



## **The attitudes of Polish advanced learners of English towards the African American Vernacular English accent.**

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The present paper examines the attitudes of Polish advanced learners of English towards the African American Vernacular English accent. The examination has been performed with the help of a language attitude experiment carried out on a group of secondary school learners. The experiment is based on previous research and utilises the model questionnaire prepared by Bayard et al. (2001). The motivation behind the study stems from a variety of reasons. Firstly, experts in the topic including Jarvella et al. (2001) or McKenzie (2008) have pointed to the lack of language attitude studies in which the judges are recruited from non-native speakers of English. Secondly, it also has to do with the fact that the accent is the main medium of expression of the so-called hip-hop culture, which in turn, seems to have gained a lot of popularity in Poland (Garcarz 2005; Cargile et al. 2006). Some of the general assumptions are that positive attitudes towards the AAVE accent, manifested specifically through high evaluations on the group of traits conventionally referred to as *solidarity* traits, could serve as an indication of the spread of the variety and the familiarity of the judges with the hip-hop culture. Six recordings have been used in the study. Three of them are the recordings of speakers whose accents are devoid of regional features, the remaining three are the recordings of the AAVE speakers. The results have been analysed statistically through a factor analysis of all the 18 traits used in the questionnaire. Additionally, the distributional patterns for each speaker are delineated with the help of box plots. The findings of the study are later juxtaposed with the findings of a pilot experiment conducted by the author at the School of English Adam Mickiewicz University and analogous experiments conducted on native speakers.

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