norwegians and is introduced early on in education, as in the other Nordic countries mentioned above. According to Graedler (2014), the national curriculum presented by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training in 2006, "implicitly challenges the traditional categories by presenting a new three-way distinction between the students' first language, English, and all other foreign languages" (p.292), illustrating that English is considered different from other foreign languages in Norway. In fact, English is considered to dominate within various areas of Norwegian culture, e.g. sports, pop music, fashion (Johansson & Graedler, 2002, p. 85). Similarly, according to Graedler (2014), the influence of English in Norway emerge from various fields, where the "exposure to the English language has steadily increased through various channels such as education, travel and tourism, television, movies and popular music, magazines and books, and the internet" (p.292). This spread is due to globalization, the modern media and technology. As a consequence of the strong position of English in various fields of the Norwegian speech community, Norwegian has many anglicized words (Graedler & Kvaran, 2010, p. 40).

### **2.3.3 Domain Loss**

The concerns about domain loss are present in situations where some languages become less used and loose status, and where the consequence might be that the languages are not used (Hultgren, 2016, p. 153). This can be related to processes of language, like borrowing, diglossia and language shift (Hultgren, 2016, p. 153). In Norway, English is considered to have attained great power and importance in several domains, and dominates within academia and research, business, pop music, fashion and sports etc. (Johansson & Graedler, 2002). In domains like business, several Norwegian companies have changed their administrative language to English. In academia, English is continually more in favor of using English. And in pop music, English songs are the most dominant (Johansson & Graedler, 2002, p. 26). As a result of the dominance of English in several areas of the Norwegian society, the Norwegian government consider the Norwegian language to be under high pressure, where the government stresses the importance of language politics onwards (Meld. St. 108 (2019-2020)). Previous reports like *Norsk i hundre!* by the Language Council of Norway (Språkrådet, 2005), as well as in the message of the Parliament *Mål og Mening* (Meld. St. 35 (2007-2008)) both express deep concerns about loss of Norwegian in several domains. The reports also present proposals on how to preserve the status of Norwegian in terms of maintaining Norwegian as the functional

national language in Norway. Therefore, a historical language law is under production to encourage public services to use the Norwegian language and thus strengthen its position (Meld. St. 108 (2019-2020)). These proposals have their aim to solidify the status of Norwegian in Norway to prevent a shift of language.

## **2.4 Language Ideologies and Attitudes**

Studying power, status and importance of certain languages, language ideologies can be important in order to recognize and understand language choices. According to Peterson (2020), language ideologies are “preconceived notions, beliefs and/or emotions” (p.7) towards language, and are “below the level of consciousness” (p. 7). Language ideologies can influence how one uses language, and can be described as structural tools, combined by beliefs and interests with regard to how one should practice language within social life as well as including power relations that come to expression through language use (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994, p. 57; Perullo & Fenn, 2003, p. 20; Kroskrity, 2004, p. 497). Language ideologies are related to awareness of language use, in terms of types of social and cultural systems they are expressed in. They can be influenced by political and economic perspectives (Kroskrity 2004, p. 497). Therefore, language ideologies can be described as affecting social and linguistic relationships, as they are described as “systems of ideas” (Irvine, 1989, p. 255). By studying language ideologies, one can thus investigate beliefs about language use and its social structure (Rosa & Burdick, 2006, p. 114). This is especially important for researchers in order to understand and explain issues regarding English and its position in the world, considering beliefs and relationships between languages, as well as the power of English.

The executive ideological beliefs of language are also related to the notion of language attitudes. According to Maio, Olson, Bernard and Luke (2006), language ideologies and attitudes are conceptually similar as “they reflect positivity or negativity toward an entity” and something that is subjective (Maio et al., 2006, p. 284). However, language ideologies and attitudes are claimed to “differ in levels of abstraction” (Maio et al., 2006, p. 284). Ideologies are claimed to be at the highest level of abstraction, while attitudes are at the lowest. Ideologies are described as being broad and abstract, including sets of values and attitudes, where changes in ideologies will mean great changes for attitudes, however, changes in attitudes might not necessarily mean great changes in ideologies (Maio et al., 2006, p. 284).

Even though attitudes can be hard to define, being a broad and abstract concept, it can generally be described as “people’s positive or negative opinions or feelings about something” (Graedler, 2014, p. 295). Respectively, attitudes can be said to be composed of cognition, like beliefs about the world; affect, such as feelings towards an object; and behavior, referring to act in certain ways (Baker, 1992, p. 12-13; Garrett, 2010, p. 23). Therefore, attitudes can be considered to share characteristics with concepts like habits, values, beliefs, opinions, social stereotypes and ideology (Garrett, 2010). In relation to language, attitudes can be defined as an umbrella term: “attitudes towards a specific language or variety, language preference, reasons for learning a language, language teaching, language groups and communities and the learning situation” (Galloway 2017, p. 24). Attitudes are important when it comes to language as they influence language use and language choice, reactions on how one uses language, and responses to language use

(Garrett, 2010, p. 21). Attitudes towards language can cause different reactions due to expectations and attitudes towards language and varieties: “[a]lthough we may feel that there are many different ways of expressing our thoughts in our languages, language variation carries social meanings and so can bring very different attitudinal reactions, or even social disadvantage or advantage” (Garrett, 2010, p. 2). As language ideologies and attitudes can motivate the use of language in various ways, it is argued that “language is a form of social practice” (Fairclough, 2001, p. 41).

## **2.5 Language and Indexicality**

The indexical feature of language can be considered important in the context of this study as language can be considered to carry social meaning and be associated with the speaker’s values, background and status (Van Ommeren 2016, p. 60-61). According to Van Ommeren (2016, p. 61), there is an indexical relation between language use and social meaning described as semiotic connections between linguistic form and social meaning. Due to associations of language use and the social meaning it might have, it can be used to associate individuals or groups with certain sociocultural values and can be used in order to mark identity or an ideological attitude (Van Ommeren, 2016, p. 61-62). Therefore, indexicality of language can influence language use, and might have an impact on choice of language in various contexts. According to Hall and Bucholtz (2005), indexicality of language is dependent on the belief and values embedded in ideologies, suggesting which speakers that can, or should construct distinct “sorts of language” (p. 594), meaning that ideological beliefs and relations can be considered to govern indexicality. According to Irvine (1989), sociolinguistics has presented us with “a view of the speech community as an organization of linguistic diversity, having a repertoire of ways of speaking that are indexically associated with social groups, roles or activities” (p. 251), meaning that language choices are important in many aspects of the system of speech communities, as they can index different social positions and functions. In these contexts, forms and variations of language can be considered more or less valuable, relating it to aspects of social structuring that can be considered as “systemic patterns of authority, of control and evaluation” (Blommaert, 2007, p. 117), where languages that are socially or culturally valued, can “display traces of power and authority” (Blommaert, 2007, p. 118). Therefore, indexicality of language might be considered important with regard to language use, and language choice. In the course of this thesis, the indexicality of English might be associated with a certain value, status and power, impacting language choices in different social situations.

## **2.6 English in Popular Culture**

The use of English independently of national culture or background has shaped a global popular culture, where people from all over the world can interact. The products and forms of English on the cultural arena can no longer be tied only to British or American culture, as it was previously, especially throughout and after the colonial times (Pennycook 2017, p. 19). As the exposure to English increased after the Second World War, it acquired a greater position in many popular-culture domains in the daily lives of individuals, such as in media and entertainment (Hoffmann, 2000, p. 1; Graedler, 2014, p. 292). The expansion and dominance of English popular culture has caused many to view it as a threat to local and ethnic traditions (Crystal, 2012, p. 103). Others, however, consider English a positive

influence on local culture and argue that one can experience “the unifying power of English in action” (Crystal, 2012, p. 103), especially when it comes to music.

Within popular culture, popular music is very attractive. Rojek (2011) describes popular music as “the people’s music” (p. 1), and as “an umbrella term to cover the people’s music as a whole” (p. 1), including genres like pop, country and rock music. According to Middleton (1990), popular music is a dynamic definition of a field “within the context of the whole musical field” (p. 7), implying that popular music is continually developing and changing. The terms popular music and pop music are sometimes used interchangeably, however, pop music is considered to be a genre within popular music. Pop music is claimed to be heavily influenced by commercial aspects, and according to Rojek (2011) the “composition, production and marketing in pop are commercially driven” (p. 1). Similar to popular culture in general, the use of English within pop music has increased.

## **2.7 English in Music and Music in English**

Modern popular music is heavily influenced by the powerful positions of Great Britain and the United States, where English has become the dominant language in music on the global arena (Crystal, 2012, p. 103). English in general, and in global pop music, has acquired high status and can be said to be a consequence of sociohistorical processes in the past (Crystal, 2012). According to Bennett (1999, p. 82), English popular music has become especially popular because it symbolizes Western culture. Moreover, the position and high prestige of English influence and contribute to shape a language ideology in global pop music (Cutler, 2003, p. 342). And, due to globalization, as well as the developments of technology, music has become excessively commercialized, and holds great economic power, spreading English music to regions across the world (Harbreaves, Miell & Macdonald, 2002, p. 1).

As popular music industry started to develop, record companies originated from English-speaking countries and these countries were also dominating in the production of popular music on the global market (Negus, 1992; Crystal, 2012, p. 101). According to Negus (1992):

The global production and consumption of popular music in the 1990s is defined by the North Atlantic Anglo-American cultural movements of sounds and images, and European, USA and Japanese dominance of finance capital and hardware on which to record and reproduce these sounds and images (p. 14).

Even though record companies have been important in terms of spreading music throughout the world, digital streaming services are currently dominating the music market, which has resulted in new power relations (Eidsvold-Tøien, Torp, Theie, Molde, Gaustad, Sommerstad, Espelien & Gran, 2019, p. 8). Digital music services provide greater capacity in multiple aspects (unlimited amount of songs and time schedule), and can be argued to be global, in contrast with local music shops (Eidsvold-Tøien et al., 2019, p. 8). One of the most popular digital music services is Spotify which is ranked highest with regard to its power in the music industry, and has the power to make whoever they want world-famous, like through suggesting songs in playlists (Eidsvold-Tøien et al., 2019, p. 28).

### **2.7.1 Music in English in Europe**

According to Bernstein, Weissman and Sekine (2007), the European music market is dominated by Anglophone music, and the authors express concerns about the future of European music. This is because English music in Europe is unchallenged, and if this remains, “there will be no space left in the market for the development of domestic repertoires and, indeed, the music industries in individual European countries” (Bernstein et al., 2007, p. 139). Therefore, multiple European countries implemented strategies to increase promotion of native languages including financial assistance, information centers, education and training, scholarships and awards, as well as regulating content both on TV and radio (Bernstein et al., 2007, p. 140). Even though English music was increasingly popular in several European countries until the 1980s where national artists used English in order to become popular, there has been an increase of popularity of domestic music from the 1990s onwards (Achterberg, Heilbron, Houtman & Aupers, 2011). The increasing popularity of national music can be motivated by bringing forward national identity and cultural boundaries, which might have caused a shift in popularity of music in different languages, where the national languages might have a benefit (Achterberg et al., 2011).

### **2.7.2 English Music in Norway**

As mentioned initially, music in English dominates within the Norwegian pop music industry. A majority of the songs within pop music playlists on Spotify are in English, consisting of a low number of Norwegian songs, even though several of the songs are released by Norwegian artists (Spotify, n.d.; Spotifycharts, n.d.). It is found that Norwegians listen less to Norwegian music, that Norwegian music is becoming more invisible in these contexts, and where the market for Norwegian music, irrespective of which language they sing in, is claimed to decrease (Eidsvold-Tøien et al., 2019, p. 10, 48). However, Eidsvold-Tøien et al. (2019) emphasize that their statistics and numbers do not include the streaming of music from artists who have contracts with international record companies. In Norway, several famous artists who use English are international artists and signed by international record companies. Therefore, Norwegians might listen more to Norwegian music than described by statistics in Eidsvold-Tøien et al. (2019). According to Hjelmbrække (2017, p. 25), over half of the music Norwegians listen to is from Norwegian artists, irrespective of language. However, digital music services might have decreased sales of Norwegian music in the beginning, but there is reason to believe that these numbers have indeed stabilized (Hjelmbrække, 2017, p. 26). The sales of Norwegian music are claimed to be more stable than sales from foreign music (Hjelmbrække, 2017, p. 26-27).

According to statistics from Gramo (2019, p. 4-5), an organization working to promote Norwegian music artists’ rights, only eight out of the 100 most played songs on radio in 2019 were sung by Norwegians and performed in Norwegian (Gramo, 2019). As a consequence of these large amounts of English in music, the Norwegian government has introduced suggestions to increase demands of Norwegian music on state-owned radio stations like NRK P1, P2 and P3 from 35% to 40%. These requirements encourage stations to include both Norwegian music in Norwegian and English by Norwegian artists (Meld. St. 15 (2016-2017), p. 28). According to Hjelmbrække (2017, p. 27), there has been an increase of Norwegian music played on the radio, however argues that these are influenced by political demands and might therefore be less related to increase of popularity of Norwegian music.



## **2.8 Language Choice in Music**

Language choice in music is a general issue and it goes beyond whether or not English should be chosen. In the following section, I outline some general motivations for language choice, and then some motivations for choosing English in particular.

### **2.8.1 General Motivations for Language Choice**

In the following section, language ideology, identity, authenticity and communication with the audience are presented as some of the general motivations for language choice in music. These motivations can also impact on the choice to use English (or not).

#### **2.8.1.1 Language Ideology**

Language choice can be influenced by language ideology, as these can shape linguistic choices, and can be considered relevant in music. This is because “[t]hese ideologies motivate the ways individuals use languages in both music-specific and more general social situations” (Perullo & Fenn 2003, p. 20). Language ideologies in music can influence language choice through beliefs that some languages are better to use in music than others, for instance related to lyrics, melody or prosody (Cutler, 2003, p. 342), or through different functions of languages in a community, e.g. in relation to power, as some languages might index greater political or economic power than others (Perullo & Fenn, 2003, p. 22, 26). The indexicality, and language ideologies of English, including the language being associated with high status and prestige, opportunities of becoming international artists, and to be “easier” and to “sound better” (Cutler 2003, p. 342) in music, might motivate artists to choose English in music (Cutler 2003, p. 330). Therefore, language ideologies might be important motivations for language choice in music, both with regard to potentially choosing English, as well as other languages.

#### **2.8.1.2 Identity**

Due to the position of music in everyday life of individuals, groups, cultures and nations, music is recognized as expressing our identities, as well as forming identities, both for individuals and groups (Folkestad, 2002, p. 151). Moreover, according to Perullo and Fenn (2003) “language is a powerful means to assert group identity and separateness from the dominant culture” (p. 30). Therefore, the domestic language and specific vernaculars can be used in order to index group identity, and thereby distinguish oneself from other social groups (Perullo & Fenn, 2003, p. 30). Similarly, language choice in music can be dependent on the ambition to express identity or culture, and where the use of dialects can make artists appeal to a local identity and communities (Van der Hoeven, Janssen & Driessen, 2016, p. 46). Thus, identity can potentially be a motivation behind language choice in music and can depend on the desire to index different values, perspectives, background and attitudes of one’s identity. Language choice in music can be used either to index a global identity by using a global language like English, or to index national identity by using a national language, like Norwegian.

#### **2.8.1.3 Authenticity**

Authenticity in music is related to “wholeness” and “truth” (O’Flynn, 2007, p. 34). Beliefs with regard to whether artists appear authentic or not can impact the “musical experience” (O’Flynn, 2007, p. 37) and can determine the perceived quality of an artist (O’Flynn, 2007, p. 33). Authenticity can both be related to index the personality of an artists or culture (Baker & Taylor, 2007, p. x) and according to Negus (1992), “there is a widespread belief

that image and music should in some way express the character and personality of an artist” (p. 69). Therefore, artists who write and perform their own songs in their own language can potentially be perceived by their audience as more intense and significant due to a stronger feeling of self-expression (Barker & Taylor, 2007, p. 173). In this sense, artists can index authenticity or inauthenticity depending on language choices, which can also affect their ambition to appear credible in music (Larkey, 2003, p. 147). However, according to Cutler (2003, p. 342), due to English-speaking traditions within pop, many non-native speakers of English might consider music in English as more authentic than the same expressions and lyrics in their native language.

According to Moore (2002), there are two types of authenticity in music, particularly first-person and third-person authenticity. First-person authenticity is related to the descriptions of authenticity above, considering whether the audience perceive the music that is performed to be authentic, as artists accomplish to index personality and an “interpretation of the perceived expression of an individual” (Moore, 2002, p. 214). Third-person authenticity, on the other hand, is related to authenticity of a piece of music as part of a given genre, because music acquires authenticity through “mode of expression”, particularly through following traditions in performance (Moore, 2002, p. 218). Therefore, third-person authenticity and the influence of traditions and genre might impact, and be a general motivation for language choice in music.

#### ***2.8.1.4 Communication with the Audience and Conveying a Lyrical Message***

Another general motivation for language choice is related to communication with the audience, as well as conveying a message through music. According to Van der Hoeven et al. (2016), music can communicate the lyrics and message of the song in a better way, as the listeners better identify the lyrics: “when music is in the native language of the audience, it enhances communication between the musicians and listeners” (p. 52). Similarly, according to Bennett (1999, p. 82), language in music can influence how the lyrics are perceived and heard by the listeners. Accordingly, the lyrical message might be reduced and considered less important when the artists use English rather than their native language (Larkey, 2003, p. 146). Therefore, language choice in music might depend on the importance of communication and conveying a lyrical message.

#### ***2.8.2 Specific Motivations for Choosing English***

In the following section, specific motivations for choosing English in music are presented. These include commercial influence, imitation, comprehension, proximity and distance.

##### ***2.8.2.1 Influence from Commerce***

Commercial influence on language choice can be tied to the indexicality of English and its advantages globally. In fact, some claim there is a demand by the music industry to produce music in English (Cutler, 2003, p. 329). Pop music artists often choose English even in countries where it is not a native or official language as many seek to become international artists (Cutler, 2003, p. 331). According to Larkey (2003, p. 146), artists have the possibility to reach a broader audience and engage in the global music industry when using English. Also, it is important that music fit within commercial formats, like radio stations, as this might influence the probability to be signed by record companies (Lull, 1992, p. 3). Verboord and Brandellero (2018) describe some commercial differences between using English and other languages, where “[p]erformers who use languages other

than English receive less marketing support, media attention, and thus have smaller chances of foreign success” (p. 609). Therefore, a potential commercial desire might have an influence on language choice in music, especially with regard to choosing English.

### **2.8.2.2 Imitation**

In relation to obtaining commercial success, imitation can be practiced by music artists. Through imitation, artists seek to achieve success either by imitating their own songs or those of other artists. Pop music in English can function as a reference to pop for those who are non-native speaker of English both for artists and fans (Cutler, 2003, p. 342). Accordingly, artists imitate successful artists, typically those who use English in hope to experience the same success. Imitating others can help artists become discovered and publish successful music that record companies search for (Lull, 1992, p. 3). The notion of imitation, as well as the process related to this is described in Adorno (2006):

The musical standards of popular music were originally developed by a competitive process. As one particular song scored a great success, hundreds of others sprang up imitating the successful one. The most successful hits, types, and ‘ratios’ between elements were imitated, and the process culminated in the crystallization of standards. Under centralized conditions such as exist today these standards have become ‘frozen’. That is, they have been taken over by cartelized agencies, the final results of a competitive process, and rigidly enforced upon material to be promoted. (p. 77)

Imitation in music can influence language choice in music as one wishes to sound similar to others who have attained great international success and popularity abroad. These artists might be Native-English speaking- artists, however, might also be non-native speakers of English who have attained success abroad. Imitation and its influence on language choice can be considered to be relevant in terms of motivations to use English as artists using English have a higher probability to become international and achieve international success and popularity. Therefore, the concept of imitation is greatly related to commercial desire above.

### **2.8.2.3 Comprehension**

The concept of comprehension in music is related to artists seeking to reach specific audiences through their music and performances, which can influence their language choice. Perullo and Fenn (2003) argue that language choice might depend on the intended audience, as one wants to reach different groups of people with one’s music, and that one can do so when using different languages. Artists can establish a broader and bigger audience and increase the chances of success depending on the choice of language and the wish to be understood by more people, like English (Larkey, 2003, p. 146). By using English, one can acquire a greater audience in terms of comprehensibility as “everyone” understands English and there are many speakers of the language. However, language choice can also be used for the opposite reason, namely to include elements which result in incomprehensibility by other audiences than those intended (Larkey, 2003, p.134). Similarly, Van der Hoeven et al. (2016) claim that music in the native language can be considered more accessible for the population, having more proficiency in the native language than in a second or foreign language, like English. Therefore, even though comprehension is mentioned to be a specific reason for choosing English, it can also be

considered a motivation to use another national language in order to appeal more to a local or national audience.

#### **2.8.2.4 Semantic Bleaching: Distance and Proximity**

Motivations behind language choice in music might also be related to proximity or distance to theme, lyrics or text in music. The perceived distance can be understood as a type of semantic bleaching, as words can be semantically bleached, meaning scaled-down or weakened in some contexts and languages (Peterson, 2017, p. 122). According to Larkey (2003), using a foreign language, song lyrics might sound less direct than a native language because it “allows a greater degree of emotional distancing and ironic detachment” (p. 141). The consequence being, in research by Weston (2017), that Norwegian words are considered more formal in contrast with English words in some social contexts. This is also mentioned in Johansson and Graedler (2002), where English is considered to be easier to use (as a lyric tool) when expressing love and affection as artists do not dare to use their native language in affectionate contexts and rather use English. One example is comparing the English and Norwegian phrases “I love you” with “Jeg elsker deg” where English is considered harmless and untroubled compared to the Norwegian translation (Johansson & Graedler, 2002, p. 88). Thus, perceived proximity and distance of languages might influence language choice in music as languages might create a proximity or distance to words or lyrics. Native languages are suggested to generate a sense of formality and directness while English might appear to become semantically bleached, and thereby causing a distance.

### **2.9 Previous, Similar Studies**

This section presents relevant empirical studies on language choice in music and on potential motivations behind language choice. Even though a study on language choice in Norwegian music industry was initiated in 2003-2004 by an MA student from the University of Oslo, no research at MA level or above has, to my knowledge, been finished and published on this topic in Norway. However, there is some research related to issues concerning motivations behind language choice and attitudes towards language in music from other parts of the world.

Aleshinskaya and Gritsenko (2016) researched motivations behind language choices in the Russian TV-show *Golos* (similar to the TV-show *The Voice*) and argue that language choice in music is meaningful and “shaped by language ideologies” (p. 58). Similarly, the importance of attitudes towards language and their potential motivation on language choice in music is found in research by Sparling (2003). The research investigated the negative attitudes towards music in the previously stigmatized Gaelic language compared to English. In a process of revival of Gaelic culture and language, the attitudes shifted into a more positive direction. As a result, Gaels took pride in their language and music, which contributed to the language being more used in music. Therefore, attitudes towards language might be important in order to develop music in a language (Sparling, 2003, p. 164). Sparling (2003) emphasizes the strong connection between language attitudes and music, as language attitudes can cause marginalization of language, and stresses the need for more sociolinguistic research on music.

Van der Hoeven et al. (2016, p. 45) researched language choice and cultural expressions in music and found that languages are used in order to express culture and identity through

music, where language choice might affect these expressions. Also, Van der Hoeven et al. (2016, p. 52) found that music in the national language can be considered to be more 'accessible' domestically as it is the native language of the population, which can cause a greater communication between the musician and the listener. In relation to cultural expression of languages, Van der Hoeven et al. (2016, p. 51) found that certain musical genres might be related and preferred to be sung using certain languages, calling it a process of cultural legitimization. In the case with Dutch, the language is related and culturally legitimized the genre of "levensliederen".

In research by Mtallo and Msoffe (2018) that investigates language choice in Tanzanian music, the popularity of English in music is related to a market perspective. The study found that English is claimed to make music more attractive abroad compared to the local languages, which are usually considered to limit the opportunities to reach out to an audience abroad. In addition, it is found that the media is considered a gatekeeper, deciding which music to be aired and claim to prefer English or language with elements of English and therefore might influence language choice in music (Mtallo & Msoffe, 2018, p. 10). However, using English is claimed to limit the chance of reaching out to the audience with a specific message of the song as most people do not understand English (Mtallo & Msoffe, 2018, p. 11). Similarly, in Peterson (2017), investigating the results of language contact and pragmatic borrowing from English to Finnish, the use of English and not a native language can make phrases be perceived as semantically bleached. This is because the meanings of the expressions are weakened or because phrases in a native language can be perceived as "too pragmatically strong" (Peterson, 2017, p. 122).

Verboord and Brandellero (2018), who researched cultural globalization and internationalization in pop music charts in several countries, including Norway, point out that success in music can depend on the degree of centrality in cultural production. A country being more central is more likely to be placed on charts abroad, like countries like the USA, compared to countries more peripheral, like Norway (their example, explicitly mentioned in the study) (Verboord & Brandellero, 2018, p. 615). Similarly, it is found that larger languages can increase the likelihood of attaining success abroad, like English, claimed to hold the greatest advantage (Verboord & Brandellero, 2018, p. 620). Smaller languages like Norwegian and Dutch is considered to hold the least advantage in this context. Aleshinskaya and Gritsenko (2016) found that artists use English in order to be "a part of the global pop music community" (p. 57), and where artists strive to belong to an international community of pop music. The study also found that artists who use English can appear more modern. Similarly, Mtallo and Msoffe (2018, p. 10) found that using English can index modernity and that English is considered fashionable. This is also found in research by Peterson (2017, p. 125), as English words and phrases might index urbanity and might appeal more to youths.

According to Aleshinskaya and Gritsenko (2016), English is considered to "index professionalism, convenient melodic and rhythmic structure and an opportunity to demonstrate one's vocal range" (p. 57). The study also found that musicians highlight the high prestige of English as well as the benefit of using English in music as it is considered an easier language to sing in. Similarly, Mtallo and Msoffe (2018, p. 9) found that artists consider English more suitable in music as it is considered a benefit when developing a

rhythmical structure. Therefore, artists often use English words instead of the national or local language. Also, the English vocabulary is found to be considered an advantage compared to the local language, as the language is claimed to lack enough words in order to write songs and therefore many musicians use English words instead (Mtallo & Msoffe, 2018, p. 9).

Verboord and Brandellero (2018) found that pop charts in several countries have become more internationalized since the 1960s. However, in research by Achterberg et al. (2011), a trend of American hegemonization or Americanization (a domination of music in English, and from the United States) started to decrease from the 1989 onwards. The research found that the share of music in national languages, like in the Netherlands and France, started to increase from the 1990s (Achterberg et al., 2011, p. 599). According to Achterberg et al. (2011, p. 602), the increase of national music is can be described as a cultural resistance to globalization. Therefore, Achterberg et al. (2011), claim that there has not been a general trend of globalization in pop music due to the decrease of popularity of English in music, but instead claim that there has been a national reaction towards the American domination in pop music resulting in increasing popularity of national languages in music.







### **3 Method and Materials**

This chapter presents the different research methods for the project of this thesis, including description of methodological choices and aspects like collection, execution and handling of the empirical data in the research. The first section presents the motivations behind methodological choices with regard to the topic. This is followed by a description of the two methods used more in detail. And lastly, a consideration of the terms for reliability, validity and generalizability is included, which outlines how these are important in the research.

#### **3.1 Choice of Methods**

There seem to be no published research carried out on motivations behind language choice and attitudes towards English and Norwegian in pop music in Norway. Therefore, it was important to choose methods that both have the opportunity to go in depth on the topic and gather information from a larger amount of people in the present research. For these reasons, the methods used to perform the research in the present study were interviews and surveys, respectively.

To be able to go in depth on motivations behind language choice of Norwegian artists, the initial method for the present research was interviews with Norwegian pop music artists. According to Van Peer, Hakemulder and Zyngier (2012), interviews are “excellent for exploring areas about which little is as yet known” (p. 84), and is used to “develop new insights and generating new hypotheses” (p. 85). Also, interviews are important in this research as they are used to study opinions, attitudes and experiences, where the participants can elaborate and specify on perspectives and topics (Van Peer et al., 2012, p. 81; Tjora, 2021, p. 128). Considering these aspects, interview is a suitable research method for the present study. However, I also wanted to reach out to a larger amount of people than those interviewed, namely the listeners of Norwegian pop music, the ‘Norwegian audience’. This is because I wanted to obtain information and perspectives from a different angle than the interviews. The survey in the present research is used to uncover beliefs on motivations behind language choice as well as contribute to a greater understanding of language ideologies and attitudes of the Norwegian audiences. The survey was initially thought to function as an additional and smaller emphasis in the research, however, it eventually became an essential part of the research. This is because the survey achieved a much greater number of respondents than firstly anticipated and brought new insights to light, especially in the open questions of the research. In the survey, a large amount of people were asked the same questions, which can be used to recognize and investigate opinions, attitudes and behavior (Van Peer et al., 2012, p. 94). The information from the two groups of informants provide a greater understanding of the various motivations of language choice, considering whether motivations presented by the artists are similar or different from those presented by the audience. Therefore, the two research methods contribute to valuable perspectives on motivations of language choice.

The material from the two data-gathering methods are analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively, respectively. Qualitative methods are normally used to research a smaller group than in quantitative research and qualitative research are usually more in-depth. This can give the researcher a thorough and deep understanding of the topic. On the other hand, quantitative methods are usually used to reach out to a broader amount of people, but they can be less in-depth than qualitative research. Quantitative research, and greater amounts

of materials, make it possible to recognize potential patterns and tendencies through the responses and answers of the participants. Therefore, also, according to Meyerhoff, Schieff and McKenzie (2015, p. 160), the combination of qualitative and quantitative research in sociolinguistics makes it possible to understand language variation more extensively, as one can, in a broader sense, investigate the social and linguistic functions it might have.

## **3.2 Qualitative Research Method**

### **3.2.1 Sampling Participants**

The participants for the interviews were chosen through investigating pop music charts and reading newspaper articles about artists who discussed the issue. In the search for artists, I considered the artists' released songs in terms of genre as I was seeking Norwegian artists who are consistent performers of pop music either by singing in English or Norwegian.

Most of the artists were requested to participate through email either by a personal email or through managers. The email provided information about the topic of the research, along with a statement about how the artists were important (an example of such an email is illustrated in Appendix A) and included a consent form (English version found in Appendix B).

### **3.2.2 Participants**

The participants for the interviews consisted of six Norwegian music artists who I communicated with through managers or personally by email. The six artists are categorized into three groups according to their choice of language in released songs: two artists only use Norwegian, two other artists only used English, and lastly, two of the artists had released songs both in Norwegian and English. The artists are numbered from 1-6, and are followed by (n) for using Norwegian, (e) for using English, or (n/e) for those have used both languages. I included artists with various backgrounds in relation to language choice in order to acquire a diversity concerning potentially different motivations behind language choice in music.

The artists are all eagerly engaged in the process of writing their own songs, which is a practice called singer-songwriter, where the artist oneself writes, sings and performs their own songs. The artists are all pop music artists, although, as musical genres can be complex and hard to define, some artists stated that their music include components of and/or range towards genres like urban, rock, country and folk. All music artists interviewed have Norwegian as their mother tongue/first language and English as their second language. The ages of the artists range from 23-38 years old and consist of four women and two men.

Artist 1: is an artist in her early thirties, who was one of the first artists to establish a big audience in Norway by writing songs in Norwegian. She is sometimes referred to as a folk music artist, however, she describes herself as a pop music artist. For clarity, she began to write songs in English, but never released any of these and has only released songs in Norwegian.

Artist 2: is a young artist in the beginning of his twenties, who uses his Norwegian dialect in his music. He has only released songs in Norwegian. This artist is in the beginning of his

career, however, he has already established a great audience in Norway and had his own concerts in different cities in Norway.

Artist 3: is an artist in her mid-thirties, who has won one of the biggest song competitions in Norway. She has been active for several years but only performed occasionally the last few years and has not released anything new in the last five years. She has, until now, only written songs in English, but she is working towards the possibility to releasing new songs in her Norwegian dialect.

Artist 4: is an artist in her mid-twenties, producing music in English within the pop genre, describing it as folk-pop. She sometimes covers Norwegian songs, however, has never written or released her own songs in Norwegian.

Artist 5: is an artist in her mid-thirties who has switched from using English to now only using Norwegian in music. She is educated within jazz, and her music consists of elements of jazz and pop.

Artist 8: is an artist in his late thirties who has switched back and forth between English and Norwegian, however, now only uses Norwegian. He has been an active artist for many years, and has competed in several music competitions in Norway.

### **3.2.3 Interview**

Even though I was looking forward to traveling across Norway to meet Norwegian artists, I was stopped due to the situation of the Covid-19's continuous spread. Therefore, the interviews were performed through a digital platform for video communication, named Zoom. The interviews lasted between thirty minutes and an hour, and were all completed during the fall of 2020. The participants of the interviews are all anonymous and signed a consent form in order to participate. All interview recordings were transcribed immediately after the interviews and the recordings of the interviews were deleted after the transcription process. The research project and execution of interviews are approved by the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD).

The interviews can be characterized as semi-structured ones as they were based on questions from an interview guide made beforehand, consisting of topics and open questions I wanted information about. The questions from the interview-guide are found in Appendix C. These topics consider language choice, motivations, language proficiency, commercialism, semantic bleaching, theme, target group and language attitudes. The participants were also asked spontaneous follow-up questions, elaborating on certain aspects I found unclear or interesting perspectives I wanted more information about. All interviews developed differently, as the various artists mentioned various points and perspectives.

The interview data is analyzed using thematic analysis, which is the general method to analyze qualitative data (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012, p. 10). Thematic analysis includes an interpretation of the data and identifying then categorizing the data within thematic sections (Guest et al., 2012, p. 9). The analysis of the interview data in the present study includes a selection of relevant themes defined by the interview guide questions as well as themes brought up by the artists themselves through the interviews.

The themes are related to potential motivations behind language choice and language attitudes.

### **3.2.4 Challenges**

A challenge I faced through this method included getting in contact with pop music artists, as I initially sent requests for an interview to a limited number of artists in fear of acquiring too many participants. However, after managers replied that pop artists were busy and some not answering at all, I expanded my search and list of artists, which resulted in six eager participants.

All the interviews were executed through a digital platform and there were some technical issues due to internet connection and sound, however these were minor issues and solved quickly. The participants were asked to repeat their answers in these situations.

## **3.3 Quantitative Research Method**

### **3.3.1 Participants**

The survey was distributed through my personal Facebook profile, and further shared through people's personal networks. Therefore, I did not control the distribution of the survey. My Facebook friends consist of both people I know personally and acquaintances. However, since the Facebook post was shared by my personal network, the participants might also consist of people outside of my network. Geographically, my friends on Facebook consist of people from my hometown in Eastern Norway, but also people from all around Norway. However, the Eastern part of Norway is probably the dominating group. Age wise, my Facebook friends are mostly people between the ages of 20-30, even though both younger and older age groups are present among my list of Facebook friends, and therefore also potentially participants in the survey.

All in all, 71,6% of the participants were women, 27,4% were men, and 1% did not want to state their gender. The majority of those who participated in the survey were between age 20-29, which equals 65,2% of the participants. The participants under age 20 and between 30-39 covers 10% of the answers, while age groups 40-49 covers 4,5%, age group 50-59 covers 8% and participants above age 60 covers 2% of the participants.

### **3.3.2 Questionnaire Design**

The survey was developed through the service Nettskjema, making the responses anonymous. This was also made explicit to the participants. Aside from the questions of consent to participate, gender and age, the survey consisted of seven multiple choice questions, where three of these could have several answers. All multiple choice questions had follow-up questions with text boxes where I asked the participants to elaborate or specify on their last answers. In the last question I asked the participants to add anything relevant with regard to the topic. The questions from the survey are found in Appendix D.

### **3.3.3 Survey**

The survey was chosen as a method mainly to gather information from another perspective, more specifically the Norwegian audience. The survey covered many of the same topics as the interviews and helped gain a broader understanding on motivations behind language choice. This is a valuable perspective in the research as it provides an understanding about whether or not artists and their audiences have similar perspectives on the issue. Also, the

survey is important as it gives an indirect understanding about ideologies and attitudes of audiences. The motivations behind language choice presented by the survey participants are not directly their motivations for language, but their beliefs and perceptions of Norwegian artists' motivations for language choice.

This survey reached out to far more than the amount of interview participants, which is characterized as one of the main differences between quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. Initially, the survey was performed to serve as an additional method where the aim was to receive 30-40 responses. However, in the distribution of my survey, through a link on my personal Facebook profile, the amount of responses grew quickly, and the final number of survey participants ended up being 201. Using Facebook as the distributor helped me reach out to people across various age groups, backgrounds, professions etc.

In the collection of survey data, the anonymous and approved questionnaire form Nettskjema was used with regard to ethical considerations where the answers cannot be related to individual identities. The participants were not asked to fill in names or other information, only age and gender.

The survey data is partly analyzed by descriptive statistics, illustrated through the use of diagrams. The survey data from the open questions (where the survey participants were asked to elaborate their answers), on the other hand, is analyzed using thematic analysis, like the interview data. This includes a selection and interpretation of relevant themes. These are presented thematically in combination with the descriptive statistics.

### **3.3.4 Challenges**

A challenge of the survey was to acquire an equal number of participants across age and gender. Instead of controlling the group participants, I decided to prioritize obtaining a large number of participants instead of secure an even distribution across age groups. However, distributing the survey more equally across age groups might perhaps lead to other results.

Another challenge of the survey was the construction of it. As I did not want to "steer" my participants in any direction, I initially favored open questions in order for participants to write thorough answers. However, after a pilot test of my open question-survey, the participants provided me feedback on the design, requesting questions that were less demanding. Thus, I constructed a survey consisting of a greater amount of multiple choice questions, with various perspectives and options for the sake of the participants. The multiple choice questions were followed by text boxes where the participants could elaborate and specify their answers. In some cases, however, the participants responded somewhat briefly which made it hard to interpret answers and understand the reasons behind the statements.

### **3.4 Validity, Reliability and Generalizability**

Especially in qualitative research, the notions of reliability and validity need to be considered differently than in traditional quantitative research where there are strong demands for certain reliability and validity measures. Traditionally, a study is reliable if it gives the same results each time it is employed and valid if the results are true or correct (Johnstone, 2000, p.61). Nonetheless, in interpretive sociolinguistic research, these concepts are to be

considered differently. This is because one work with people and cannot simply regard research reliable only if acquiring the same results and valid only if the results are true or false (Johnstone, 2000, p.61). Reliability and validity in qualitative research should therefore rather be considered to be measured by the degree of trustworthiness of research, quality of interpretations, and according to whether the insights of the research can be supported by other research (Rindal, 2007, p. 221).

According to Tjora (2021, p. 259-260), reliability and validity of qualitative research emanates from the internal logic and context of the research where there should be relevant connections between the method and empirical work with analysis, theory and other research. Therefore, the quality of qualitative research can be considered through how the analysis is developed from empirical work, how theoretical concepts are made important and support the research, and whether one is researching what one is supposed to (Tjora, 2021, p. 260). In sociolinguistic research, one also has to consider the choice of informants, how to recruit them, their relevance, relations between researcher and participant, and how to perform the research (Johnstone, 2000, p. 62; Tjora, 2021, p. 264). The questions one asks, are also important tools to obtain the best results for your research (Mæhlum & Akselberg, 2008, p. 75). In the qualitative method of the present study, the empirical work is made relevant with theoretical aspects and previous research. The analysis is closely developed from the methodological parameters and coding of the interviews. The study researches essential individuals within the topic, who were chosen due to their relevance being pop music artists, and there is no prior relation between informant and researcher. The informants were asked appropriate and relevant questions regarding the research topic, particularly questions concerning motivations behind language choice. With regard to how the research was performed, the qualitative research was recorded and transcribed. The statements of informants can hereby reduce random errors tied to misunderstandings or researchers noting wrongly which might occur when interviews are not recorded. Therefore, the research is designed to be as reliable and valid as possible.

In quantitative research in sociolinguistics, reliability is often referred to in terms of the degree to which one can trust the research executed (Akselberg, 1997, p. 30), as well as to reproduce results, being the general aim for quantitative results. In the quantitative research of this thesis, reliability can be considered to be obtained due to detailed descriptions on how the survey is designed, carried out and distributed, even though it is distributed unequally across age groups and gender, to ensure replicability. Also, the high number of respondents of the survey, who were all asked the same questions, can be considered a way to trust the research, as well as to reproduce results in the research even though this is more closely tied to generalizability. Validity in quantitative research also depends on the relevance of questions. If one is researching what one is supposed to also determines the research quality. In the quantitative research executed in the fulfillment of this thesis, the survey participants are asked questions regarding their attitudes towards English and Norwegian music, and beliefs on motivations behind language choice. Thus, the survey can be considered valid, as the questions are relevant, and the survey can be considered to be researching what it is supposed to.

The concept of generalizability is also important to consider in relation to the quality of research executed. The qualitative research in this thesis cannot be considered

generalizable in the statistical way like quantitative studies might be. Instead, generalizability in qualitative research in the present study depend on the degree of transferability of results, in to which they correspond to other contexts and situations (Rindal 2007, p. 221). Therefore, the qualitative research might be generalizable in a theoretical, analytical view, which is important in order to strengthen validity of qualitative research (Rindal, 2007, p. 221). However, the present study has a relatively limited size which impacts the generalizability of the research. The quantitative method can be generalized in a more traditional, descriptive and statistical way, like through diagrams. Also, the quantitative method consists of a relatively high number of participants which makes it likely to obtain many of the same results when performed in another study.





## 4 Analysis

This chapter presents results from the interviews and survey. Analysis 1 (4.1) consists of results from the interviews, while Analysis 2 (4.2) consists of results from the survey.

### 4.1 Analysis 1: Interviews

In the following section, statements from the six pop music artists are summarized and occasionally quoted. The quotes are translated into English and the original Norwegian quotes from the interviews can be found in Appendix E. The quotes are numbered in the following section and in the Appendix.

#### 4.1.1 Motivations anchored in Authenticity and Identity

##### 4.1.1.1 Authenticity and Identity

Some of the artists mention that appearing authentic and reflect identity through music is important. However, according to Artist 2 (n), English is claimed to index a 'fake' identity as it is a language he claims one can hide behind in music. Also, he argues that artists do not necessarily have to have an honest expression in English compared to when using Norwegian. He claims that artists who use English build a character in order to fit the musical expression:

You kind of make a character instead of being 100% honest. (1).

Therefore, he argues that Norwegian artists lose their identity and personality when they use English and claim that they can appear inauthentic. In fact, he claims that the artistic characteristics disappear when Norwegian artists use English. However, he claims that when artists use Norwegian, they index a nearer and personal identity. Therefore, he claims that language choice might influence the personal expressions of artists:

If you wanted to write a song aimed to reach a lot of people you might choose English, but if you wanted to approach people in a certain way, more recognizable just for you, you might choose Norwegian. (2).

He argues that this is because artists are closer to the person one is in real-life when using Norwegian compared to using another language. Therefore, especially emphasized by artists who use in Norwegian, the personality of artists is important and that the use of Norwegian can index and promote the artists' authentic expression and personality:

Artist 6 (n/e): I think I appear more like myself and not just an artist who sings cover songs or imitate my idols. (3).

Artist 1 (n) states that she took pride in Norwegian and wants to cultivate and develop music in Norwegian as it expresses more identity. She describes music in Norwegian as refreshing because it indexes the Norwegian identity:

There is more identity in it, it's Norwegian after all! (4).

Similarly, Artist 3 (e) points out that it is important to use Norwegian language in music due to the reflection of the Norwegian identity.

In sum, one motivation behind language choice might be influenced by the desire to index authenticity and identity in music. This is especially emphasized by artists who use Norwegian.

#### **4.1.1.2 Third-person Authenticity**

Some of the artists imply a genre-specific nature of English in pop music, a preference of English in pop music. The artists imply that English is the desired language to use in pop music in order to appear authentic within this genre of music. Artist 3 (e) describes English as being the obvious language choice in pop music through personal experience:

I don't think we considered other options either. It was just 'What music do you want to make?' 'Okay, he'll help us with writing the text' – in English! (5).

Similarly, Artist 1 (n) states that:

In the pop world, it seems like English is what matters. Absolutely! (6).

In contrast with the implied genre specific nature of English in pop, artists claim that pop music in Norwegian is sometimes associated with folk music. Artist 1 (n) claims that her Norwegian music is therefore usually related to this genre:

A lot of people have described my music as belonging to the folk music genre, but I feel like these folk-associations are related to the use of Norwegian language in music in general. It seems to be what people relate Norwegian songs with. However, it's not a musical genre I feel at home in. (7).

Artist 3 (e) admits that she previously also associated Norwegian music to folk music. She believes that people choose English in fear of being classified as folk-song artists:

I think I just thought that 'Music? Yeah, that's English'. I don't think I really considered anything else. It's what I listened to on the radio, and my dad's music was English, and those who sang in Norwegian were Norwegian folk-song artists, and I was like 'Okay Norwegian and dialect are folk-songs, and that's not what I'm going to sing'. I don't want to sing folk-songs. (8).

Considering this, some artists might regard certain languages to index, and fit better within certain musical genres.

#### **4.1.1.3 Authenticity through Dialects**

Artist 2 (n) states that he uses his Norwegian dialect as it personally gives him more in terms of personal growth and development. He also points out that his music attains a personal touch. He argues that he appears honest and authentic, and that it might be easier to grasp the personality behind his music as it is developed based on his voice, vocabulary, expressions and sentences that he uses in everyday-life:

It's a lot easier to communicate a personal feeling when I use the language and expressions I would've used normally, like when I would've told a story to some friends or someone I knew. (9).

According to Artist 4 (e), pop music in Norwegian became popular through artists who used their dialect in music. She claims that the possibility of releasing songs in Norwegian would

have been greater if she had a more distinct dialect, rather than her Eastern Norway dialect. This is because she considers artists who have a distinct and exotic dialect to have an advantage in the Norwegian pop music industry as they stand out. This is also pointed out by Artist 3 (e). Artist (3) emphasizes that the use of dialects in music is important because she is afraid of people becoming copies of each other as it might result in lack of using dialects. She stresses the importance of using Norwegian and dialects in order to preserve the Norwegian identity:

I'm extremely engaged in preserving the Norwegian language and dialects. That's one of the coolest things about Norwegian – the dialects! (10).

She emphasizes the importance of Norwegian artists singing in Norwegian as they pave the way for future Norwegian artists who might want to do the same. Despite her commitment to preserving Norwegian dialects, Artist 3 (e) has not managed to write and sing songs in her own dialect. However, she is devoted to bring back the pride of her dialect and test whether it can work, and come naturally in musical contexts.

#### **4.1.1.4 Credibility**

For Artist 6 (n/e), authenticity is especially relevant and important in music in order to achieve credibility. He argues that the audience admire artists who appear authentic and credible, and argues that when using English artists might alienate both their audience and themselves. This is also mentioned by Artist 4 (e). She describes pop music in English as alienating to the audience because it is a foreign language. By contrast, Artist 6 (n/e) claims that the artist and the audience might appear more credible when artists use Norwegian:

I think that neither the audience nor myself are as credible as when I sing in Norwegian. (11).

He states that artists who choose English compete with many artists who have a greater credibility in English than they have themselves, as many are native speakers of English. However, he explains that Norwegian artists who sing in English can acquire credibility by the audience if accent and correct pronunciation is in place, and if they manage to sound authentic:

There are a many artists who sing in English and make it work and make it seem relatively credible. (12).

Nonetheless, Artist 6 (n/e) believes that Norwegian artists have greater credibility in music using Norwegian because the phrases and sentences are similar to those one use in daily life:

I think it's important to produce music where the text sounds like sentences you could've said, and that the audience get an impression that this is how the artist actually talks. I think that's very important. That the credibility is present, that's what people believe in. (13).

He relates this to the audience's expectations of artists, where audiences might have different expectations depending on artists. However, he claims that the audience expected and wanted songs in Norwegian from him:

It's not a coincidence that my hit was in Norwegian, because that's what people wanted from me. But it might be English they want from other artists. Because they might have greater credibility in English than I had. (14).

Attaining credibility might be an important motivation influencing language choice in music as artists might have a desire to be credible and different languages might provide a difference in credibility. Especially by using one's native language, artists might achieve greater credibility, which is important in music.

#### **4.1.2 Impact of International Ambition and Chance of Success and Popularity on Language Choice**

##### **4.1.2.1 Ambition**

According to the artists, ambition can be a motivation behind language choice in music. Several of the artists claim that artists choose English because they have an ambition to reach out and be visible to an audience abroad, and therefore choose to use English:

Artist 6 (n/e): I think a lot of people sing in English because they don't want to rule out the possibility to become great artists outside of Norway. It kind of closes the door to be famous in England, you know, when you sing in Norwegian. (15).

The majority of the artists in the present study point out that they indeed had ambitions of becoming international and world famous artists, be streamed on the most popular radio channels, performing at big pop festivals, and be recognized by other international artists. According to Artist 1 (n), Norwegian artists who have an ambition to reach out internationally should in fact choose English. This is because she claims that it is difficult becoming an international artist when singing in Norwegian as few people understand the language. This point is also emphasized by Artist 6 (n/e) who considers it strange for artists who plan to stay within Norway sing in English:

The main point of singing in English for Norwegian artists must be that you want to reach outside of Norway. And, for a Norwegian artist who performs for a Norwegian audience, but who sings in English... It's just stupid I think. (16).

Nonetheless, he explains that he had two music tours in Norway before he changed language to Norwegian and insists that there is no reason for him to sing in English as he only performs in Norway. However, according to Artist 5 (n/e) some Norwegian artists who sing in English can be popular both in Norway and abroad:

They perform in the big cities and at the big festivals [in Norway]. And then they travel abroad to perform. Even though they write in English. They have a huge audience, both at home and abroad. (17).

Some artists point out that English music by Norwegian artists is positive in terms of music export and industry as Norwegian artists can be visible and recognized abroad, because their language choice might lead to gaining opportunities and fame.

However, according to Artist 6 (n/e), artists who have an ambition to become famous abroad might limit their chances to become recognized as an artist in the home country:

If you bet everything on becoming famous abroad, and if you don't focus on your home place... Your dreams become so big that you might dream about the world but didn't even get your home place. Because you didn't focus on your home place, you focused on the world. (18).

Even though having an ambition to reach out internationally with her music, Artist 5 (n/e) describes that she found value in using Norwegian:

I didn't really manage to be myself in that [English pop] music. While, now, I make music I feel very at home in, I'm confident with, and I know is good. (19).

Therefore, ambitions of artists seem to be relevant in terms of motivation behind language choice as artists might prefer English when having ambitions to reach out internationally as well as having the chance to become popular in Norway. However, artists' might risk to lose audience in Norway when using English as they might have more focus on the world and less focus on Norway.

#### **4.1.2.2 Chances of Success and Popularity by using English in Music**

According to some of the artists, using English might open up to more opportunities in music as one can participate in more genres, and establish partnerships with other international artists. Artist 5 (n/e) points out that most of the Norwegian artists who have achieved popularity abroad are those who have written in English. She claims that commercial pop music in English is also very popular in Norway:

I mean, most of the commercial pop music in Norway is more or less in English. (20).

According to Artist 4 (e), using English might be motivated by the music business coming with suggestions for artists. She explains that this might contribute to a motivation behind language shift and choice in music, especially when artists change language from Norwegian to English in music:

I think the branch is suggesting things. How I analyze it [an artist's shift of language] it was definitely someone who influenced him. (21).

Artist 6 (n/e) claims that English opens up more opportunities, but that Norwegian artists might lower their chances of recognition in Norway by using English, while using Norwegian might increase the chances of success in Norway:

Obviously you have bigger opportunities in English. Most of the time. I mean, bigger opportunities in the sense that if it goes well, it can go very well. Outside of Norway and these things. But, I mean, if the chances to accomplish this in Norway is so much greater in English, I think it's almost the opposite. I mean, I think the chances to accomplish something with one's music in Norway is actually greater using Norwegian. (22).

Similarly, the artists who sing in Norwegian emphasize that using English in pop music makes one compete with greater and international groups of artists, which might make it harder to stand out among artists:

Artist 6 (n/e): It might be easy to drown in the number of artists. Resulting in that no one is aware of who you are. (23).

Artist 6 (n/e) describes this as a demotivating factor for using English, as Norwegian artists disappear among the very high number of artists who use English. He claims that might be a recurring and significant issue when discussing chances of success and popularity of Norwegian artists, as they might miss opportunities and booking requests. This is because it might be harder to identify that artists are Norwegian when they sing in English:

Artist 6(n/e): It's like you can't play live because no one understood you're Norwegian. (24).

Similarly, Artist 5 (n/e) emphasizes that Norwegian artists should not always chase success abroad as one might miss good opportunities and acknowledgements in Norway. However, Artist 6 (n/e) claims that this might be overshadowed by the fact that some Norwegian artists use English and indeed achieve success and popularity abroad. As a result, artists might strive to acquire the same success and popularity abroad and therefore choose English.

Even though the artists were asked directly about whether English or Norwegian might hold a greater commercial advantages than the other in terms of selling better, the commercial aspect is expressed implicitly in their statements. Instead, the artists seem to combine different chances of success and popularity with the two languages. The use of English is related to international ambitions and opportunities, but opportunities in Norway might become limited and potentially affected by the issue of not standing out between the great number of artists.

#### **4.1.2.3 Music in Digital Music Services and Radio**

According to some of the interviewees, the attraction and opportunities of English in music are related to the power of social media and music services. According to Artist 3 (e), the opportunity to become famous on social media and music services is greater when using English as one can reach out internationally. Artist 5 (n/e) argues that music services like Spotify and radio channels can also make artists popular and discovered, as new music is presented and introduced through these channels. She argues that Spotify has become powerful in the distribution of music due to its algorithms and the chance of being inserted into many playlists, which might lead to more opportunities for artists:

Spotify is the powerful agent who decides what songs should become popular. (25).

However, she claims that Spotify has few playlists for music in Norwegian, and that artists have higher chances of recognition by using English. She describes that she has had a decrease of listeners on Spotify after switching into using Norwegian, claiming that Spotify's algorithms are not distributing her songs into playlists due to her music being in Norwegian.

#### **4.1.2.4 Chances of Success and Popularity by using Norwegian in Music**

Some of the artists who use Norwegian point out that Norwegian artists who want to remain popular and develop their music in Norway might benefit from using Norwegian. Artist 5 (n/e) points out that using Norwegian in music might lead to recognition during a longer period of time where artists who sing in Norwegian are attractive throughout many years.

This might imply a commercial advantage of Norwegian. She mentions several examples of Norwegian artists who have performed all around Norway over several years, who are still popular:

All these have been in the music business for many years. They can travel around Norway and attract audience almost anywhere they go. They have written and performed songs in Norwegian. (26).

According to Artist 2 (n), it might be easier to get a good start and be recognized in the Norwegian pop industry when using Norwegian:

I think in Norway, in the Norwegian music industry or environment, I think it's easier to be successful or to get a good start when using Norwegian compared to using English. (27).

Artist 2 (n) suggests that his recognition in music might be related to the fact that there are few pop music artists who sing in Norwegian, and in addition very few men.

The use of Norwegian in music is also valued by artists using English:

Artist 4 (e): It's a cool thing for younger people to see that one can get pretty far with using Norwegian, and that it can be a nice thing. And that it's not a stupid language, you know. That you can actually be pretty fresh and write in Norwegian! (28).

In fact, Artist 3 (e) considers to change her music from English to Norwegian by using her dialect as she wants to stay in Norway. Artist 5 (n/e) admits that artists might need to promote the Norwegian language in music:

Norwegian artists might not be good enough to promote the Norwegian language exactly because to 'survive' abroad as a pop artist you almost have to write in English, because it's the universal language. (29).

Artist 4 (e) highlights the importance of the Norwegian music industry rewarding artists who write in Norwegian as it can contribute to the preservation of the Norwegian language. She also points out that she is very positive towards prizes given to motivate the use of the Norwegian language.

Considering the chances of success and opportunities related to English and Norwegian in music, there seem to be some differences between the languages. Norwegian might be favored by artists who want to establish and remain in Norway, even though English is also very attractive within music in Norway. Norwegian is claimed to make artists stand out more, which might also contribute to higher chances of recognition and success within the Norwegian music branch, hence a better chance of commercial success. Using English, however, seem to be more related to the chances of success abroad.

#### **4.1.2.5 Norwegian Wave**

When considering chances of success and popularity by using Norwegian, many artists describe an increased use of Norwegian in music. This trend is described as emerging throughout the last few years and is mentioned by most artists, including those who use

both Norwegian and English. According to Artist 3 (e), the increase of Norwegian music can be described as a shift:

It's a language shift. If you look at it in a broader view. Something has happened the last ten years. People have just been wanting to do it. (30).

Artist 4 (e) points out that the shift of Norwegian has occurred throughout her career:

When I started to develop as a performing musician Norwegian music wasn't as fucking cool as it is now. That wave came from 2017 and onwards, I'd say. (31).

Similarly, Artist 1 (n) describes that few people sung in Norwegian in the beginning of her music career. She explains that her songs stood out from many others that were mainly English-language songs. Now, a few years after her debut as an artist, she claims that there has been an increase of artists using Norwegian. She points out that many of these artists started to developed around the same time as her. She claims that language choice might therefore be based on trends where artists started to use Norwegian due to the increasing popularity of it:

It's been an increase of writing in Norwegian since I started releasing music six-seven years ago. And, when thinking about it, it's not a long time ago where no one rapped in Norwegian. But now it's almost a bit weird. Very weird, I'd say, if Norwegian artists rap in English. So I mean it's pretty obvious that this is based on trends, and that one is naturally very influenced by others. I thought I was unique because I wrote in Norwegian, but now I see that there were many artists who started writing in Norwegian around the same time I did. Therefore, I might just be a product of a greater trend. (32).

The artists who use Norwegian explain that they have experienced good responses and acknowledgement on their music when releasing songs in Norwegian, both from the audience and the pop music branch.

Artist 1 (n): I experienced a good response on writing in Norwegian, both from the audience and the branch, which made me continue writing in Norwegian. I was a part of a wave, but I didn't know it. (33).

The wave of Norwegian is described as being a result of Norwegian artists wanting to write songs in Norwegian, and that this has become favored and appreciated both from the music industry and the audience. The upcoming of a Norwegian wave might have contributed to greater recognition and popularity of Norwegian music.

### ***4.1.3 Motivations behind Language Choice related to the Songwriting Process and Lyrics***

#### ***4.1.3.1 Inspiration and References in Music***

Most of the artists who were interviewed believe that many Norwegian artists write songs in English as they have most references from English music. These references are described as being used as inspiration in their own songwriting. This is because the artists claim that it is easier to develop and become inspired by music one listens to. Artist 3 (e) points out that all her musical idols sing in English, that most music on radio is in English, and all those she seeks inspirations from who were popular at the time she grew up (in the 90s and 00s)



sung in English. Therefore, she describes it as being a natural choice for her to use English. Artist 4 (e) suggests that using English in music might be a subconscious choice emerging as the natural one as one mostly only listens to English music:

I've thought about this, and I don't think it was a conscious choice in the beginning. But I guess it's because the music I listen to, also by Norwegian artists, is in English. (34).

According to Artist 6 (n/e), artists use English in order to imitate and sound like other successful artists. He explains that most artists want to be recognized and achieve success and therefore imitate other artists in an attempt to become as successful as them:

I think we are very influenced by one another. If someone acquires success with something, I think a lot of people will try to imitate and copy, and do the same. (35).

However, according to Artist 1 and 2, this might cause artists to adopt many of the same words and phrases from other artists which might make lyrics sound imitative and clichéd:

Artist 2 (n): If I had sung in some Eastern Norway dialect or in English, I would've taken tremendous inspiration from someone I was fan of or liked very well. This would have caused me to use many of the same phrases, vocal ending, sentence structure and vocabulary as they used. Instead of developing my own expressions. (36).

According to Artist 2 (n), a consequence might be that artists lose personality as well as limit themselves in their progress and personal development as songwriters. However, several artists point out that there were few, if any, pop music artists that previously sung in Norwegian, and therefore less artists to be inspired by. For that reason, some artists argue that if they had grown up listening to music in Norwegian, it would have been an obvious language to use in music:

Artist 3 (e): If I'd grown up listening to Norwegian artists, I honestly think that it had been an obvious choice for me to write in my dialect when I started developing my music. But it wasn't like that earlier. Because I've mostly only listened to English music growing up. (37).

According to Artist 2 (n), inspiration from other artists might be especially relevant when it comes to linguistic support in songwriting using dialects. He describes that he studied various artists who use the same dialect within other musical genres in order to examine their use of the specific dialect, and to gain some linguistic support and inspiration.

Therefore, references in music might be an important motivation behind language choice in music as artists might seem to find it easier to develop songs and lyrics in music they have references to, and can draw inspiration from.

#### **4.1.3.2 Songwriting in English vs. Norwegian**

Throughout the interviews, the artists comment on differences in songwriting between English and Norwegian. According to some of the artists, English is a better 'melodic language', described as being more suitable for music as it makes it easier to adapt phrases

and lyrics to a melody. Similarly, Artist 3 (e) claims that English is an easier language to write songs in:

English is more foreign, but it's a language which is a lot easier to sing in. It comes easier out of the mouth, and I feel like it's easier to explain jokes, punchlines and feelings. (38).

On the other hand, some of the artists who use Norwegian argue that Norwegian is an easier language to express oneself through, as it is their native language. However, artists claim that Norwegian might demand more time in a songwriting process:

Artist 2 (n): I have used a lot of time on developing my music in order for it to work in my dialect. It took a lot of time before things fell into place. And that barrier was of course hard to break, but I feel like it's much more worth it, rather than jumping on the trend and sing in English. (39).

According to the artists who use English, Norwegian makes it difficult to write songs:

Artist 4 (e): I think it's very hard to write in Norwegian, compared to English. At least when you're not used to it. I want to try to write in Norwegian, but it's just so freaking hard. (40).

The artists do not mention explicitly what these difficulties consist of, but state that it is hard to 'make songs work' in Norwegian.

Due to facing challenges related to songwriting in Norwegian, some of the artists claim that the personal growth and development is greater compared to writing songs in English:

Artist 3 (e): Your growth is a lot bigger if you bother to push yourself and write and do it all in Norwegian. (41).

According to Artist 2 (n), this is because artists use less clichéd language, and phrases from others when writing songs in Norwegian. Artist 3 (e) points out that she wishes to write good Norwegian songs, but admits that it is hard choosing another language than English as she considers it an easier language to write songs in. Considering the challenges in songwriting in Norwegian, Artist 4 (e) claims that it makes it even more impressive when artists write good Norwegian songs:

As a songwriter I have to say that I'm very impressed by those who manage to write good Norwegian songs. Because it's so much harder. At least when you have grown up in our age, with so much English around us. (42).

Some artists point out that English sounds cooler in music than Norwegian. Artist 3 (e) claims that she feels cooler as she can use more power and energy when she sings in English. Artist 5 (n/e) admits that she previously considered Norwegian a less cool language to write songs in:

As immature as it might sound, I considered songwriting in Norwegian to be not as 'cool' compared to artists who managed to write cool things in English. (43).

According to Artist 4 (e), some artists manage to make songs sound cool in Norwegian, however admits that the use of Norwegian in some musical context can be perceived as

clumsy [keitete] and awkward due to the different sounds music in Norwegian produce. In some contexts, she finds Norwegian songs so awkward, making it hard for her to listen to them:

I just... I can't. I can't bear to listen to it, because it's so awkward. (44).

Therefore, this might show that songwriting in English and Norwegian can influence language choice, depending on which language that allegedly index better musicality, or might be related to various challenges of the songwriting process. Moreover, perceived coolness of languages might also be a motivation for language choice.

#### **4.1.3.3 Attention and Focus on Lyrics**

According to some artists, songs in English are given less attention compared to songs in Norwegian. Artist 4 (e) claims that the lyrical messages in her (English) songs are not perceived nor understood by the Norwegian audience. She has both tried writing complex English songs, including metaphors, as well as simpler songs being specific and easy. However, she claims that the audience do not grasp the message regardless of the lyrics being complex or simple:

I mean, people understand English, but it's unbelievable how much more attention people give lyrics in Norwegian compared to lyrics in an English song. At least from a songwriter's point of view. You can sit for a fucking long time with lyrics and develop it where you think 'I hope this will be nice and metaphorical', and that you have done a good job, but then everyone's like 'what is the song actually about?'. (45).

Nonetheless, she emphasizes that the attention to text and recognition from other musicians is something she values and desire, therefore, she strives to write good English texts.

According to some artists, the lack of attention on lyrics in English songs might be due to the position of English as a foreign and second language, where people are claimed to be less critical in general, and focus less on text and meaning compared to songs in their first language. Accordingly, Artist 4 (e) argues that artists who write and sing in Norwegian have the advantage to convey something with their text as the audience pays more attention to the lyrics. This is also emphasized by Artist 5 (n/e) who points out that the lyrics in her Norwegian songs are indeed given more attention and where she has received positive responses with regard to songwriting. In English, however, she claims that the responses mostly concerned her voice or sound of the song rather than the lyrics. Moreover, the process of developing songs in English is according to some artists more focused on catchiness, good refrains and hooks rather than good lyrics and focus on texts:

Artist 6 (n/e): It's probably different from artist to artist, but for me it's like... if I don't have anything to say, if I just have a catchy melody and these things... I think it's best to use English. (46).

The attention and focus on lyrics in different languages might influence language choice in music depending on the desire of artists, as it is claimed that some languages are given more attention than others.

#### **4.1.4 Language Choice Impacting Communication with the Audience**

##### **4.1.4.1 Perceived Distance and Proximity of Languages**

According to several of the artists, English is considered to create a distance in music. This is especially pointed out by Artist 5 (n/e) and 6 (n/e), who have both changed from using English to Norwegian. According to Artist 5 (n/e), the understanding of the distancing effect of English did not appear until she changed from writing songs in English to Norwegian:

Now, afterwards, I can see that my songs in English created a distance as most of my audience is Norwegian. I can now let go of that. (47).

However, Artist 4 (e) perceives English music as softer, and that the distance creates a possibility to be open and expose oneself when writing in English without raising conflicts or discussions, as the audience might not catch the lyrical message. She points out that music in English carries a certain strength which makes this possible. According to her, developing music in English can be considered therapeutic as it creates a room to express her feelings. This is also mentioned by Artist 3 (e), who finds English an easier language to explain certain topics in:

The English language provides a better musicality which makes topics easier to explain. It can be love, anger, or injustice. The big topics. It's just easier somehow. (48).

Some artists claim that the distance in music might arise due to English being a foreign language in Norway. As a result, the audience might not understand the lyrics as well as when artists use Norwegian. Also, some claim that the perceived distance of English might be caused by the familiarity of music in English, where Norwegians might experience the phrases and lyrics as clichés which might cause a distance.

In contrast, several of the artists describe Norwegian as creating a nearness due to using their native language. According to Artist 1 (n) and 2 (n), Norwegian is a language that one more easily can express feelings and personal stories through. For Artist 5 (n/e), Norwegian has proved to fit her voice better, pointing out that her voice is near and intimate:

The music I make and the voice I have, it's probably more near and... what should I say... intimate. My voice is near and intimate. More than grand [storslått] and grandiose [sværisk]. I experience that my voice fits better in the format I'm in now. (49).

However, according to some of the artists, songs in Norwegian can be experienced as more direct for the Norwegian audience. Artist 1 (n) argues that artists cannot hide behind distance and clichés when using Norwegian compared to using English, and therefore appear more direct. Artist 6 (n/e) points out that this might intimidate artists who might otherwise have chosen to write in Norwegian.

According to this, the artists seem to advocate that English and Norwegian might be providing the artists with a sense of distance and nearness to songs and lyrics, which might also provide the listeners with the same perceptions of distance and proximity. This can be considered to be a motivation behind language choice as the various preferences of artists,

in relation to either providing or avoiding distance or proximity in music, might impact language choice.

#### **4.1.4.2 Communication with the Audience**

According to a majority of the artists, it seems to be important to have the ability to reach out to the audience and establish a contact with them through music. Many consider it easier to communicate with the audience in Norway by using Norwegian, due to the common understanding of the lyrics. Some describe that one acquires a different contact with the audience using Norwegian:

Artist 5 (n/e): I notice it now that the texts communicate in a totally different way in Norwegian than they have ever done in English. (50).

According to Artist 4 (e) artists who sing in Norwegian has a different loyalty in their Norwegian audience:

I think you have a safety in terms of the loyalty in your audience that you perhaps don't have in English. Unless you are super famous. (51).

Several of the artists emphasize the importance of making songs that can be understood by the audience and where they can relate to the lyrics, irrespective of language. According to Artist 3 (e), Norwegian has an advantage due to the understanding of lyrics and the relation to them. Similarly, Artist 3 (e) states that the Norwegian audience catch on to music in Norwegian easier.

According to Artist 5 (n/e), the audience value specific lyrics as they can obtain an immediate understanding of the theme and song, which is easier by using Norwegian in Norway. According to Artist 1 (n) it is therefore unfortunate that those who want to convey a specific lyrical message choose English, as the lyrics communicate differently with the Norwegian audience compared to using Norwegian. She explains that the audience is forced to listen and relate to the lyrics in her Norwegian songs, and is thereby triggered to laugh, enjoy, or hate the lyrics:

There are a lot of people that don't like my texts, but at least they have a relation to them. (52).

She argues that these responses would not have been present if she had used English. The difference in communication and relation to songs in Norwegian is also mentioned by Artist 3 (e):

I think... If she had sung this song in English, it wouldn't have reached people's hearts like it did. Because when she sung the lyrics – it was Norwegian, and it hit people in a completely different way than if it would have been sung in English. (53).

However, according to Artist 4 (e), writing in Norwegian is daunting since everything is more see-through:

That's what's scary about Norwegian. People actually know what you're saying. (54).

Also, some of the artists describe the communication and attachment to Norwegian songs as a member of the audience:

Artist 3 (e): I love that song. I can't imagine the song in English. It doesn't work in English. It's everything it's supposed to be in Norwegian. It hits me. (55).

This is also pointed out by Artist 4 (e), who describes that Norwegian words and songs can touch her in a special way compared to English songs. One of her favorite Norwegian singers translates songs from English into Norwegian:

Her translations of songs... It's just... I'm speechless. 'Shit, is this really Norwegian?'. It's so fucking nice and simple. (56).

Therefore, communication and attachment with the audience might affect and be affected by the language choice artists choose. Together with the alleged perception that different languages provide a distance or proximity in music, languages might result in different communication and contact with the audience. There seems to be agreement among many of the artists that Norwegian generates a stronger connection or reaches out to the audience differently than English songs, due to the understanding and relation the native language provides.

#### **4.1.4.3 Language Choice Affecting Selection of Audiences**

According to Artist 5 (n/e), language choice might affect the audience in Norway. She describes that her English music was targeting a young and narrow age group while her Norwegian music seems to appeal to a broader audience with regard to age groups. She explains that language choice in music might have an impact on which radio channels her music is played on:

It's a pretty big difference [in audience]. When I started writing songs, and when I got the first song listed on P3, in 2012, I think, I only wrote in English and I had a younger audience. After I released [her first song in Norwegian] I was, firstly, not listed on P3, but on P1, which is a totally different type of profile, and a different group of audience. So, as I experience it, I have an older audience, maybe from the late thirties, but also people up to 60-65 show up on my concerts. (57).

However, Artist 6 (n/e) argues that his music can reach out to different age groups depending on the song. The other artists claim that the age groups in the audience are similar to their own age.

Therefore, language choice in music might affect artists' audiences with regard to which age groups and which radio channels artists appeal to.

#### **4.1.5 Impact of Perceived Language Competence on Language Choice**

##### **4.1.5.1 Proficiency**

Several of the artists claim that Norwegians have high proficiency in English, and Artist 4 (e) insists that her level of proficiency is good enough to create songs in English. She argues that few people choose Norwegian instead of English because they lack English skills, and points out that Norwegian language is highly influenced by English. By contrast, Artist 5 (n/e) argues that the competence to create the good English songs is limited for Norwegians in comparison with those who are native English speakers:

I regard myself as pretty good in English. I lived in the USA for a while when I was younger, read English and can communicate well in English, without any issues to be

understood, and I believe my pronunciation to be very good, but it's obvious that my vocabulary is very limited, and also the deep artistic involvement and expression in songwriting might be harder, as it should be metaphors and involve imagery. It demands a first language... I experience. (58).

Both Artist 1 (n) and 5 (n/e) have experienced the differences with writing songs in both languages and argue that songwriting demands a first language to be able to write satisfying lyrics. Artist 1 (n) points out that songwriting in English includes concerns regarding how to use expressions correctly and issues of pronunciation. As a result, she argues that artists might reach for easier solutions by adopting overused phrases from other English songs, and is therefore claimed to sound clichéd. This is because artists might use expressions and phrases greatly inspired by other artists when writing songs due to a fear of practicing incorrect use of language. This notion is also described by other artists, who explain the use of phrases from other artists as safe and easy solutions. In Norwegian however, Artist 1 (n) relates songwriting to freedom:

If I had something grammatically wrong [in Norwegian], it would be a part of my artistic freedom. (59).

Proficiency in a language might be an important motivation for language choice in music due to artists' abilities to express oneself through different languages. Even though some find their proficiency in English good enough, others claim that using one's native language might lead to more freedom and less concerns about language use.

#### **4.1.5.2 Creativity**

By some of the participants, it is claimed that creativity in songwriting depends on the language one writes in. Artist 5 (n/e) describes that the creativity in songwriting from English to Norwegian has changed as ideas and themes in songs are easier to develop in Norwegian. She describes the lyrical flow and text-process to have become improved, and admits that she struggled with producing text and songs in English:

When I started writing in Norwegian a few years ago, it was just like it became easy to write. I've spent a lot of time coming up with ideas and how to express it [in English]. This has become a lot easier in Norwegian. I mean, it's not easy writing in Norwegian either, but coming up with the ideas has become easier. (60).

According to Artist 1 (n), creativity and originality in songwriting can be limited due to language competence as it might depend on which language one feel safer in. This is claimed to allow artists to become more free as they can use words, expressions and grammatical concepts that they might not have proficiency of in other languages. According to Artist 2 (n), English is a hard language to be creative in as it is overused:

English is a kind of language you've heard so much that there's not so many new things you can do with the language. (61).

On the other hand, some claim that songwriting in Norwegian requires artists to be creative, as one has to find words and phrases that create a good flow, and because of the attention claimed to be given to Norwegian texts.

Artist 1 (n): You can't get away with the bad phrase in Norwegian. (62).

Artist 1 (n) experiences artists who write songs in Norwegian as playful and creative, as they have worked more with the language and are taking more risks, and dare to invent new ways of expressing themselves.

Creativity might therefore be considered to influence language choice, especially favoring artists' native language. This is because several artists describe that increased language competence might lead to a greater amount of creativity in songwriting.

#### **4.1.5.3 Vocabulary**

Both Artist 3 and 4 (e) point out the large vocabulary of English as a great advantage in music. The artists describe songwriting in English as easier and better, as there are more words to write songs from. They also describe the English vocabulary as a bigger and better one compared to the Norwegian vocabulary. Artist 3 (e) mentions that she uses English words in her everyday language, and claims English words describe feelings or things better than Norwegian words:

It's a much greater vocabulary in English, compared to Norwegian. It's easier to explain things in English, compared to Norwegian, because our vocabulary is so small. (63).

In fact, Artist 3 (e) argues that the Norwegian vocabulary is a barrier for writing songs in Norwegian. She claims that the Norwegian vocabulary forge limitations on songwriting in Norwegian, due to its small size. However, on the other hand, Artist 5 (n/e) insists that one has greater opportunities using the Norwegian language and vocabulary in songwriting. She experiences the Norwegian vocabulary as larger, which might also make texts better:

In Norwegian, I can list twenty different word that means the same. Because my vocabulary is a lot bigger, which also makes my texts better. (64).

Considering this, motivation behind language choice might be influenced by the aspect of vocabulary in languages, as artists prefer different languages. This is because some consider the English vocabulary to be an advantage in songwriting due to its perceived size, while others find the Norwegian vocabulary an advantage due to it being the native language.

## **4.2 Analysis: Survey**

The survey aimed to reach out to the listeners of Norwegian pop music, particularly the Norwegian audience, and there were 201 participants. The survey is an important contribution to this thesis as it presents results from another angle of the topic different from the interviews. The survey participants are occasionally quoted and a translation of the quotes from the survey is found in Appendix F with the same numbers.



#### 4.2.1 Gender and Age of Participants

The participants consist of 72 % women, 27% men, and 1% who did not want to state their gender. The distribution of age groups is illustrated in the diagram below.

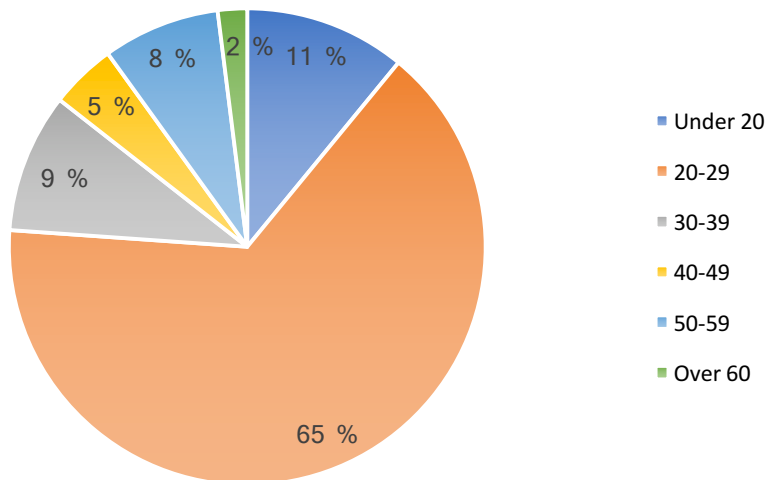


Figure 1: Age of Participants

The biggest groups of participants were between the age 20-29 with 65% of the participants, and the smallest age group between 60 years old with 2% of the participants. The other age groups were more evenly distributed.

#### 4.2.2 Listening Habits of Participants

One of the questions of the survey concerns the personal listening habits of the participants, specifically, which languages they prefer to listen to. The diagram below illustrates the results.

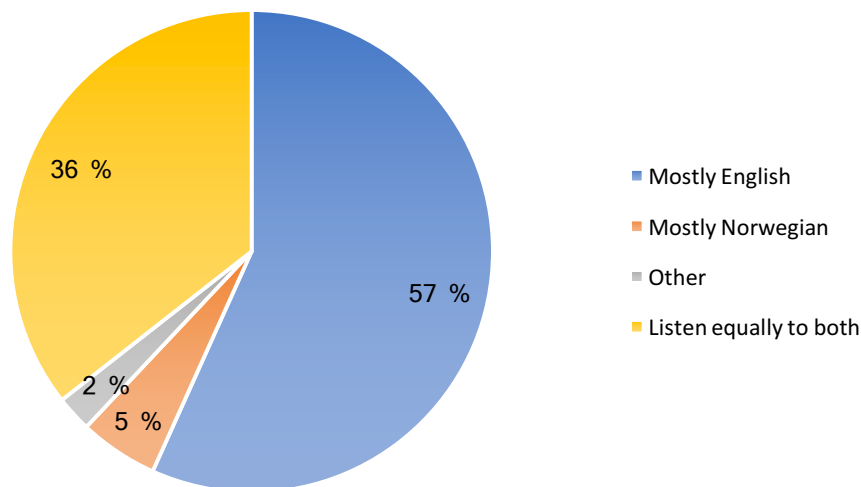


Figure 2: Listening Habits of Participants

This diagram gives an indication of popularity of languages in music. As the diagram shows almost 60% of the participants listen mostly to English music, while 36% of the participants listen equally to both languages. Only 5% listen mostly to Norwegian pop music, while 2% answered other. The participants were asked to add on languages they listen to music in where languages like Swedish, Danish, German, French and Spanish were frequently listed.

### 4.2.3 Motivations behind Language Choice in Norway (reported by the Participants)

This section considers why the participants believe that Norwegian artists choose to use English or Norwegian in music. The participants were presented with different options and had the possibility to choose several answers. They were also asked to specify and elaborate on their answers.

#### 4.2.3.1 Beliefs on why Norwegian Artists choose English in Music

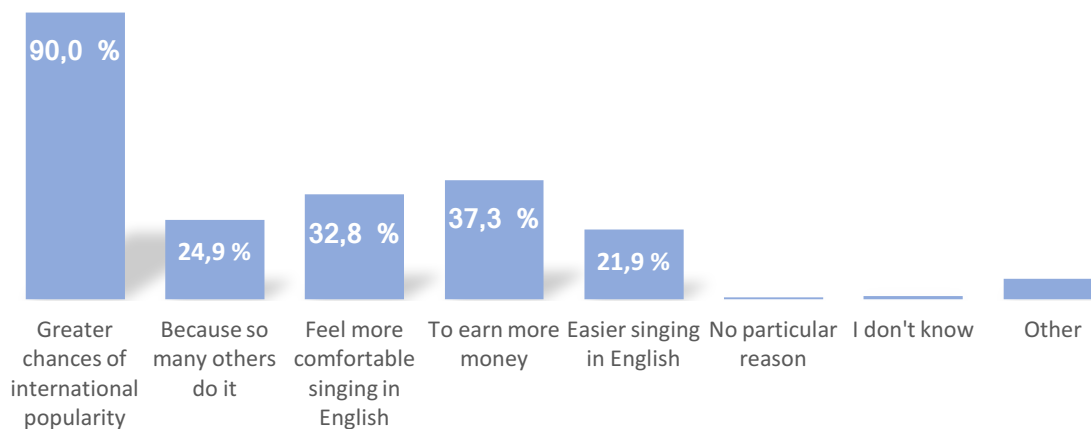


Figure 3: Potential Motivations for using English

As shown in the diagram, most participants consider English to be chosen by Norwegian artists in order to attain greater chances of international popularity. Almost 40% claim that it is to earn more money, and almost one third believe that artists feel more comfortable singing in English. One fourth of the participants believe that artists are influenced by other artists, while one fifth believe it is easier to sing in English.

Some participants elaborated their answers on this question. Many emphasize the greater chances of success and popularity, especially mentioning the higher chances of reaching out to an audience abroad. Others describe English as a comfortable language for Norwegians due to the position English has in the Norwegian community:

There's a greater chance of popularity, which leads to greater income, and many feel that it's a lot more comfortable than writing in Norwegian. (65).

Another describe it as being a desire to be a part of a global culture:

English pop is often exciting and brings in new elements and introduces a unity with the rest of the English-speaking population. (66).

Others claim that the familiarity of English, especially in musical contexts, can be important motivations on language choice in music as it might be easier for artists to write songs in English as one is used to listening to them:

It might be easier to write songs in English because one is used to listening to English music. (67).

Other participants claim that English is a language with more synonyms than Norwegian, which can make it easier to express oneself poetically. Some claim that people might have a greater understanding of poetic and literary devices in English. Several participants point out that the English vocabulary can be the reason behind writing songs in English:

English has a larger vocabulary, it's easier to describe feelings and experiences in English, and include more details than it is in Norwegian. (68).

Many participants describe that English songs sound better than Norwegian ones and some describe English as a cooler language.

Some participants describe that there is a certain distance in English songs and point out that the distance effect makes it better to sing about themes that are difficult or hard. Some mention that singing in Norwegian is too near and personal, and claim that artists use English as they might not dare to use Norwegian. Some participants describe songs in Norwegian as personal and awkward. One participant describes that artists might feel naked when using Norwegian because everyone understands it, and claims that artists might therefore favor English in music. Considering many of the points already made, one can see how these echo statements made by the artists themselves, like the popularity and familiarity of English in music, as well as how English is claimed to make it easier to express oneself through music, especially mentioned by artists who have used/use English.

#### 4.2.3.2 Beliefs on why Norwegian Artists choose Norwegian instead of English

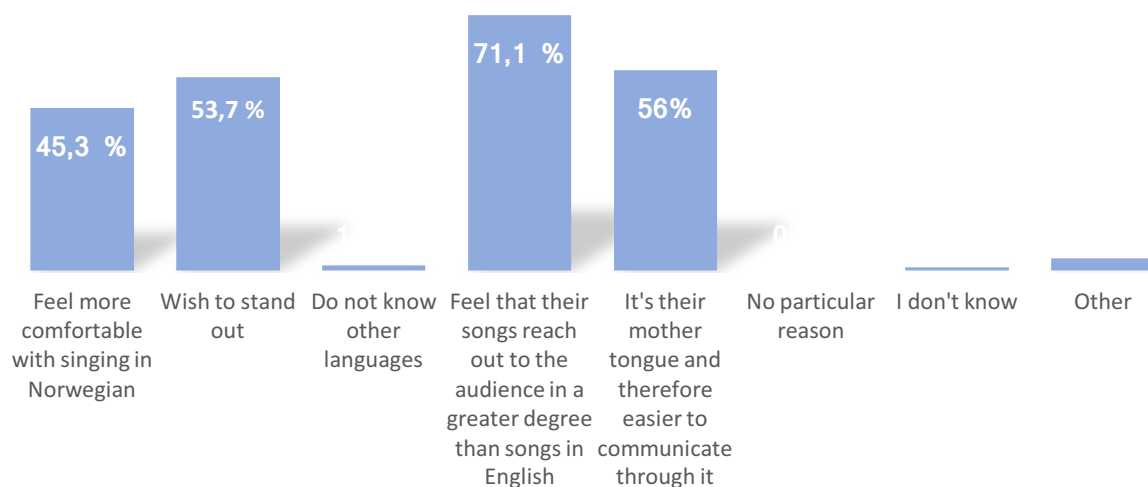


Figure 4: Potential Motivations for using Norwegian

The answers regarding this question show that the majority of the participants believe that the ability to reach out to the Norwegian audience is the most important motivation for choosing Norwegian in music. Over half of the participants consider that artists use Norwegian as it is their mother tongue, and can communicate better through it. Also, over half of the participants consider the desire to stand out [være særegen] as a motivation for choosing to write in Norwegian, while a little less than half of the participants believe that artists feel more comfortable with singing in Norwegian.

Some of the participants added on and elaborated their answer also on this question. Some believe that artists choose Norwegian as one has pride in the language, can express themselves better, and that one can express more of one's personality using Norwegian, like using dialect:

Artists can show who they are, and bring forward personal characteristics and nearness. (69).

By another, using a Norwegian dialect pose a nearness and vulnerability in music:

It's more near singing in your dialect and your language, almost like a type of vulnerability. (70).

Some participants mention the advantage of using Norwegian as being able to appeal more to a home-based audience by using Norwegian. Others argue that artists might use Norwegian in order to appear original or as an attempt to revive it in pop music.

Again, many of these are statements similar to those of the artists themselves, especially by the artists who use Norwegian as they claim to express themselves better through Norwegian, as well as expressing their personality. By most of the artists it is also mentioned that Norwegian appear near, and might communicate more with the Norwegian audience, similar to the views of the survey participants.

#### **4.2.4 The Participants' Attitudes towards English vs. Norwegian music**

This section presents an analysis of the participants' attitudes towards English and Norwegian music by Norwegian artists.

##### **4.2.4.1 Attitudes towards Pop Music in English by Norwegian Artists**

The participants were asked about their thoughts on English-language pop music by Norwegian artists, and the result is illustrated in the diagram below.

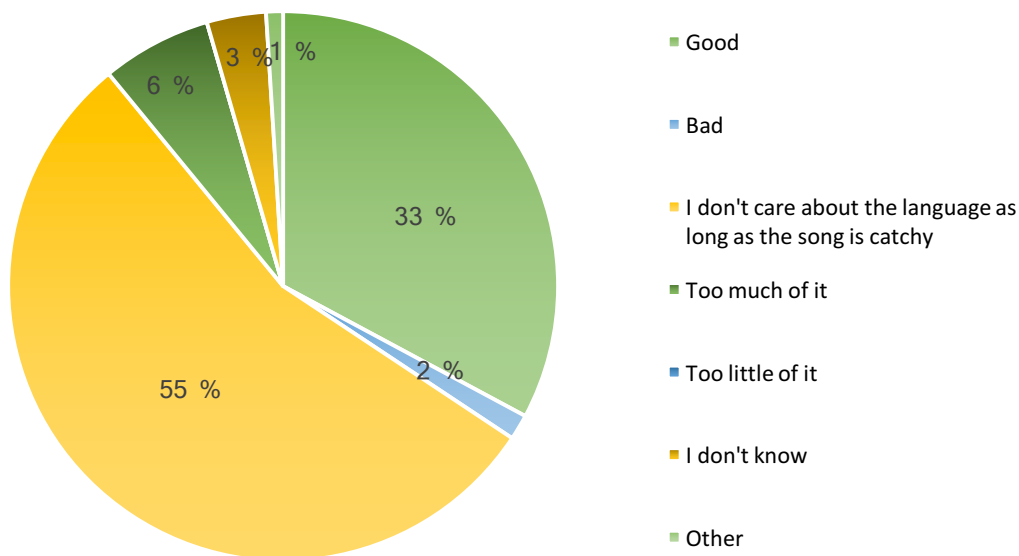


Figure 5: Attitudes towards English-language Pop Music by Norwegian Artists

Over half of the participants point out that the importance of a song being catchy is more relevant than the language of the song, and one third of the participants considers English pop music by Norwegian artists as good.

Some participants elaborated their answers. Many of the survey participants claim that English songs are the most normal to listen to, and some argue that those who listen to pop music tend to favor English. One participant states:

I mostly listen to English songs, and my impression is that this is the most 'normal' thing to do. (71).

Some participants point out that there is more English music played on the radio, the famous musical idols and artists sing in English, and that it might affect what people listens to. Some claim that this is because there are generally more English songs than Norwegian ones as it is more popular to choose English.

Some point out that English is a comfortable language to listen to, as most pop music is in English. Some claim that modern music is characterized by English and that it is as an important language in entertainment and social media. Some describe English as dominating in pop music and that English pop music is better than Norwegian:

English pop beats Norwegian pop all the time. I can't remember any good Norwegian pop. (72).

Some state that they do not listen to Norwegian artists who sing in English, and one describes the quality of artists as various. Other participants describe that Norwegian artists do not have a good enough vocabulary in English, and another points out that one can easily notice if Norwegian artists are not very good in English, even though they sing in English. One participant insists:

If they choose English (or another language), they have to master the language! (73).

Some mention that they want more music in Norwegian, and another points out that there has been an increase of Norwegian artists:

The last few years have had a lot of new and good Norwegian artists! But it's often very commercial I think, and very similar to other music. (74).

These attitudes seem to indicate a popular and dominant role of English in the Norwegian pop music industry, considering music in English as modern and the most normal language to listen to music in. However, some mention issues regarding the use of English by Norwegian artists, especially with regard to proficiency. The attitudes towards English music seem to reflect many of the similar points as the artists in the interviews. Particularly, both groups of informants consider English to be the dominant and most normal language to use and listen to in pop music in Norway, and that one has more references to English music. Especially by the artists who use English, English is described to be a comfortable language to sing in, and according to the survey participants, it is also a comfortable language to listen to. However, similar to the concerns of proficiency in English expressed by the survey participants, some of the artists, especially those who use Norwegian, express concerns of proficiency when using English.

#### 4.2.4.2 Attitudes towards Norwegian-Language Pop Music

The participants were asked to consider their attitudes towards Norwegian pop music, and these are illustrated below.

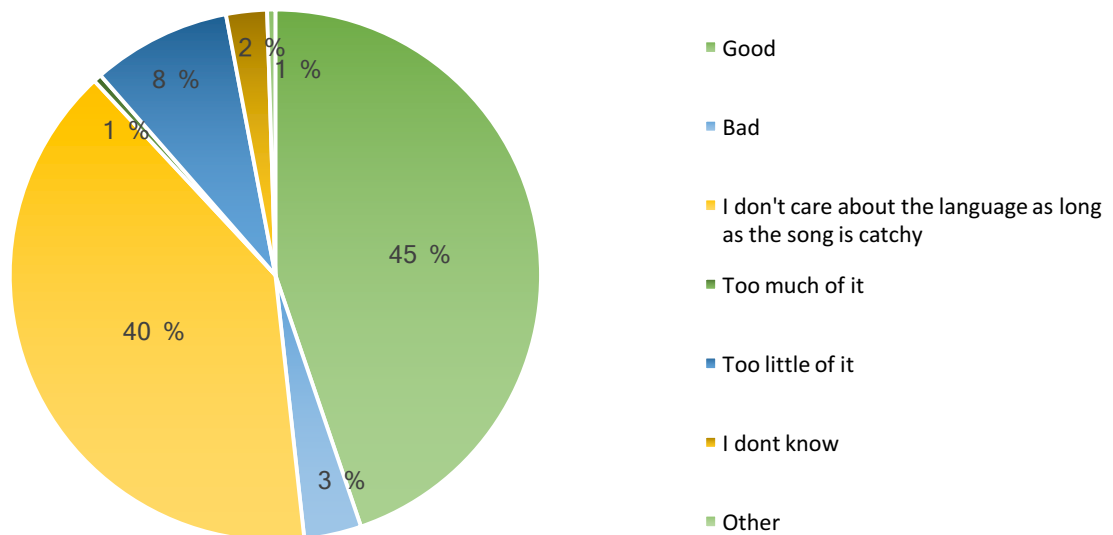


Figure 6: Attitudes towards Norwegian-language Pop Music

This diagram illustrates that almost half of the participants consider Norwegian-language pop music as good compared to the results above, where only one third found English music by Norwegian artists good. Comparing diagram 5 and 6, the diagrams illustrates that over half of the participants in diagram 5, and 40% in diagram 6, consider catchiness more

important than the language of the song. Compared to diagram 5, there were no answers concerning a lack of English music by Norwegian artists, however, diagram 6 show that 8% of the participants claim that songs in Norwegian are lacking. Also, compared to diagram 5, 6% claim that there is too much of English music, while only 3% claim that there is too much Norwegian music. All in all, these results might illustrate a direction of attitudes leaning towards a greater preference of Norwegian-language pop by Norwegian artists, rather than Norwegian artists using English. The diagrams might perhaps also indicate a desire for more Norwegian-language music. However, due to the small variations on several aspects in these diagrams, these considerations and preferences can only be concluded in a low degree. Instead, the results illustrate a high degree of emphasis on the importance of catchiness rather than language in music, which might be the most apparent and clearest conclusion to draw from the diagrams.

Some participants elaborated on their attitudes to Norwegian pop music. Some describe Norwegian music as more fun to listen to and experience a stronger artistic expression when artists use Norwegian in music. Others claim that artists who sing in Norwegian stands out and might be more easily acknowledged as artists in Norway using Norwegian. Some argue that this is especially due to the understandability of lyrics and capacity to convey the message of the song using Norwegian. Some participants describe that if the song has a particular message to convey, it might be easier to use Norwegian, as the audience can properly understand the lyrics and produce engagement, even though several participants claim that Norwegian and English pop music is popular in Norway as people can understand both languages as well. Some participants point out that some songs in English can have a boring [platt] lyrical message and that some texts can be too banal [banale] for English, where Norwegian might help express the message better.

Several participants argue that Norwegian is a better language for pop music in Norway, as most people in Norway can recognize and understand the music. Some point out that it is something very special and unique about Norwegian music. One participant describes how Norwegian can contribute to a proximity in lyrics:

Songs often seem more cozy and one comes more close to the lyrics when songs are sung in Norwegian. (75).

Some argue that using Norwegian is an advantage in Norway as the music makes the audience relate easier to the text and have a closer relation to it, and that it can appeal to the Norwegian nationalism:

I think artists who sing in Norwegian can get more attached to their audience, as it's often the mother tongue and one can understand what is sung and can relate to it, and that it can feel like/ be experienced as more personal. In English it might not have the same effect, and it might, to a certain degree, be hard to present Norwegian culture by singing in English. Therefore, I think, it might be better to sing in Norwegian for a Norwegian audience. (76).

This is also mentioned by the artists, who express the communication and contact with the audience when using Norwegian as a reason for using Norwegian. Through the interviews, some of the artists describe the communication of Norwegian songs both as a members of

the audience and as artists, perceiving Norwegian music as near and describe the proximity unique for Norwegian songs.

According to several participants, Norwegian has become more trendy and popular the last few years:

It seems like it has become more and more popular with songs that are written in Norwegian in Norway. (77).

Some point out that the upcoming and popularity of using Norwegian in rap might have contributed to more acceptance of Norwegian in pop music, and mention that the increased popularity of Norwegian has resulted in greater acceptance of the language in pop music.

Some describe new Norwegian pop music artists as successful, and explain that they are on top in several popular playlists on Spotify. However, some participants point out that Norwegian music can be considered less modern, and not as trendy as English. Some participants describe Norwegian music as sounding corny [corny], stupid [teit], and some claim that many do not listen to it because it sounds wrong. Another participant describes how Norwegian music can be considered boring and outdated. Some of the participants describe the use of Norwegian in pop music as stigmatizing. One participant responded very eagerly on the issues considering the differences of English and Norwegian in Norwegian pop music:

I think there's a certain stigma around mixing Norwegian and pop. Not that it's not accepted or perceived as 'foolish' [teit], but I know that personally, I have a tendency of being sceptical towards Norwegian songs that are suggested in playlists. If the title is in Norwegian and I've neither heard about the song nor the artist, I automatically skip to the next one. I do not have the same approach to pop songs in English, strangely enough. (78).

Similarly, some participants admit to not give Norwegian pop songs a chance, and others claim that English music is catchier than Norwegian music. Some argue that Norwegian music might appeal more to the older audience. Some explain that this might be due to the lack of proficiency in English by the older generation, or that Norwegian music is related to the folk music genre. Some claim that using Norwegian in pop music might impact the group of audience artists reach out to by using Norwegian. One participant states:

A personal impression regarding pop songs in Norwegian is that they are recognized as less catchy than the English ones. I feel that Norwegian as a language, within the Norwegian music industry, is linked to folk music. There are less young people who listens to this type of music, and more people prefer pop music (this might be because younger people regard folk music genre as belonging to the parents' generation). Artists naturally choose to produce something they believe have a greater chance to reach out with and can sell good. I simply think there's a stigma around listening to Norwegian pop. (79).

However, some claim that this has changed through the popularity of using Norwegian music the last years.



The views on the use of Norwegian in pop music seem to be somewhat contrasting. Some hold positive attitudes to Norwegian music due to the ability to communicate and attach to the audience, express personality, and conveying lyrical messages, and where Norwegian is considered to increase in popularity. Others, however, consider Norwegian to be an awkward language that might propose a stigma in pop music. As a result, Norwegian is given less chances in terms of suggestions on playlists because it is claimed to be related to folk music and to an older audience.

There are many similar points when comparing these to the artists' views. The artists also mention that artists stand out, can be more easily acknowledged, and have a closer relation to the audience and the lyrics when using Norwegian. Also, both groups of informants mention that Norwegian songs might appear more near and personal, as well as index a Norwegian identity. Both groups of informants also mention the rise of Norwegian in music where Norwegian is described as becoming more trendy and accepted. However, some participants claim that Norwegian music might still be associated with folk music. Both artists and survey participants present some negative attitudes towards the use of Norwegian in music where it is described as corny, and Artist 4 (e) mentions that it can be an awkward language to use in music. However, the artists do not imply that the use of Norwegian is stigmatized.

#### **4.2.5 Opinions on if and why English is a better Language for Pop Music in Norway**

This section presents an analysis of the survey participants' opinions on whether English is a better language for pop music in Norway. The participants consider whether a Norwegian pop music artist who writes in English has an advantage in comparison with an artist who writes in Norwegian. The answers are shown in the diagram below.

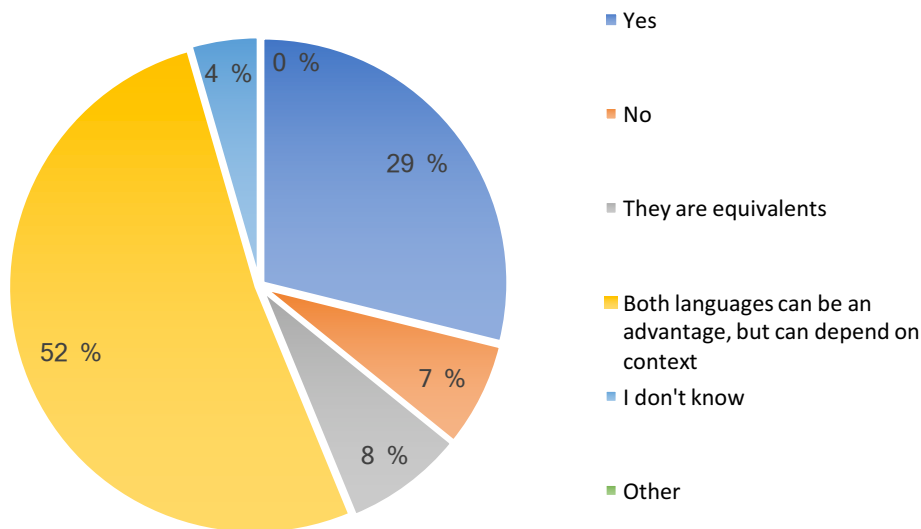


Figure 7: Advantage of English compared to Norwegian in Pop Music

The answers show that almost one third of the participants consider English better language for pop music in Norway, while only 7% answered that it is not. Over half of the participants regard English and Norwegian as both being advantageous to use in pop music, but can

vary depending on situations or contexts. Only 8% regard the languages as equivalents. Even though some motivations and aspects are already highlighted, the following notions are the most frequently listed aspects in the open comment text boxes in the survey on why English can be considered a better language to use in pop music.

#### **4.2.5.1 International Audience**

Many participants describe English as a better language for pop music when the artists have an ambition to reach out to a bigger and international audience. Many participants point out that English is an advantage in pop music due to the opportunity to be understood and appeal to more people, and argue that using English can be an advantage commercially as well. Some participants mention that artists who use English can get more opportunities in terms of collaboration with other international artists. Some also claim that artists might appear more serious when using English because they appeal to a greater and international audience. Some point out that English is well known within Norway, and can therefore be used to establish an audience in Norway. These aspects are also mentioned by the artists who consider English to be used in order to reach out to an international audience, opening up to opportunities both abroad and with other artists, and can be used by Norwegian artists who have an ambition to stay in Norway as well.

#### **4.2.5.2 Younger Audience**

Many participants argue that English appeal to the younger generation. Many explain that the younger generation both listens to more music in general, and especially in English, have better proficiency in English, and that many younger artists sing in English. Also, it is claimed that the younger generation have more focus on the international music industry, and that English appeal more to youths as it is considered more modern. This aspect is also mentioned by Artist 5 (n/e), who describes her songs in English to appeal to a younger audience with regard to which radio channels her English songs were listen to.

#### **4.2.5.3 Catchiness**

Some participants emphasize the importance of catchiness and the sound of the song, and claim that the English language consists of more nuances than Norwegian. This is explained to make it easier to write songs with a good flow in English. Several participants claim that English music is catchier, and some describe it as an easier lyrical language:

I think that English is generally a better language to sing and listen to. (80).

This is also mentioned by several of the artists, who consider English to be an easier musical language and easier to obtain a good flow. However, even though many describe English as a catchier language, many also emphasize that songs in other languages can be good as long as they are catchy.

#### **4.2.5.4 Context**

Even though most participants consider English as a better language in pop music, several participants also consider the advantages of languages to depend on context. Some participants claim that Norwegian songs fit better with sing alongs and festivals in Norway, while others point out that English fits better in party contexts. Some claim that those who sing in Norwegian has an advantage in Norway, while others claim that artists who sing in English can also be popular in Norway due to high proficiency in English. This is also

mentioned by the artists, who claim that it is easier to stand out in Norway by using Norwegian, but that Norwegian artists can also use English and achieve success in Norway.

Some participants describe that artists fit within different expressions, meaning that some artists are claimed to work best using English while others might fit better with Norwegian. In this context, features like type of song, theme, artists, and what is to be conveyed through music, can determine the advantage of the language of the song. This is also mentioned by Artist 5 (n/e), who describes her voice to fit better with Norwegian than English. Also, Artist 6 (n/e) describes that the audience might hold various expectations towards different artists. Other artists describe that one language can be regarded as better than the other, especially in relation to conveying a specific lyrical message, where Norwegian is claimed to have an advantage.



## 5 Discussion

As mentioned in the introduction, this thesis aims to investigate the following research questions:

1. What motivates Norwegian artists' language choice?
2. What are the Norwegian audience's beliefs about artists' motivations, and what do they think are good reasons for choosing English vs. Norwegian in pop music?

The results from the interviews and the survey provided the research with many perspectives, both expected and unexpected ones, and the findings are quite extensive and complex. I started out with the research with the fact that not much is known about these issues in the Norwegian context. Therefore, this research aimed to be an exploratory study where the two methods together have provided a wealth of detail. For that reason, the present study can function as a springboard to further research.

Throughout the present study, the participants point out many interesting motivations for language choice. Some motivations and themes were more frequently mentioned by the two groups of informants than others, and these are considered main findings in the following discussion. However, many of the findings in the present study are closely related to each other, and the discussion therefore include several findings from the present study.

Table 1 below presents a summary of the main findings mentioned by both groups of informants in the present study, while Table 2 presents a summary of the main findings unique for the two groups of informants:

<b><i>Motivating Factors for using English</i></b>	<b><i>Demotivating Factors for using English</i></b>	<b><i>Motivating Factors for using Norwegian</i></b>	<b><i>Demotivating Factors for using Norwegian</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-high popularity of music in English</li> <li>-increases chances of success abroad               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- attain inspiration and references in music</li> </ul> </li> <li>-a language more suited for music</li> <li>-easier to sing in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-not good enough proficiency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- express one's personality and identity</li> <li>- easier to communicate with a Norwegian audience</li> <li>- attached to the audience</li> <li>- increased popularity and acceptance of Norwegian in music</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- difficult to succeed abroad</li> <li>- less cool and trendy</li> <li>- too near and personal</li> <li>- folk-song associations</li> </ul>

*Table 1: Motivating and Demotivating Factors for using English and Norwegian suggested by both groups of Informants.*

	<b>Motivating Factors for using English</b>	<b>Demotivating Factors for using English</b>	<b>Motivating Factors for using Norwegian</b>	<b>Demotivating Factors for using Norwegian</b>
<b>Artists</b>	- easier musical language	-indexes 'fake identity' - inauthentic (1 <sup>st</sup> person authenticity) -creates a distance between artists and their lyrics, and audience and lyrics - more difficult to communicate with a Norwegian audience	- indexes 'true' identity -more authentic (1 <sup>st</sup> person authenticity)	- more challenging to write in Norwegian
<b>Audience</b>	-financial advantage			- less modern and trendy - sounds wrong in music

*Table 2: Motivating and Demotivating Factors for using English and Norwegian unique for the two groups of Informants.*

The following sections discuss the main findings from both the interviews and the survey on motivations for using and not using English and Norwegian in pop music in Norway. Even though the following sections are structured into motivations for using English and not using English, as well as using Norwegian and not using Norwegian, it is important to mention that motivational factors for using one language can directly or indirectly be demotivating factors for using another language. Therefore, the sections might overlap thematically, because some of the motivations for using English might be motivations for not using Norwegian and vice versa.

## **5.1 Motivating Factors for using English**

### **5.1.1 Ambition relating to International Recognition and Audience**

One of the main motivations for using English in music is suggested to be related to the ambition to gain recognition and popularity abroad. It is implied that English holds an advantage in music due to the position and status as a world language, where artists can reach out to audiences outside of Norway by using English. This is claimed to provide greater opportunities, like partnerships with other artists. Artists might therefore choose English because it is a very attractive language in international pop music and to have the opportunity to be a part of a global music industry, even though it is not their native language (Cutler, 2003, p. 342; Larkey, 2003, p. 146; Aleyshinkaya & Gritsenko, 2016, p. 57; Mtallo & Msoffe, 2018, p. 9).

This can be due to the dominant position of American culture and English, usually referred to as a hegemonization or cultural imperialism, where the pressure and promotion of values and structures from the English-speaking cultures has resulted in a strong position of English in various areas of popular culture (Achterberg et al., 2011, p. 591; Phillipson,

1992, p. 58-59). Attitudes towards English can be considered to be shaped by the prestige and power of the language, which has a dominant position in many domains, including in Norway. The linguistic and cultural imperialism of English include inequalities of languages where English is the most favored one and indexes many advantages in several domains, like popular culture and pop music (Phillipson, 1992, p. 58- 59).

#### **5.1.1.1 Commercial Advantages**

Both groups of informants in the present survey consider English to provide opportunities and higher chances of success, which implies commercial advantages of English in music. The results from the survey found that the ambition of reaching out abroad might be motivated by and have financial advantages, where almost 40% of the survey participants believe that English is used in order to earn more money. This aspect is not explicitly mentioned by the artists. Instead, artists describe the international opportunities of English to include making it easier to reach out abroad compared to using Norwegian. Similarly, English is claimed to be a better language to use in music compared to other languages, as it is a commercially attractive language, can be promoted across the world, and contribute to great sales for artists (Negus, 1992, p. 14; Perullo & Fenn, 2003, p. 30; Mtallo & Msoffe, 2018, p. 9).

The present research implies that English has a commercial advantage as it is usually claimed to be on top positions on charts. The survey results show that 35% of the participants consider that English and Norwegian are not equally normal to listen to, and where almost 60% of the survey participants mostly listen to English songs. English music dominates the charts in Norway, both on digital streaming services and on the radio (Spotify, n.d.; Spotifycharts, n.d.; Gramo, 2019). Especially on digital music services like Spotify, a majority of the songs in popular playlists like "Top 50 Norway" and "It's Hits Norway" are in English, and some of these songs are sung by Norwegian artists (Spotify, n.d.; Spotifycharts, n.d.). The domination of English music on Spotify might indicate a greater commercial attraction. As a result, English songs might perhaps have increased chances of getting onto streaming services, mentioned by one of the artists. Also on Norwegian radio channels, English music dominates the charts, as 92 of the most played songs in 2019 were in English (Gramo, 2019, p. 4-5). This might indicate that English music is also more attractive on the radio, and that, according to some of the participants, English songs are more likely to be played on the radio compared to Norwegian songs. This can influence language choice as Norwegian artists might choose English in order to achieve visibility and success through digital music services and radio channels. Artists might therefore use English or elements of English in order to be favored within media, which is claimed to be due to the associations and opportunities it might provide globally, and its strong position in music (Perullo & Fenn, 2003, p. 30; Mtallo & Msoffe, 2018, p. 10). According to Verboord and Brandellero (2018, p. 615), chances of success abroad might also be related to the degree of centrality of the language in cultural production where countries like the USA hold the greatest advantage, but where Norway has a disadvantage due to a more peripheral position in global cultural production. Also, larger languages like English might increase artists' chances of success compared to a smaller language like Norwegian (Verboord & Brandellero, 2018, p. 620).

According to Johansson and Graedler (2002), pop music is one of several English dominated domains in Norway and the notion of domain loss is therefore especially relevant. This is because English is considered to be a more commercial and popular language than Norwegian within the domain of pop music and popular culture. As a result, several fear a domain loss of Norwegian. However, the Norwegian government has proposed demands in order to strengthen its position in music. As an example, several Norwegian music channels must play a certain percentage Norwegian music, even though this also includes English-language music by Norwegian artists (Meld. St. 15 (2016-2017), p. 28).

#### **5.1.1.2 Modernity**

Several of the survey participants point out that English symbolizes modernity and that most modern pop music is in English. Similarly, some of the artists describe English as trendy and both groups of informants describe it as a cooler language than Norwegian, implying a relation to modernity. Therefore, using English in music can symbol modernity and might be an important motivation for language choice due to the relation to globalization and modern trends in music (Aleshinskaya & Gritsenko, 2016, p. 55; Mtallo & Msoffe, 2018, p. 10). This indexical feature of English might be important in the consideration of why it is commercially attractive in pop music and other domains. The indexicality of modernity might also affect the age of audience, as several of the survey participants and one artist point out that English music might appeal more to youths. Similarly, Mtallo and Msoffe (2018, p. 10) suggest that English is used in order to reflect and appeal to youths as it is considered a more fashionable and modern language than other languages. According to Peterson (2017), English index youths, and therefore appeal to this group more.

#### **5.1.2 Linguistic Advantages**

Another motivation for using English is related to its linguistic features. Both groups of informants describe English as a comfortable language in music, a better language to sing in and some claim it is also better listening to. Both groups of informants consider English to carry an advantage related to achieving a good melodic flow in music and to make it catchier. Several artists perceive English as an easier language than Norwegian to write songs in due to the ability to adapt melody to lyrics in a smoother way. In fact, musicians often claim English to be more suitable in music as it fits lyrics better to melody and rhythm, and is claimed to bring forward vocal qualities in a better way than other languages (Aleshinskaya & Gritsenko, 2016, p. 57; Mtallo & Msoffe, 2018; p. 9). English is also claimed to have more synonyms and nuances which is described as making it easier for artists to write in more detail when creating songs. Similarly, Mtallo and Msoffe (2018, p. 9) found that artists often use English words instead of the local language in order to express themselves in music.

The alleged advantage of English being a richer language than other languages can be seen in relation to language ideologies of English, where the language is considered to be easier and sound better in music (Cutler, 2003, p. 342). These language ideologies are common among non-native speakers of English, and is shaped by the position of English in music (Cutler, 2003, p. 342; Aleshinskaya & Gritsenko, 2016, p. 57). Therefore, these language ideologies might be shaped by the linguistic and cultural imperialism and status of English, where English has become an important and prestigious language in several domains



(Phillipson, 1999, p. 58). They might also originate from traditions in pop music, which are claimed to be rooted in English-speaking music (Cutler, 2003, p. 342). However, these ideas about language are not necessarily anchored in the objective truth.

### **5.1.3 References in Music**

Another motivation for using English in music is suggested to be due to the great amount of references and familiarity to music in English. Because of this, Norwegian artists might find it easier to start writing songs in English. The present study found that references might impact artists in their choice of language in music through attaining inspiration from other artists. Therefore, the domination of music in English on digital music services and radio might have an impact on language choice of Norwegian artists, due to the familiarity and references it provides. Cutler (2003, p. 342) describes English as serving as a reference in music as it is considered to be the official language within pop music.

References in music can also lead to imitation for artists who have an ambition to become as successful as other artists and therefore imitate them. This is a well-known practice within pop music where artists strive to be successful and imitate elements in music hoping to achieve same success (Adorno, 2006, p. 77). According to Lull (1992, p. 3), imitation might help artists to become discovered as they imitate already successful artists and music, and because it might lead to another successful hit.

## **5.2 Demotivating Factors for using English**

### **5.2.1 Authenticity and Identity**

The present study found that artists who use English might seem dishonest, portraying a fake identity and lose their identity in music due to limitations of personal expression. It is implied that artists might appear inauthentic with regard to first-person authenticity, especially mentioned by artists who use Norwegian. Also, some artists describe English music to a lack personality due to a detachment of identity and authenticity. To convey personality and have an authentic expression is indeed emphasized to be important in music, because it can impact perceived quality of artists and the musical experience (O'Flynn, 2007, p. 33-34). According to one of the artists in the present study, the degree of authenticity and credibility an artist obtain can depend on the expectations the audience might have towards various artists. Similarly, Larkey (2003, p. 147) emphasizes that authenticity in music can depend on the audiences, because different audiences constitute different demands for authenticity (Larkey, 2003, p. 147).

However, the survey participants do not explicitly mention the lack of authentic expression by Norwegian artists using English. This might perhaps be related to language ideologies of English where non-native speakers of English often consider English more authentic than a native language, considering it as one that sounds better and works easier in music (Cutler, 2003, p. 342). Also, English is considered a natural and suitable language to use within the pop music genre, reflected through its position as the dominant language. Therefore, music in English can attain authenticity due to a third-person authenticity as it appears that English is perceived to fit the mode of expression and genre (Moore, 2002, p. 218). Even though artists who use English potentially lack first-person authenticity and identity, the potential achievement of a third-person authenticity might make English attain the necessary authenticity important for various audiences.

### **5.2.2 Semantic Bleaching: Distance**

Throughout the interviews, the artists were asked directly about whether they felt English causes a distancing to feelings and emotions, or made them closer to the text and expression. As a result, the present study found that the artists consider music in English and Norwegian to differ in terms of perceived proximity and distance of the song and lyrical message. Many mention that English provides a distance to the songs' lyrics and message. The survey participants, on the other hand, were not asked directly about this aspect even though some mentioned it briefly. However, this concept might have been further elaborated on by the survey participants had they been asked explicitly about it.

Even though the distance-effect of English is considered a demotivating factor for using English, some suggest that it can open up opportunities of writing about challenging topics. This is claimed to be because English makes it easier to sing about themes that might seem hard to sing about in Norwegian. This might be because English causes a distance to certain themes, which might make it easier for artists to use English (Johansson & Graedler, 2002, p. 88; Larkey, 2003, p. 141). However, most artists seem to be considering the distance-effect of English a disadvantage due to an alienation between artists and the audience when using English. This might lead to a lack of contact and communication with the audience, which is mentioned to be especially important according to the artists. Larkey (2003, p. 140), describes that using an English word or a foreign term in general might pose a greater distance and detachment to words. This is likely to be due to a type of semantic bleaching, where meanings of words might be considered to be reduced or scaled-down (Peterson, 2017). The perceived distance of using English in music is also mentioned to be affected by the level of proficiency in the language. Even though many Norwegians have high proficiency in English (Weston, 2017, p. 89-90; Education First, 2020, p. 6), they naturally have less proficiency in English than their native language. As a result, the artists claim that the audiences do not perceive the English lyrics the same way as when using Norwegian, which might affect the understanding and message of songs. This is claimed to lead to less attention to the lyrical message in English songs. Mtallo and Msoffe (2018, p. 11) found that English in fact limits the possibility to reach out to a domestic audience due to lack of proficiency in the language.

### **5.2.3 Proficiency and Focus on Text**

The issue of proficiency can also be a more general one in music, and is claimed to affect songwriting. The importance of high proficiency is especially mentioned by artists who use Norwegian. These artists describe that songwriting in English might lead to less creativity and originality in songwriting by Norwegian artists as it might be difficult to express messages in a foreign or second language. Nonetheless, the artists who use English claim that they have enough proficiency in English in order to write good English texts. However, according to the artists who use Norwegian, artists who use English tend to use phrases from others instead of developing their own personal expression and claim that they also focus less on text. This is mentioned to be a demotivation for using English both because artists focus less on texts when using English, as well as the audience's lack of attention, mentioned in 5.2.1 above. Therefore, Larkey (2003, p. 146) claims that language choice of artists might depend on the importance of lyrical message. However, he argues that pop music in English might focus more on melodic components like catchiness rather than a having a lyrical message.

### **5.3 Motivating Factors for using Norwegian**

In the following sections, one can clearly see how some of the motivations for *not* using English overlap with the motivations *for* using Norwegian.

#### **5.3.1 Authenticity and Identity**

According to both groups of informants in the present study, one of the greatest motivations for using Norwegian in music is related to the expression of authenticity and identity. This is claimed to be because artists who use Norwegian reflect honesty and personality instead of hiding behind another language or a character, suggested to be the case when Norwegian artists use English. It seems to be important that music index the artist's personality and culture in order to attain first-person authenticity (Negus, 1997, p. 69; Moore, 2002, p. 214; Barker & Taylor, 2007, p. x). This might also have an impact on language choice. Similarly, authenticity can be important in order to reflect group identity and appeal to specific audiences in music (Perullo & Fenn, 2003, p. 30; Van der Hoeven et al., 2016, p. 46). This is also found important in the present study where Norwegian is claimed to appeal collectively to the Norwegian audience through indexing Norwegian identity and nationalism. Likewise, according to Van der Hoeven et al. (2015, p. 45), language choice in music might be determined by the intention artists have to index identity and culture in music. The use of national languages might be related to the desire of national identity in a time of globalization (Achterberg et al., 2011, p. 602). Also, artists might use Norwegian in order to acquire a more credible expression. This is because the musical expression might appear more authentic in artists' first language. This is important as it can affect the audience's perception of whether artists and their music are credible or not (Larkey, 2003, p. 147).

#### **5.3.2 Communication with the Audience**

The artists claim that using Norwegian in music might establish better parameters for contact, communication and attachment between artists and audiences. Similarly, over 70% of the survey participants believe artists choose Norwegian as these songs reach out and hit the audience in a greater degree than English songs. The present study found that the contact and communication with the Norwegian audience might be related to the comprehension and the proficiency of Norwegian. According to Van der Hoeven et al. (2016, p. 52), language choice can impact the communication between artists and audience due the audience being able to recognize the lyrics. Similarly, Bennett (1999, p. 82) claim that language choice can indeed influence the perception of lyrics because the audience might understand the meaning of the lyrics and songs. Also, language choice can influence the cultural significance songs attain, in relation to indexing identity and culture (Bennett, 1999, p. 82). This might contribute to an enhancement in the communication and attachment between artist and audience.

The present study found that the communication with the audience might also affect and be affected by the attention given to lyrics in Norwegian songs. Artists claim that lyrics in Norwegian music are given more attention by audiences and describe it as an advantage. In contrast, the attention to English lyrics is claimed to be lacking. Potentially, this can be because national languages might have greater focus on conveying important lyrical messages. However, it can also be due to the desire artists might have to reach out to specific national or local audiences depending on their language choice, as audiences can understand the national language better than English (Larkey, 2003, p. 146; Mtallo and

Msoffe, 2018, p. 11). However, according Condit-Schultz and Huron (2015), listeners who generally find lyrics in music important also pay more attention to the them, while those who find lyrics less important also give them less attention, regardless of language. This might imply that the audience in the present study perhaps find lyrics in Norwegian songs more important than those in English songs, and therefore devote more attention to them.

### **5.3.3 Proximity**

The present study found that both groups of informants consider Norwegian to appear nearer and closer in music compared to English. According to the artists, this might be due to the authentic expressions artists attain through using Norwegian and dialects, and/or because of high proficiency in Norwegian where the audience understand the songs better than English songs. By some, this is claimed to be an advantage as songs might appear more personal and nearer in Norwegian. It is also claimed that this might contribute to establish a highly valued contact and communication between the artists and the audience. For others, however, Norwegian is considered to be less satisfactory to use in musical contexts. This is because some perceive Norwegian to sound too direct, near, awkward and naked. As a consequence, some claim that artists might reject using Norwegian in music. According to Weston (2017), Norwegian words can be considered to sometimes sound more formal than English, and are described as "stuffy" and "too proper" (p. 101). This is claimed to be because native languages might appeal more directly to us, whereas foreign terms might cause a greater distance and detachment than native languages (Johansson & Graedler, 2002, p. 88; Larkey, 2003, p. 141).

## **5.4 Demotivating Factors for using Norwegian**

As mentioned above, the following demotivating factors for using Norwegian consider several aspects mentioned to be motivations for using English. Therefore, the aspects overlap either directly or indirectly, but provides us with different views on the similar topics.

### **5.4.1 Limited Commercial Opportunities of Norwegian**

The present study found that Norwegian is far less attractive and commercial outside of Norway than English. Therefore, artists who use a native language might aim for a more home-based audience (Mtallo and Msoffe, 2018, p. 9). The artists claim that singing in Norwegian might limit chances of getting an international hit. According to Verboord and Brandellero (2016, p. 615), this is because Norway has a peripheral position in the global cultural production, and therefore fewer chances of attaining success abroad. It might also be because Norwegian is a smaller language, and is therefore less likely to attain success internationally in music (Verboord & Brandellero, 2016, p. 620). According to Perullo and Fenn (2003, p. 22) this might be because English is generally a more attractive language in pop music and provides opportunities all over the world. Nonetheless, Norwegian musicians like Kaisers Orchestra and various metal bands who sing in Norwegian have attained recognition and success abroad.

Norwegian might also be considered to be less commercially attractive in music than English in Norway. It is claimed that Norwegian music is less popular on digital music services than music in English, and less frequently listed on radio channels. This might be because Norwegians listen more to foreign music than Norwegian music, both expressed through interview and survey results, and in Eidsvold-Tøien et al. (2019, p. 10). Therefore, this

might imply a limited commercial attraction for Norwegian. Also, popular playlists on Spotify consist of few Norwegian-language songs (Spotify, n.d.; Spotifycharts, n.d.), which might cause greater competition for Norwegian songs than English songs. Digital music services are claimed to potentially challenge the visibility and distribution of Norwegian music in Norway due to international competition and the high amount of foreign music on digital music services (Eidsvold-Tøien et al., 2019, p. 10). The limited commercial attraction of Norwegian-language songs might also be evident on the radio channels in Norway, where only six out of the 100 most played songs in 2019 were in Norwegian (Gramo, 2019, p. 4-5). Similarly, there were no Norwegian-language songs among the 100 most popular songs from 2013-2019 on the Norwegian radio (Gramo, 2019, p. 20-21). Even though the Norwegian government has introduced demands on the amount of Norwegian music radio channels have to play, it seems like these demands might be overshadowed by the popularity and desire for songs in English. This illustrates that Norwegian songs might be less listened to compared to English songs and might indicate a difference in commercial attraction in Norway.

#### ***5.4.2 Demanding Songwriting Process***

In contrast with the advantages for using English in music, most of the artists describe songwriting in Norwegian to include longer processes of development in order to achieve the desired flow in music, and especially artists who use English consider songwriting in Norwegian to be very difficult. This is claimed to be due to the lack of musical idols and references in Norwegian pop music compared to English music, which might make writing in Norwegian harder or perceived as a less natural choice for these artists. Some also perceive the Norwegian vocabulary as smaller than the English one, and some claim it to be a barrier for songwriting in Norwegian. Similarly, research by Mtallo and Msoffe (2018, p. 9) found that national and local languages might forge limitations on songwriting due to the vocabulary, as some claim that some languages seem to not have enough words in order to develop songs. However, several artists in the present study consider Norwegian to be a better language for songwriting due to generally better proficiency in the language, including a better vocabulary, compared to English. This is claimed to provide a greater freedom in terms of potential concerns of correctness, and is also considered to make it easier for artists to come up with suitable words in different contexts and be more creative in songwriting.

#### ***5.4.3 Norwegian less Trendy and Cool***

The present study found that some participants have negative attitudes towards the use of Norwegian in some aspects of music. According to the artists who use English, Norwegian is considered a less cool language to use in pop music, and some of survey participants claim that Norwegian sounds wrong, outdated and boring. Also, several survey participants and some of the artists claim that Norwegian music might be associated with the traditional genre of folk music. As a result, Norwegian music might appeal to an older audience, according to several of the survey participants. In this sense, the views on Norwegian compared to English in music might be considered contrastive where Norwegian indexes tradition and folk music, not modernity and pop music.

The results from the survey also found that some consider Norwegian pop music to propose a stigma as it is claimed to not fit within the pop music genre. This is argued to be relating

to the purpose and aim of the pop music genre, suggested to reaching out abroad and internationally. Using Norwegian in pop music, then, makes this difficult for artists. As a result, some survey participants perceive Norwegian a less suitable language for pop music. Moreover, this might be related to the notion of third-person authenticity where Norwegian is by some considered as not belonging within pop music, and therefore does not attain authenticity in the genre (Moore, 2002, p. 218) This is especially contrastive in compared with views of perceived suitability and third-person authenticity of English in pop music. Furthermore, this might also be related to cultural legitimization of languages where certain languages are preferred to be used within specific genres (Van der Hoeven et al., 2016, p. 51). This might be implied by several survey participants as English seems to attain a greater cultural legitimization than Norwegian in pop music.

To my knowledge, no research has been conducted on several of the aspects mentioned in this section. Therefore, it is challenging to compare and discuss the results from the present study in a broader manner.

### **5.5 A Norwegian Wave in Music?**

The perhaps strongest finding in the present study is related to a potential rise of Norwegian in music in Norway, described as a 'Norwegian wave'. This concept is mentioned by both groups of informants and includes increased use, popularity and acknowledgement of Norwegian in pop music, which is recognized the last few years.

According to the results in the present study, artists are described to have taken pride in the Norwegian language, and that this has also become appreciated by the Norwegian audience. Even though Anglo-American music increased in popularity from the 1960s (Verboord & Brandellero, 2018), domestic and national music is considered to have increased in popularity from the 1990s onwards (Achterberg et al., 2011). This is described as a counter reaction to globalization and an answer to Anglo-American homogenization effects, which seem to have led to nationalization where local and cultural identity has become increasingly important (Achterberg et al., 2011, p. 602). Similarly, indexing the Norwegian identity might be considered important in the context of increased popularity of Norwegian, because the use of Norwegian might appeal more to the Norwegian audience and therefore be an advantage for using Norwegian in music. The indexicality of Norwegian might also lead to artists attaining a first-person authenticity as Norwegian is claimed to reflect the honest personality of an artist. This is claimed to be important in music (Moore, 2002, p. 214; O'Flynn, 2007, p. 34). According to some of the artists, Norwegian in pop music is claimed to make artists stand out from other pop music artists. This might be an important motivation for artists as it might lead to greater probability of acknowledgement. Similarly, the present study found that 50% of the survey participants believe that this is an important motivation for using Norwegian.

Reflected by the responses from both groups of informants in the present survey, the rise of Norwegian has led to an increased use of Norwegian within pop music in Norway the last few years. It has also reached a greater acceptance among artists and audiences. This might have affected and been affected by attitudes towards Norwegian. Acceptance and attitudes towards language can be considered a motivating factor for language choice in music as language choice is considered to be shaped by attitudes and language ideologies (Sparling, 2003, p. 164; Aleshinskaya & Gritsenko, 2016, p. 58). Therefore, an increased

acceptance of Norwegian in music might be a contributing factor for choosing Norwegian in music, where potential stigma and/or lack of popularity of Norwegian might seem to be in the process of shifting or weakening. Also, there seem to be several advantages and motivations for choosing Norwegian in music. These might be especially important to value in order to continue the current rise of Norwegian in music, as attitudes towards language are considered critical with regard to developing music in certain languages (Sparling, 2003, p. 164). According to one of the artist in the present study, it is important to reward artists who use Norwegian in pop music, as it might contribute to a preservation of the Norwegian language and might be essential due to the concerns of a potential domain loss. Therefore, it might be crucial to value Norwegian in music, in order for it to continue to increase its status and position within pop music in Norway, instead of strengthening the power and value of English. Accordingly, it is likely that Norwegian music is not suffering a domain loss to English, but rather a potential rise, and increase of acceptance.

However, even though several recognize an increase and acceptance of Norwegian music, many acknowledge and consider English to be the dominant language with the highest popularity within the pop music genre. Both pop charts and radio channels also have a dominant number of English songs (Spotify, n.d.; Spotifycharts, n.d.; Gramo, 2019), and both groups of participants recognize the dominant position of English in pop music. In addition, some artists and survey participants express negative attitudes to some of the aspects regarding the use of Norwegian in pop music. Therefore, it might be reasonable to believe that even though Norwegian might potentially increase in popularity and acceptance, English will still serve as the most popular language to use and listen to in pop music.





## 6 Conclusion

The present study introduces research on motivations behind language choice in music, and beliefs about such motivations, using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative research method includes six interviews on Norwegian artists with various linguistic backgrounds in music, while the quantitative method is a survey performed by the Norwegian audience, having 201 responses. The interviews are analyzed through thematic analysis, including a structuring and gathering of the material within thematic sections, and comparing their perspectives and motivations on language choice. The quantitative data is analyzed through descriptive statistics, where responses are illustrated through diagrams, and thematically, where the open questions in the survey are analyzed through thematic analysis.

The research carried out in the present study found that motivations for using English includes the ambition to become famous internationally, as well as commercial opportunities, and where English indexes modernity. English is also considered to hold linguistic advantages, and perceived to be a better musical language. Also, references to English music might potentially inspire and motivate artists to choose English. Conversely, these motivations are considered to be many of the motivations for *not* choosing Norwegian. Norwegian is claimed to make it harder to reach out to an international audience, as it is not considered commercially attractive abroad. It is considered less trendy and cool compared to English, and by some, it is associated with traditional folk music instead of pop, implying a lack of third-person authenticity. Also, it is claimed that Norwegian is a demanding language to write songs in, due to lack of references in Norwegian music, challenging artists through lack of inspiration. Therefore, some of the motivations for choosing English or Norwegian are contrasting, and seem to hold different motivations for language choice.

Such contrasting views are also evident when it comes to motivation for using Norwegian, where Norwegian music is associated with the opportunity to express identity, first-person authenticity, as well as better contact and communication with the audience through proximity and proficiency of language. Also, Norwegian lyrics are considered to be given more attention by audiences. Conversely, these are considered disadvantages and motivations for *not* using English. Moreover, English is claimed to provide a certain distance in music, causing a distance between artists and audience, due to a potential semantic bleaching of English phrases and lack of proficiency of English by the Norwegian audience. The proficiency issue is presented also as a general issue, where artists are claimed to lack proficiency in English, resulting re-using phrases from others, and lack of personality in music. Moreover, it is claimed that issues concerning authenticity in English music might be different in comparison with Norwegian, as it might be easier to express identity and first-person authenticity. Also, in contrast with the communication between artist and audience using Norwegian, English music is claimed to be less focused on text, resulting in less contact and communication. These main findings show a great variety of contrastive view on motivations for using and not using English and Norwegian, including various advantages and disadvantages of the languages.

Despite the comments to the effect that Norwegian is a poorer language for pop music than English, the research uncovered an acknowledgement of a current Norwegian wave in

music. This can be considered to be the greatest finding in the research, as it is mentioned by many participants. The research found that many consider Norwegian as becoming more popular the later years. It is claimed that artists and audience has gained increased acceptance of Norwegian in music, and where artists have started to use Norwegian more. This can be explained due to the ability to stand out among artists, express the Norwegian identity through using Norwegian, and might include a better communication and contact with the audience. The upcoming of Norwegian might imply a larger commercial attraction of Norwegian music the last few years and imply positive attitudes of Norwegian in pop music. However, some describe English as more suitable and popular in pop music, as it indexes modernity, while Norwegian, according to others, indexes tradition and is associated with folk music.

The study has hopefully provided a greater understanding of language ideologies and attitudes in music in Norway, where languages seem to index different advantages and disadvantages influencing language choice in music. As the present study consists of a limited number of participants in the qualitative method, these results cannot, traditionally, be generalized very far. However, most of the results are supported by previous research, and can be transferred to other contexts and situations, making it possible to generalize at least to a certain degree (Rindal, 2007, p. 221). The quantitative method can broadly be generalized in a descriptive statistical way, which is a traditional way of generalize the results. In this context it might be likely to achieve many of the same results when performed in another study, due to the relatively large number of participants. The present study introduces new knowledge by the use of these two methods, which provides a good platform for many further studies.

Further research could look at the connection between language and audiences, as it is, to my knowledge, no previous research on this topic. Further research could study different age groups in the audience, and compare their preferences in music, and thereby confirm or reject the findings in the present research. Another interesting topic for further research is related to the digital music services. More research on this topic can provide a greater understanding of their influence on listeners, in terms of how algorithms of suggestions of songs and playlists might impact language choice and preferences in music. Also, research on this topic can provide a greater understanding of listening habits, and potential measures that could be made for promoting Norwegian music on digital music services. Also, it might be interesting to research the aspect of semantic bleaching in music, as the present study propose strong findings on English providing a distance in music, while Norwegian cause a proximity. This might also be interesting to research in relation to code-switching in Norwegian music, because many Norwegian artists who use Norwegian integrate English words. Also, more research on the current Norwegian wave is needed, where one could research further in order to confirm or reject it, and thereby discuss the notion of domain loss of Norwegian in pop music in a broader extent. However, generally, I would call for more research on language ideologies and attitudes towards English and Norwegian in music. Further research can include larger amounts of interviews and surveys within more and various genres of music, in order to make further and stronger conclusions regarding language ideologies and attitudes towards English and Norwegian both in general and in music.





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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A: Email to Interviewees**

Dear [name of artist or manager]! I am a student from the Department of Language and Literature at the NTNU and I am writing a master thesis about Norwegian artists and their language choice in music.

In my project I aim to interview six Norwegian artists and I hope you want to be one of them.

This is a project where I want to research motivations for Norwegian artists' language choice, and [the artists' name] is an interesting and experienced artist.

The interview will be executed through Zoom. More information about the project and rights are found in the consent form.

I hope you want to participate in this project.

I appreciate a fast answer. Thank you in advance.

Best regards, Ragnhild Bjørnhaug



## **Appendix B: Consent Form (English Version)**

*Consent form borrowed from the NSD (The Norwegian Centre of Research Data AS) with minor adjustments.*

### **Are you interested in taking part in the research project**

#### **“Motivations behind Language Choice in Music”?**

This is a request for you to participate in a research project aiming to uncover motivations behind Norwegian artists' language choice. This form gives you information about the project, and what your participation involves.

#### ***Purpose of the Project***

This project is a master's thesis, where the purpose is to uncover motivations behind artists' language choice, where interviews are an important source of information. The research will also include a survey to gather information from another perspective.

#### **Who is responsible for the project?**

NTNU is responsible for the project.

#### **Why are you asked to participate?**

You are asked to participate in this project because you are a Norwegian pop artist who use English, Norwegian or both. You are one of six Norwegian artists who are asked to participate in the project.

#### **What does the participation involve for you?**

To participate in this project involves being a part of a video-interview, lasting approximately 30 minutes. The interview includes questions regarding Norwegian artists' language choice, where you are asked to answer questions both about your decisions and choices, as well as why you think others might have other reasons. The interviews will be recorded and deleted after transcriptions.

#### **Participations is voluntary**

To participate in this project is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All your personal information will be deleted. There will be no negative consequences for you if you choose not to participate or later decide to withdraw your consent.

#### **Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data**

We will only use your personal data for the purpose specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

- It is only student and supervisor who can access the personal data in this project
- The recording of the interviews will be stored through NTNUs cloud

- Your participation will not be recognized in the publication of the project, as it is only age and gender that will states

### **What happens to the personal data at the end of the research project?**

The project is scheduled to end spring 2021, and information about the interviews will be deleted within this period.

### **Your rights**

As long as you can be identified through the collected data, you have the right to:

- Access the personal data that is being processed about you
- Request that your personal data is deleted
- Request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected
- Receive a copy of your personal data
- Send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or the Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

### **What gives us the right to process your personal data?**

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on the agreement with NTNU, NSD – The Norwegian Centre of Research Data AS has accesses that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

### **Where can I find out more?**

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise you rights, contact:

- NTNU via student Ragnhild Bjørnhaug or supervisor Annjo K. Greenall
- Out Data Protection Officer: NTNU via Thomas Helgesen, [thomas.helgesen@ntnu.no](mailto:thomas.helgesen@ntnu.no)
- NSD. The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email: [personvertjenester@nsd.no](mailto:personvertjenester@nsd.no)

Yours sincerely

Ragnhild Bjørnhaug

*(student)*

Annjo K. Greenall

*(supervisor)*

### **Consent form:**

I have received and understood information about the project "Motivations behind Language Choice" and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

to participate in interview

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2021.

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(Signed by participant, date)







## Appendix C: Interview-Guide

Gender:

Name of Artist:

Introductory Questions:

1. Which genre does your music belong to?
2. Which language do you use in music?
3. Do you have a second language/ several mother tongues?
4. Why do you use [the specific language] in music?
  - Why did you choose this instead of English/Norwegian or potentially both?

Pop and Genre

1. Is there anything with pop-music that might influence language choice in music?
2. When using English, do you feel like you are distancing yourself from feelings and emotionality, or do you feel like you get closer to the theme? Can you reflect a bit around this topic?
3. What are your songs about, are these topics you consider it easier to express yourself through using English/ Norwegian?
4. Do you think it is a difference in the use of the languages? Why and what do artists use the different language for?
5. Do you feel like you express yourself better in English/Norwegian?
6. Do you think that by using English/ Norwegian you can sell better than using Norwegian/ English?
7. Which target group do you have considering your language choice? Who do you intend to reach out to?

Language Attitudes

1. What is better with using English/ Norwegian than Norwegian/ English?
2. What are your thoughts regarding that many artists choose to write/sing in English?
3. What are your thoughts regarding that many artists choose to write/sing in Norwegian?
4. Do you think it is important to take care of the Norwegian language?
5. What do you think about the fact that English is used in a great degree in Norwegian pop music? Advantages/Disadvantages
6. What do you think about Norwegian being used in pop music in Norway?
7. What are your attitudes towards English vs. Norwegian in pop music?



## Appendix D: Survey Questions

Questions	Options for Answers
<b><i>I give my consent to participate in this survey</i></b>	
<b><i>Gender</i></b>	Woman Man Other Do not wish to state
<b><i>Age</i></b>	Under 20 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 Over 60
<b><i>Why do you think certain Norwegian pop music artists choose to sing/write songs in English (and not Norwegian)?</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greater chances for international popularity</li> <li>- Because so many others do it</li> <li>- Feel more comfortable singing in English</li> <li>- To earn more money</li> <li>- Easier singing in English</li> <li>- No particular reason</li> <li>- I don't know</li> <li>- Other</li> </ul>
<b><i>If you answered other, or have anything to add to the previous question, please elaborate:</i></b>	
<b><i>Why do you think certain Norwegian artists sing/write songs in Norwegian (and not English)?</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feel more comfortable with singing in Norwegian</li> <li>- Wish to stand out [være særegen]</li> <li>- Do not know other languages</li> <li>- Feel like their songs reach out to the Norwegian audience in a greater degree than songs in English</li> <li>- It's their mother tongue and therefore easier to communicate through the it</li> <li>- No particular reason</li> <li>- I don't know</li> <li>- Other</li> </ul>
<b><i>If you answered other, or have anything to add to the previous question, please elaborate:</i></b>	
<b><i>Are pop songs in Norwegian and English equally normal listening to in Norway?</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yes</li> <li>- No</li> <li>- I don't know</li> <li>- Other</li> </ul>

<b>Please elaborate on the previous question:</b>	
<b>Do you think English is more advantageous in pop music in Norway compared to Norwegian? (Does a Norwegian pop artist who use English have a greater advantage in comparison to a Norwegian artist who use Norwegian?)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yes</li> <li>- No</li> <li>- I think they are equally normal</li> <li>- Both languages can be an advantage, but can depend on situation/context</li> <li>- I don't know</li> <li>- Other</li> </ul>
<b>Based on what you answered on the last question, why do you think so?</b>	
<b>What do you think about English pop music written/released by Norwegian artists?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good</li> <li>- Bad</li> <li>- I don't care about the language as long as the song is catchy</li> <li>- Too much of it</li> <li>- Too little of it</li> <li>- I don't know</li> <li>- Other</li> </ul>
<b>If you have something to elaborate on, please write it here:</b>	
<b>What do you think about pop music written/released in Norwegian?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good</li> <li>- Bad</li> <li>- I don't care about the language as long as the song is catchy</li> <li>- Too much of it</li> <li>- Too little of it</li> <li>- I don't know</li> <li>- Other</li> </ul>
<b>If you have something to elaborate on, please write it here:</b>	
<b>In what language do you listen to music in, if and when you listen to pop music?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mostly English</li> <li>- Mostly Norwegian</li> <li>- Other</li> <li>- Listen equally to both languages</li> </ul>
<b>Please state which other languages you listen to here:</b>	
<b>Do you have anything else to add, considering Norwegian artists and potential motivations behind language choice or attitudes towards different languages, please elaborate here:</b>	





## Appendix E: Quotes from the Interviews

The original statements from the interviews are found below. The statements are organized by artists following the number of the quotes from Analysis 4.1.

<p><b>Artist 1 (n)</b></p>	<p>(4). <i>Det er liksom mer identitet i det da, det er jo tross alt norsk.</i></p> <p>(6). <i>I popverdenen virker det som at det er engelsk som gjelder, så absolutt!</i></p> <p>(7). <i>Det er mange som har kalt musikken min vise, men jeg føler de visegreiene handler om at jeg synger på norsk. At det er litt mer tilknyttet visekulturen i Norge. For meg er vise en musikalsk sjanger jeg ikke føler meg hjemme i.</i></p> <p>(9). <i>Det er mye lettere å på en måte, å få frem en personlig følelse når jeg bruker det språket og de uttrykkene som jeg ville brukt ellers da, som om når jeg skulle fortalt den historien da bare til noen venner eller noen jeg kjente.</i></p> <p>(32). <i>Jeg merker jo bare fra da jeg begynte å gi ut musikk, som er 6-7 år siden, så er det en veldig oppblomstring av norsk. Og, om man tenker over det, så er det ikke lenge siden ingen rappa på norsk liksom. Men nå er det jo nesten litt rart, veldig rart synes jeg, at norske artister rapper på engelsk. Så det er jo veldig tydelig at det er en trend og sikker at man blir veldig påvirket naturligvis da, av andre. Jeg trodde jo at jeg var helt unik i det å ville skrive på norsk, men så ser jeg jo at det har poppa opp ganske mange som skriver på norsk, sånn ca. rundt samme tid som da jeg begynte da. Og man kanskje bare er produktet av liksom en sånn større trend da.</i></p> <p>(33). <i>Jeg opplevde en god respons når jeg skrev på norsk, både av publikum og bransje. Og det gjorde litt at jeg fortsatte. At jeg var en del av en sånn bølge, men jeg visste det ikke selv.</i></p> <p>(52). <i>Det er mange som ikke liker tekstene mine, men da forholder de seg i hvert fall til de.</i></p> <p>(59). <i>Om jeg har noe feil grammatikk så er det min kunstneriske frihet.</i></p> <p>(62). <i>Du kommer ikke unna med den dårlige frasen på norsk.</i></p>	
<p><b>Artist 2 (n)</b></p>	<p>(1). <i>Du lager deg på en måte en karakter da, istedenfor å være 100% ærlig.</i></p> <p>(2). <i>Hvis du ville skrive en låt som skulle treffe flest mulig folk så hadde du kanskje valgt engelsk, men vil du at folk skulle bli truffet på en spesiell måte så ville du kanskje, som er mer særegent for kun deg, så ville du kanskje skrevet på norsk da.</i></p> <p>(27). <i>Jeg tror at i Norge, i den norske musikkbransjen eller musikk miljøet, så tror jeg det er lettere å lykkes litt mer på norsk eller få en god start på norsk da, enn man gjør på engelsk.</i></p> <p>(36). <i>Hvis jeg hadde sunget på østlandsk eller på engelsk så hadde jeg gjerne tatt kraftig inspirasjon fra noen jeg var fan av da, eller likte veldig godt og da gjort og brukt mange av de samme fraseringsene og vokalendingene, og setningsoppbygging og vokabular som de hadde brukt da. Istedenfor å utvikle mitt eget uttrykk.</i></p>	-

	<p>(39). <i>Så jeg har måttet liksom bruke tid på å utvikle at det skulle låte bra da. Ikke at jeg satt å utvikla aktivt da, men det tok tid før ting falt på plass. Og den barrieren er selvfølgelig tun å bryte, men jeg føler at det er mye mer verdt det da, enn å bare kaste seg på trenden og syng på engelsk.</i></p> <p>(61). <i>Engelsk er på en måte et språk du har hørt så sykt mye at det ikke er så mye mer nytt du kan gjøre med språket da.</i></p>	
<b>Artist 3 (e)</b>	<p>(5). <i>Jeg tror ikke vi tenkte over andre muligheter heller. Det var liksom bare 'åssen musikk vil du lage?' 'ja okei da hjelper han oss med å skrive' – på engelsk!</i></p> <p>(8). <i>At man bare tenkte ja, musikk ja, det er på engelsk! Tror ikke man tenkte så mye mer over det, det var liksom det man hørte på radio og musikken pappa og de spilte det var jo på engelsk, og de som sang på norsk- var de norske visesangere – da ble det veldig sånn 'oi ja norsk og dialekt det er mer vises-sanger, og det er jo ikke det jeg skal syng'e.</i></p> <p>(10). <i>Jeg er kjempeopptatt av å ta vare på det norske språket og dialekter. Det er jo det jeg synes er noe av det kuleste med det norske språket – dialektene!</i></p> <p>(30). <i>Så det er et skifte, hvis du ser sånn totalt på det, så har det, de siste 10 årene, skjedd noe, folk har bare ønsket å gjøre det.</i></p> <p>(37). <i>Hadde jeg vokst opp med å høre på norske artister, så tror jeg det hadde vært en selvfølge for meg at når jeg skulle starte å utvikle egen musikk, at jeg skulle skrive på dialekt. Det tror jeg helt oppriktig ærlig, men det var ikke sånn før. Fordi jeg har omtrent bare hørt på engelsk.</i></p> <p>(38). <i>Engelsk blir jo litt fremmed, men det er mye lettere å syng på. Det faller vel mer lett ut av kjeften, mye lettere å forklare vitser og punchlines og følelser, føler jeg.</i></p> <p>(41). <i>Utviklingen tror jeg er mye større, om du gidder å pushe deg og skrive og gjøre alt på norsk.</i></p> <p>(42). <i>Som låtskriver blir jeg veldig imponert over de som klarer å skrive bra norske låter. Fordi det er mye vanskeligere vil jeg si det. I hvert fall når du har vokst opp i alderen vi er i, med så mye engelsk rundt oss.</i></p> <p>(48). <i>Det er en annen musikk over det engelske språket som gjør det bare lettere å forklare seg om tema, om det er tema om kjærlighet eller sinne eller urettferdighet. Store tema da. Det er liksom bare lettere.</i></p> <p>(53). <i>Jeg tror... at hadde hun sunget den på engelsk så hadde nok ikke den gått så inn i hjertet på folk som den gjorde. Fordi når hu sang den teksten – den var på norsk og traff folk på en helt annen måte enn å syng den på engelsk.</i></p> <p>(55). <i>Elsker den. Den kan ikke jeg høre for meg på engelsk. Jeg ser det ikke for meg. Det funker ikke på engelsk. Den bare er alt den skal være på norsk. Den treffer.</i></p> <p>(63). <i>Det er fordi det er så mye større ordforråd på engelsk. Enn norsk. Det er lettere å forklare seg på engelsk enn på norsk, fordi vårt ordforråd er så lite.</i></p>	<p>-</p>



<b>Artist 4 (e)</b>	<p>(21). <i>Jeg tror bransjen kommer med forslag. Slik jeg ser det var det helt klart noen som dro i spakene og sa til han at kanskje du burde vurdere engelsk</i></p> <p>(28). <i>Det er jo kult for unge i dag å vite at man kan nå ganske langt med å skrive på norsk, og at det er fint. Og at det ikke er et dumt språk liksom. At du kan være jævlig fresh og skrive på norsk!</i></p> <p>(31). <i>Når jeg startet å bli utøvende musiker så var ikke norsk musikk så jævlig kult som det er nå da. Den bølgen kom litt mer sånn ridende fra 2017 vil jeg si da.</i></p> <p>(34). <i>Jeg har tenkt litt over dette her, og jeg tror ikke det var noe bevisst valg i begynnelsen, men det er vel fordi all musikken som jeg har hørt på hele tiden da, også av norske artister, er på engelsk da.</i></p> <p>(40). <i>Jeg synes det er veldig vanskelig å skrive på norsk enn engelsk. I hvert fall når du ikke er vandt med det. Men jeg har lyst til å prøve å skrive på norsk, men det er bare så innmari vanskelig.</i></p> <p>(45). <i>Jeg mener, folk skjønner jo engelsk, men det er helt utrolig hvor mye mer oppmerksomhet de vier til norske tekster kontra engelske, i hvert fall som låtskriver. At man kan sitte så jævlig lenge med en tekst og liksom drive på den, og 'jeg håper dette ble så sjukt fint og metaforisk' og man føler man liksom har gjort en drit god jobb da. Også er alle sånn 'hva er det den handler om egentlig?'</i></p> <p>(51). <i>Så jeg tror også at når du skriver på norsk så har du en litt mer sånn sikkerhet i lojaliteten til publikummet ditt, som du kanskje ikke har med engelsk, med mindre du blir dritsvær da. Så jeg tror når du skriver på norsk så har du litt mer sånn sikkerhet i lojaliteten til publikummet ditt, som du kanskje ikke har med engelsk, med mindre du blir dritsvær da.</i></p> <p>(54). <i>Det er det som er skummelt med å synge på norsk. At folk faktisk skjønner hva du sier liksom.</i></p> <p>(56). <i>Altså oversettelsene hennes av låter... er sånn... jeg blir jo helt satt ut. 'Shit, er det der norsk liksom' Det er så jævla fint og enkelt".</i></p>	-
<b>Artist 5 (n/e)</b>	<p>(17). <i>Altså de spiller i de store byene eller på de store festivalene. Også reiser de til utlandet og spiller... Selv om de skriver på engelsk. De har et kjempestort publikum både hjemme og ute.</i></p> <p>(19). <i>Jeg klarte ikke helt å være meg selv i den... Mens nå så lager jeg musikk som jeg føler meg veldig hjemme i og som jeg er veldig trygg på at er bra.</i></p> <p>(20). <i>Altså, jeg mener, den kommersielle poppen i Norge er jo stort sett på engelsk, og de som har gjort det stort i utlandet er jo stort sett folk som har skrevet på engelsk.</i></p> <p>(25). <i>Spotify er liksom den store mektige aktøren som bestemmer litt hvilke låter som på en måte kommer opp da.</i></p>	-

	<p>(26). <i>Alle disse som på en måte har vært i bransjen i mange år.. Som kan reise land og strand rundt og trekke publikummere nesten hvor som helst.... de har jo skrevet på norsk og sunget på norsk.</i></p> <p>(29). <i>Så det kan jo være at norske artister har en litt sånn... at vi kanskje ikke er så flinke til å fremme det norske språket nettopp fordi for oss å klare oss i utlandet som popartist så må du nesten skrive på engelsk fordi det er det universelle språket.</i></p> <p>(43). <i>Det å skrive på norsk, så umodent som det nå høres ut, så tenkte jeg liksom ikke at det var så 'kult' da, sånn som når man klarte å skrive kule ting på engelsk.</i></p> <p>(44). <i>Jeg blir helt sånn.. jeg klarer ikke.. jeg orker ikke å høre på det her, fordi det er så kleint.</i></p> <p>(47). <i>Nå i ettertid ser jeg at det blir en distanse i det. At jeg skriver på engelsk når jeg har mest et norsk publikum.. som jeg nå slipper.</i></p> <p>(49). <i>Den musikken jeg lager og den stemmen jeg har er nok en mer sånn nær, hva skal jeg si.. intim da.. stemmen min er nær og sårbar. Mer enn storslått og sværisk... hvis du skjønner. Jeg opplever selv at min stemme funker bedre med det formatet jeg er i nå.</i></p> <p>50). <i>Det merker jeg nå, at tekstene kommuniserer jo på en helt annen måte på norsk enn det noen gang har gjort på engelsk.</i></p> <p>(57). <i>Det er ganske stor forskjell på [publikum] faktisk...Da jeg begynte å skrive låter, og da jeg fikk min første lista på P3, det var i 2012 tror jeg. Så skrev jeg både på engelsk og hadde et mye yngre publikum. Etter jeg ga ut [den første norske sangen] så for det første så ble jeg ikke listet på P3, men på P1, som er på en måte en helt annen type profil, og en helt annen lyttegruppe... Så sånn jeg opplever det nå så har jeg et eldre publikum som er kanskje fra sånn slutten av 30 årene, men så kan det være voksne folk helt opp til 60-65 som kommer på mine konserter nå.</i></p> <p>(58). <i>Jeg anser meg selv som ganske god i engelsk. Jeg bodde en periode i USA da jeg var liten. og leser engelsk og kan kommunisere bra på engelsk uten noe problem å gjøre meg forstått, også tenker jeg at jeg også har en veldig god uttale fordi jeg har bodd i USA, men det er klart at det vokabularet mitt er jo veldig begrenset, og også den kunstneriske fordypelsen i det å lage sangtekster som ikke nødvendigvis bare skal være konkret, men det skal være metaforer og man skal gjerne kunne snakke i bilder. Det krever kanskje mer et førstespråk... opplever jeg da.</i></p> <p>(60). <i>Så da jeg begynte å skrive på norsk nå for et par år siden så var det akkurat som at det bare be lett å skrive, hvor jeg tidligere har sittet og slitt og knota veldig både i forhold til å komme på ting å fortelle, men også å klare å fortelle det jeg vil si da. Og det... det har blitt mye lettere på norsk. Altså det er jo ikke lett å skrive tekst på norsk heller, men det er akkurat som det å komme på ideene har blitt lettere</i></p> <p>(64). <i>På norsk så kan jeg liksom sitte å skrive opp 20 forskjellige ord som betyr det samme. Fordi vokabularet er mye større, som også på en måte gjør tekstene bedre.</i></p>	
<b>Artist 6 (n/e)</b>	<p>(3). <i>Jeg fremstår kanskje litt mer som meg sjøl, og ikke bare som en sanger som synger cover låter eller etterligninger mine forbilder.</i></p>	<p>-</p>

(11). *Men jeg tror nok på en måte at hverken publikum eller meg sjøl blir like troverdig som om når jeg skriver på norsk da.*

(12). *Det er mange artister som synger på engelsk som får det til å funke. Og det oppleves forholdsvis troverdig*

(13). *Det jeg tenker er at alle artister.. hvis du klarer å gi ut musikk der du liksom synger teksten.. altså det høres ut som setninger du.. altså at det du synger faktisk høres ut som setninger du kunne sagt liksom. At det er sånn den artisten faktisk prater. Det tror jeg er viktig. At den troverdigheten der, det er den folk tror på, ja .. at de tenker at det er faktisk sånn han prater.*

(14). *Det er jo ikke tilfeldig at hitten ble på norsk.. for det var jo det folk ville ha... av meg.. Av meg så var det det folk ville ha... men av andre artister så er det kanskje engelsk de vil ha.. av de da. Fordi de har kanskje større troverdighet på engelsk enn jeg hadde.*

(15). *Jeg tror mange synger på engelsk fordi de ikke vil utelukke muligheten for å bli store utenfor Norge da. Jeg tror det. Det lukker jo litt den døra til å bli kjempestor i England liksom, når du synger på norsk.*

(16). *Altså, hovedpoenget med å synge engelsk for norske artister må jo være at du vil ut av Norge da. For om en norsk artist skal synge norsk publikum er det egentlig bare teit å synge på engelsk. Synes jeg da.*

(18). *Om du satser alt på det å bli stor i utlandet. Om du ikke fokuserer på hjemme.. at det er det.. man kan få så store drømmer at du drømmer om hele verden men så fikk du ikke til hjembygda di en gang liksom. Fordi du fokuserte ikke på hjembygda di, du fokuserte på utlandet.*

(22). *Det er klart at du har jo større muligheter på engelsk. Stort sett.. Altså sånn... større muligheter fordi at om det går bra så kan det gå veldig bra. Altså det kan bli utafør Norge og sånne ting. Men.. altså sånn.. om sjansen for å få det til er så mye større det tror jeg kanskje nesten motsatt. Altså sjansen for å få til noe i Norge tror jeg faktisk er større på norsk.*

(23). *Det er veldig fort gjort å drukne i mengden av artister da. At du.. ingen får med seg hvem du er..*

(24). *Altså, du kan ikke spille live fordi ingen har skjønt at du er norsk på en måte.*

(35). *Vi blir jo veldig påvirket av hverandre da. Alle artister. Så jeg tror.. hvis noen får suksess med et eller annet så er det veldig mange som vil prøve å kopiere og herme og gjør det samme.*

(46). *Det er nok forskjellig fra artists til artist, men for min del så er det litt sånn... hvis jeg egentlig ikke har noe å si på en måte.. hvis jeg bare har en fengende melodi, og sånn, så er det bedre med best med engelsk.. egentlig.*



## Appendix F: Quotes from the Survey

The original statements from the survey participants are found below. The statements are organized by number from Analysis 4.2.

<b>(65).</b>	<i>Større sjanse for popularitet, som leder til høyere inntekt, og mange føler at det er mer komfortabelt å synge på engelsk.</i>
<b>(66).</b>	<i>Engelsk pop er ofte spennende og tar med seg nye elementer og et samhold med resten av den engelsktalende befolkningen.</i>
<b>(67).</b>	<i>Kan være lettere å skrive tekster på engelsk da man har hørt mange engelske låter.</i>
<b>(68).</b>	<i>Engelsk har et bredere ordforråd, det er lettere å beskrive følelser og opplevelser på engelsk og inkludere flere detaljer enn det er på norsk.</i>
<b>(69).</b>	<i>Artister kan vise hvem de er, og får frem en egenhet og nærhet.</i>
<b>(70).</b>	<i>Det er mer nært å synge på sin egen dialekt og sitt eget språk, nesten en slags sårbarhet.</i>
<b>(71).</b>	<i>Jeg hører mest på engelske sanger og har inntrykk av at det er det som er mest "normalt".</i>
<b>(72).</b>	<i>Engelsk pop slår norsk pop hele tiden. Kan nesten ikke huske noe norsk pop</i>
<b>(73).</b>	<i>Dersom de velger engelsk (eller et annet språk) så må de beherske språket!</i>
<b>(74).</b>	<i>De siste årene har mange flinke artister kommet på banen! Men det blir ofte veldig kommersielt synes jeg, og likt mye annet.</i>
<b>(75).</b>	<i>Sangen virker ofte mer koselig og mange kommer tettere på teksten når den synges på norsk.</i>
<b>(76).</b>	<i>Jeg tror artister som synger på norsk kan bli enda mer knyttet til publikummet da det ofte er morsmålet deres og alle forstår hva som blir sunget og kan relater, samt at det kan føles/opleves mer personlig. På engelsk vil det kanskje ikke ha like stor effekt, og det kan, til en viss grad, være vanskelig å få frem "norsk kultur" ved å synge på engelsk. Derfor tror jeg for et norsk publikum at det vil bli bedre mottatt å synge på norsk av en norsk artist.</i>
<b>(77).</b>	<i>Virker som det blir mer og mer populært med sanger som er skrevet på norsk i Norge.</i>
<b>(78).</b>	<i>Jeg tror det ligger en viss stigma rundt det å blande norsk og pop. Ikke at det ikke er tillatt eller oppfattet som "teit", men jeg vet ved meg selv at jeg har en tendens til å være skeptisk til norske sanger som blir foreslått i spillelister. Det er ofte at dersom tittelen er på norsk og jeg har verken hørt om sangen eller artisten før, så hopper jeg automatisk til neste. Jeg har ikke samme tilnærming på engelsk, merkelig nok..</i>
<b>(79).</b>	<i>En personlig oppfatning ang. popsanger på norsk er at de blir oppfattet som mindre fengende enn de på engelsk. Sammenlignet med f.eks. rap-sjangeren, hvor det å anvende norsk har blitt mer akseptert av norske lyttere i senere tid. Jeg føler at norsk som språk er, innenfor den norske musikkindustrien, i større grad linket til folkemusikk. Det er færre unge som hører på slik type musikk, og flere som heller foretrekker popmusikk (dette kan ha med p gjøre at unge føler folkemusikk-sjangeren tilhører foreldregenerasjonen). Artister velger naturlig å produsere noe de tror har størst sjanse</i>

	<i>på å slå an og selge bra. Jeg tror rett og slett det er en stigma rundt det å høre på norsk pop.</i>
<b>(80).</b>	<i>Jeg mener at engelsk generelt er et bedre språk og synge og høre på.</i>

