The Evaluation of Eastern European accents of English in the Netherlands

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0. Abstract

There has been an ample amount of studies conducted on attitudes towards different varieties of English by native speakers of the English language. However, little has been done on how different foreign accents are perceived by non-native speakers of English. The main aim of this study was to investigate whether the Western European accented speech is perceived better than the Eastern European one by non-native English speakers in a non-English-speaking country. The research was conducted using the matched-guise technique (Lambert, 1967) in the Netherlands. 94 subjects participated in the study. All were asked to fill in a survey constructed in accordance with a Likert Scale. The findings revealed that although it could not be generalised that the Eastern European accents are perceived less positive than the Western European ones, it could be generalised that speaking without a foreign accent at all is perceived more favourably in terms of intelligence, education, and social class. Moreover, speaking with a Standard American or British accent increases your chances on the job market. Whereas that could be justified in the native English-speaking environment, it is interesting to acknowledge that much the same attitudes hold in non-English-speaking European countries.
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1 Introduction

In 2001, a few years before the Polish accession to the European Union, I was travelling by train through Europe. On one occasion I met a Dutch man with whom I had a long conversation about Eastern Europe. At a certain point I told him that I found some of the statements and questions regarding Poland offensive, especially the one where Western Europeans do not recognise the difference between Poland, Russia or the Czech Republic, notoriously thinking that one is a republic of the other. I added that I did not understand this level of ignorance towards the Eastern European countries. Then the man said something very interesting: “When I was young my parents and the media used to refer to Eastern Europe as the Eastern bloc – indicating that they are not several countries but one ‘Enemy’. This short reflection made me realise that in a common perception I was not seen as a Polish citizen but rather as a citizen of the Eastern bloc, a mass from the unknown.

My journey to the Netherlands ended up with me staying here for several years, and I experienced many more of these kinds of stereotypical judgements. Subconsciously, I decided to drop my Polish accent in favour of a Dutch one. I still remember how proud I was if someone assumed that I am from South Africa, the Netherlands or even New Zealand. In other words, I did not want to be identified with my own community. I wanted to be recognised as a member of Europe and I achieved that by dropping the accent of my origin.

The negative attitudes towards Eastern Europeans in Western Europe are obviously influenced by recent history, most specifically, the Second World War, communism, the Cold War and the massive immigration after the accession of several Central and Eastern European countries to the European Union. Throughout the centuries, Poland and Russia were a labour pool for the developed countries, mainly the USA, Canada, Australia, Germany, France and to a lesser extent the UK. The first wave of immigration of Eastern Europeans to the United
States was from 1890 up to 1914 for both economic and political reasons. In 1924, in order to minimize and select immigration to the US, a National Origin Quota Act was passed (U.S. Department of State Office of the Historian). The idea was that immigrants were permitted to enter the USA only in proportions to their numbers already living in the US. In other words, ethnic groups who were relatively high in numbers – mainly Western and Northern Europeans – were allowed to immigrate in greater numbers than the ones from Eastern and Southern Europe. Moreover, during that period immigrants were also subject to a literacy and IQ test which was entirely in English. It was, of course, highly unlikely for a non-English speaking person to score high on this test. Consequently, people from Eastern Europe were considered morons (a term used to describe an unintelligent person at that time) (Anderson & Taylor, 2006). Unfortunately, this action had long-lasting consequences on how Poles and Russians are perceived in the United States – often as stupid and unintelligent. Further political events, such as the Second World War, communism and the Cold War, only worsened the perception of the Eastern Europeans. Moreover, the fact that Eastern European people mainly occupied low social status jobs has also contributed enormously to the negative perceptions.

In Western Europe, on the other hand, the events after the Second World War, most specifically the division of Europe between the communist controlled and the free democratic countries, made lands behind the Iron Curtain be seen as enemies. Moreover, since the accession to the European Union of several Eastern and Central European countries, citizens from Poland, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia have had the right to participate in the UK, German, French, the Netherlands and more labour markets and a substantial rise in immigration has been noted (Blanchflower, Saleheen & Shadforth, 2007; Findlay, McCollum, 2010). Only in 2004 approximately four hundred thousand Poles immigrated to Western Europe, mainly to the United Kingdom (Findlay, McCollum, 2010). Although several studies have reported that immigration has had positive
economic consequence (Brenton, Mauro, Lucke, 1999; Konings, 2003), the feelings of mistrust towards immigrants in the UK and other Western European countries appear to be rising since the economic crisis of 2009.

An illustration of how, for example, Poles are perceived by British people can be found in a report that was prepared on the basis of a survey conducted in Great Britain on a representative group of 1,029 respondents, as part of “The Perception of Poles and Poland in Great Britain” project, which interestingly was co-financed by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs as part of an ongoing program intended to promote knowledge about Poland (Fomina, Frelak, 2011). In short, the results veered towards rather positive ones. For example, over half of the interviewees stated that Poles fit into British society well or very well, and British people apparently have nothing against Poles as neighbours or friends, family members etc. The report gives very positive feedback until the last paragraph, where it is stated that most of the British respondents would be against their company being managed by a Pole: “Britons do not accept the granting of British citizenship to Poles. It is most difficult for the British to accept a Pole as a local councillor [...] the typical Polish migrant is an unqualified worker – over 75% of respondents expressed such an opinion” (Fomila, Frelak, 2011). Interestingly, the same project was undertaken in several other Western European countries and similar findings can be observed for Germany, Austria and France (Frelak, Łada, 2009).

In the Netherlands, whenever I mention that I am from Poland, Dutch people ask me whether I have seen the movie called De Poolse Bruid (The Polish Bride). The movie tells the story of a Polish woman who escapes a brothel and ends up living on a farm in Groningen. It is a great film, yet, the fact that the woman is a prostitute and that the first thing that springs to Dutch people’s minds upon hearing the word ‘Poland’ is a film such as this may lead us to believe that the general perceptions of Polish immigrants is far from positive. In fact, there are a lot of Central and Eastern European prostitutes in the Netherlands, which may even worsen
the perceptions. Thus, assuming that the majority of Western Europeans associate Eastern Europeans with low social status professions, we may conclude that Eastern European accents will evoke negative perceptions from non-native speakers of the English language.

Since most of the research related to the perceptions of the foreign accented speech has been conducted in the English speaking countries, it is interesting to investigate how accented English is perceived in Europe, one of the most cosmopolitan and culturally diverse continents in the World, where the English language is quickly becoming a *lingua franca* and different accents mingle within one another. Is the Eastern European accent perceived differently than the Western European one? Do Dutch speakers perceive a Western European accent to be more favourable than the Eastern European one? Does the accent determine whether or not one is applicable for a certain profession?

In order to answer the above questions, I decided to conduct a study where the main concern is how different foreign English accents are perceived by non-native speakers of the English language. More specifically, using a matched guise technique (Lambert, 1967).

1.1 Thesis outline

In the second chapter of this thesis, I will present different definitions of accent. Since it is an area of interest of many different fields of linguistics such as phonetics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, second language acquisition and language teaching, the section will comprise various definitions of each of the aforementioned branches.

Subsequently, I will concentrate on the attitudes towards different foreign accents. I will present, summarize, and discuss research that has been done in this field, which will include the following: (a) studies that have investigated attitudes and perceptions of non-native accents of English; (b) studies that have examined attitudes and perceptions of non-native accents of languages other than English; (c) how a language can be used as a tool for
discrimination; (d) how media influences the perceptions on different accents; and (e) how recent historical events may influence the attitudes towards Eastern European accents.

Accordingly, in order to determine whether specific accents influence a listener’s perception of the speaker, I will conduct an experiment. The methodology is presented in Chapter 2 of the thesis. Lastly, I will analyse and discuss my findings. The concluding remarks will be given in a separate chapter.
2 Background Literature

2.1 Theory of Language Attitude

The notion of attitude is a subject of disagreement among researchers. Most often, attitude is defined as a hidden tendency towards a psychological object. These dispositions can be positive, negative, or neutral. In other words, experiences may be classified as pleasant or unpleasant (Bohner & Wänke, 1986). Attitude can serve either utilitarian functions or social identity functions. In relation to the first function, Herek (as cited in Bohner & Wänke, 1986) argued that some attitudes are central to a person’s self-perception and, by acting upon them, they affirm central values, such as a non-smoker who values stricter smoking regulations (Green & Gerken, 1989). The latter function serves as maintenance of social relations, which means that one may hold a positive attitude towards an object because the rest of the group serves similar views.

Attitudes are formed on the basis of a person’s personal experiences and social environment and are relatively resistant to any changes. Two fundamental factors play a role in learning attitudes. The first is defined as observational learning, and is based upon the concept that people form their attitudes by first noticing the behaviour of others and then the consequence of that behaviour. The second is defined as instrumental learning, in which people form their attitudes upon experiencing the consequences themselves (Garret, 2010). Moreover, according to Baker (1992), attitude serves double functions: input and output. The first one is defined as a positive experience, which may influence a positive attitude (input); the latter is defined as outcome in itself, i.e. a positive attitude follows a positive outcome.
The three components of attitude include cognition, affect and action. Based upon this assumption, a hierarchical three component model has emerged (Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960). According to this model, attitudes are directly unobservable and immeasurable. Therefore, they are only deduced from a reaction to a certain stimuli. These reactions are divided into three categories: cognitive, affective and actions. The first one is based upon beliefs and thoughts, the second one concerns feelings, and the third – readiness for action. Although at first it may seem that, if a person has positive beliefs and thoughts about a certain object, it will also evoke positive feelings (and vice-versa), it is not always the case. In other words, people are not always aware of their attitudes. Therefore, attitudes have been divided into two categories: ones that are held consciously (overt attitudes) and ones that are held subconsciously (covert attitudes). Thus, a person may show a conscious positive attitude towards something, but at the same time unconsciously bear negative attitudes.

2.2 Measurements of the Language Attitude

The study of language attitude recognises two main approaches to measuring language attitudes. Since, as mentioned above, attitudes are divided into the overtly held and the covertly held, two different methods, direct and indirect, respectively will be discussed.

2.2.1 Direct Approaches

The direct method is used to measure consciously (overtly) held attitudes through open or closed questionnaires. In open questions the participants are directly asked to give their opinion on a given topic. In closed questions the participants are given a set of multiple answers. The advantage of the first one is that participants may elaborate on their attitudes and at the same time give some personal insights. However, the main disadvantage is the effort that people need to put in to express their opinions. Moreover, open question answers are difficult to measure as it is hard to score them (cf. Agheyisi and Fishman 1970: 147).
Therefore, closed questions seem more practical in measuring attitudes. First of all, participants do not have to put a lot of effort into filling out the questionnaire as the answers are already given. Secondly, the answers are easier to score. However, since in closed questions the answers are already given, there is a risk that the participants will fill out the questionnaire automatically, consequently choosing answers that are not particularly true (cf. Agheyisi and Fishman 1970: 148).

There are several tools used to measure language attitude in the direct method, such as the Likert Scale (1932), Semantic Differential scales or interviews. Both the Likert Scale and Semantic Differential Scales are used in closed types of questionnaires. In the Likert Scale method the participants are asked to indicate to what extent they agree or disagree with a given statement on a scale from 1-5 (agree, strongly agree, undedicated, disagree, and strongly disagree) (Sommer, 2001: 155).

The Semantic Differential Scale (Osgood, 1957) method is built up on two opposite (bi-polar) adjectives (e.g. friendly-unfriendly) and contains a number of points. The outer points indicate the most extreme judgement; the point between the middle and the extremes indicates semi-judgement. Lack of opinion is represented by the point in the middle. In order to build up a differential scale the following requirements need to be fulfilled: stimuli in the form of a concept, response and scales. The scale needs to be semantically stable, which means that the chosen bi-polar adjectives should have relevant connotations.
2.2.2  **Indirect Approaches**

The most popular indirect method in measuring language attitudes is the matched-guise technique. The matched-guise technique uses recorded voices speaking first in one accent, and then in another. What listeners do not know is that the speech samples are from the same person, so they judge the two guises of the same speaker as two separate speakers (Gaies & Beebe, 2007). The method was first introduced by Lambert (1967). In his study bilingual speakers read the same passage twice, once in Canadian English and once in Canadian French. The samples were presented to both Canadian French and Canadian English speakers for evaluation. Astonishingly, both groups evaluated Canadian English guises more favourably than Canadian French ones (Lambert, 1967).

2.3  **Definition of Accent**

Since this particular study investigates attitudes towards certain types of accents, the accents will serve as the stimuli. Therefore, the concept of accent in the light of different linguistic branches will be discussed.
Accent identifies a speaker as a member of a particular ethnic or cultural group, and, therefore, the attitude of the listener towards members of that particular group may be generalised to the speaker (Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner, and Fillenbaum, 1960). Listeners may be biased and assign personality traits that reflect the stereotyped characteristics or perceptions of that accent group to the speaker (Edwards, 1985). Thus, some groups are perceived as intelligent, hard-working and educated, some – as procrastinating, lazy and easy-going. These attitudes are reflected in the perceptions of the language variety (Preston, 1999:359).

2.3.1 General Definition of an Accent

Oxford Dictionary (1989) defines accent as a “distinctive way of pronouncing a language, especially one associated with a particular country, area, or social class”. We are also given two examples of what the accent is: “a strong American accent”, or “she never mastered the French accent”.

This definition, although simple and short, already emphasises the relationship between the identity of the speaker and the speaker’s accent on both local and foreign levels. Therefore, the features of somebody’s accent are not only an indicator of one’s origin but it can also carry pejorative stereotypes (Abercrombie, 1956).

2.3.2 Accent in phonetics

Phonetics is one of the sub-areas of linguistics that studies the sounds of speech, focussing on the differences between languages with emphases on phonetic and phonological features, rather than grammar or lexis. It defines accent as a specific pattern of pronunciation that is specific for ones’ nationality, i.e. mother tongue (O’Grady, Archibald & Aronoff,
Rees-Miller, 2005). This field sees an accent as an ability or inability to produce certain sounds due to the speakers’ native language phonetic register (Rogers, 2000).

Since each accent has its own peculiarities, articulator phonetics deals with the inventory and structure of the language sounds. It comprises traits such as vowel and consonant inventories and prosody, which includes tone, stress, intonation, and intensity of speech production. Thus, different languages may have different vowel or consonant systems. The same applies to prosody: each language has its own patterns. For instance, some languages, such as Dutch are stress-timed, whereas some, such as French, are syllable-timed. For some, such as Polish, the distinction is hard to determine, as they show traits of both stress-timed and syllable-timed patterns.

2.3.3 Accent in Second Language Acquisition

The phonetic peculiarities of each language have an impact on the Second Language Acquisition. Many studies have indicated that, regardless of age or level of proficiency, learners adopt a certain number of markers in their L2 pronunciation (Dowd, Zuengler & Berkowitz, 1990). “Therefore, any occurring miss-markings may result from transferring L1 system to L2 on a sociolinguistic level” (Plebankiewicz, 2007). In other words, a phonetic trait of the first language influences the pronunciation of the second language.

2.3.4 Accent in Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is a sub-field of linguistics which studies the relationship between language and society. In contrast to the phonetics view of accent, sociolinguists define and investigate the role of accent in a broader way (Tabouret-Keller, 1998). It not only examines accent on a phonological level but also on a lexical, grammatical and most importantly in the context of diverse social settings.
The essential sociolinguistics distinction is that an accent is divided into two categories: a standard accent and a non-standard one. The first one is associated with a higher social position and wealthier economic status, whereas a non-standard accent is usually associated with the opposite. This distinction is essential for the purpose of this paper as its main goal is to examine different attitudes towards the accented speech of the English language in a non-native environment.

2.3.5 Accent in the Socio-Psychological Aspect

The socio-psychological aspect of an accent is interested in stereotypes which are associated with certain accents (Said, 2001). In this respect media, especially television, can influence specific attitudes towards accented English (Nazzi and Gopnik, 2001). One of the most common examples of discrimination through the medium of television are Disney’s cartoons. Lippi-Green (2001) showed that Disney animation films have a long history of associating certain characters with specific foreign accents.

As it can be seen, the notion of accent is used in different fields and for various purposes. However, in the framework of the present research the main focus will be on the sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics aspects of accent. Thus, the perception of accent in the context of diverse social settings and the distinction between accented and not-accented speech, as well as the stereotypes associated with certain accents will be taken into consideration.

2.4 Attitudes towards different foreign accents – Hypotheses

2.4.1 Inherent value hypothesis

The inherent value hypothesis holds the view “that some linguistic varieties are inherently more attractive and pleasant than others, and that these varieties have become

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1 The aspect of media on the perception on foreign accented speech will be elaborated broadly in the following chapter.
accepted as standards or have acquired prestige simply because they are the most attractive” (Trudgill, 1983). Giles (1970) showed that people in Britain perceived nonstandard forms of their language as inferior to the standard one. However, Wells (1982) points out that the fact that English has two standard accents already exposes the weakness of inherent value hypothesis. Giles, Bourhis, Davis (1974) investigated the relative merits of the inherent value hypothesis through an experimental study where people with no knowledge of the French language differentiated between the various forms of French spoken in Canada. It appeared that, although speakers of Canadian French evaluated their own French as aesthetically less pleasant than the European one, both varieties, when presented to the Welsh, were evaluated equally. Additionally, the Welsh listeners could not distinguish which of the varieties of French was more prestigious (Giles, Bourhis, Trudgill, Lewis, 1972).

2.4.2 Imposed norm hypothesis

The above mentioned research, while exposing weaknesses of the inherent value hypothesis, is in favour of the imposed norm hypothesis, which holds that “different varieties of the same language are objectively as pleasant as each other, but are perceived positively or negatively because of particular cultural pressures operating in each language community” (Trudgill 1983). Giles, Bourhis, Trudgill, Lewis, (1972), conducted another experiment in order to validate the imposed norm hypothesis in different social settings. In contrast to the previous research, where the listeners were uneducated middle-aged people, this experiment was conducted with British University undergraduates. Using the matched-guise technique, they presented to the listeners recordings of two varieties of Greek spoken by the same person. The first was Athenian Greek (standard and considered by Greek people as beautiful and prestigious) and the Cretan Greek (non standard and perceived as ugly and inferior). The outcome of the research showed that the British raters could not make any aesthetic distinction between the two.
Media can also be an important factor in the realisation of the imposed norm hypothesis. One of the most apparent and first examples of the discrimination of ethnic groups in media was the portrayal of the Wolf as a Jew in the Disney cartoon, "The Three Little Pigs". In 1933, Disney released this short cartoon, in which the main theme was of good triumphing over evil. There would be nothing harmful about this cartoon if not the main character – the Big Bad Wolf – who was portrayed as a Jewish peddler (Lippi-Green, 2001). The wolf in the cartoon has a large hooked nose, straggly beard and wears side locks; he wears a long black coat and a black hat (reminiscent of the one worn by Orthodox Jews). Moreover, the wolf holds coins in his hands – a stigma and stereotype of Jews being greedy moneylenders (Lippi-Green, 2001). What was even more distressing and alarming was the fact that the wolf spoke with a Yiddish accent (Kaufman, 1988). Although Walt Disney himself admitted that it was bad taste to portray the wolf as a Jewish peddler, and in 1948, changed the character into a rough, round faced man, the original voice-over remained unchanged much longer (Kaufman, 1988).

This example perfectly illustrates how the American film industry often portrays immigrants; especially that it is not an exceptional example. As a matter of fact, most of Disney’s cartoons assign certain accents to certain characters. Lippi-Green (2001) found out that overall representation of persons with foreign accents is far more negative than that of the speakers of proper Standard American or British accents (Lippi-Green, 2001).

In numbers, 20% of the bad characters are speakers of American English, whereas 40% of non-native speakers of English are evil. As Lippi-Green (2001) accurately concludes, Disney animated films influence the way a viewer perceives good and evil, with strong correlations to race and ethnicity, and have a long-lasting effect on the perception for both self and the other.
Another example that contributes to the imposed norm hypothesis are schools. In their curriculum they single out standard variations of a given accent. This applies to both the standard variation of a local accent and foreign language lessons.

2.4.3 Social connotation hypothesis

The social connotation hypothesis, as the name already suggests, argues that language attitude can be based upon individual experiences and therefore form individual connotations. For example, if one had a negative encounter with a speaker of the Polish language, it can influence their personal judgement of the Polish nation as a whole. Thus, other encounters with Poles, although ambivalent or even positive, may still hold negative attitude connotations.

2.4.4 The Intelligibility hypothesis

The Intelligibility hypothesis (Giles and Niedzielski, 1998) states that many languages and dialects are so similar that they are mutually intelligible, sometimes to such an extent that speakers of different yet related languages are able to communicate with each other by each speaking their own language (Gooskens, 2013). According to the intelligibility hypothesis, speakers of similar languages perceive their mutual languages as aesthetically beautiful. In other words, dialects that are judged as pleasant are more intelligible to the judges and vice-versa (Gooskens, 2013). Several studies are in line with this hypothesis, for example, Boets and De Shutter (1977) found that speakers of Belgian Dutch evaluated other regional dialects as aesthetically pleasant.

2.5 Research on the perception of accented speech

Many studies have shown that accent may influence peoples’ decision on whether to accept or reject a person or a whole group from society (Eisenclas, 1999; Lambert, Hodgson,
Gardner & Fillenbaum, 1960; Rubin, 1992; Seggie, Fulmizi & Stewart, 1982). Additionally, accent is a significant factor in making judgments about a speaker’s ethnicity, social class, and personality and that the style of speech is as important as any other cue in face-to-face conversations (Bourhis, Giles and Lambert, 1975). Thus, one may be rejected a job offer because of a foreign sounding accent (Kalin & Rayko, 1980; Lippi-Green, 1994; Munro, 2003; Bourhis, Montreuil, Helly & Jantzen, 2007), or teachers can subconsciously hold prejudicial reactions to certain accents of their students (Goldstein, 2003; Godley, Sweetland, Wheeler, Minnici, & Carpenter, 2006), or, finally, children playing in the playground may reject a child whose accent sounds different. Moreover, since many listeners evaluate speakers more by the none-content than content features of the message, the way something was said can leave a stronger impression than what was actually said (Giles, Wilson & Conway, 1981). Therefore, as Tsurutani and Eisenchlas (1999) concluded, “a non-mainstream accent is likely to arouse in the hearer a perception of the generalised or stereotypical characteristics that the hearer associates with that group”.

There has been an ample amount of studies done on the non-speakers’ and native speakers’ perceptions of different accents, in which prejudiced attitudes towards foreign-accented speech can be noted (Devos, 2003; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Munro, Derwing & Sato, 2006; Nakane, 2006). Since the purpose of this paper is narrowed down to the attitudes towards Eastern Europeans and whether these perceptions are mirrored in their social status in the Netherlands, I will mainly focus on the studies that were concerned with prejudiced attitudes on the socio-economical level.

Several studies have shown that speakers with non-standard accents tend to be negatively evaluated and, in consequence, have lowered expectations of their potential performance (Riches & Foddy, 1989). These tendencies have a negative impact on
employment, access to housing and educational opportunities for those who speak with accented English (Eisenchlas & Tsurutani, 2011).

Riches & Foddy (1989) examined the impact of verbal fluency and ethnic accent on perceptions of competence and on acceptance of influence in a group task. They asked participants to listen to and evaluate Australian speakers of Greek and Anglo origin. The study concerned three dimensions: intelligence, competence/education and solidarity. The results of the research showed that the speaker’s fluency in English influenced raters’ judgements of confidence and intelligence, whereas ethnic identity affected rating on intelligence. What can be drawn from this study is that the speakers of accented English tend to be perceived as less able and having lower potential in performance (Riche & Foddy, 1989).

Another illustration of the negative attitudes towards accented speech and how they influence employment opportunities has been provided by Seggie, Fulmizi and Stewart (1982). In their study they showed that speakers of Cultivated English in Australia were evaluated considerably more favourably than their counterparts of Broad English (a variety of Cockney British) on most characteristics related to competence (e.g. intelligence, determination etc.). Interestingly, the listeners (participants) in the study were employers. Generally, they judged Cultivated English speakers as more suitable for highly competitive job markets, consequently discrediting the speakers of less prestigious varieties of English (Eisenchlas & Tsurutani, 2008).

Moreover, several studies showed that native speakers of English generally judged non-native speakers to be less suitable for high-status jobs and more suitable for low-status jobs than native speakers (Kalin, Rayko 1972). In the United States, Dávila, Bohara and Saenz (1993) found that non-native accents correlated negatively with income among
Mexican Americans. Additionally, unintelligence\(^2\) is also considered as one of the attributes that is often assigned to people who speak with a heavy accent (Ryan et al., 1984, cited in Cargile, Takai, & Rodriguez, 2006).

Concluding, these kinds of attitudes have negative effects on life-altering perceptions of non-native speakers of the English language, especially when concerning immigrants who immigrated to another country for economical reasons (Eisencllas & Tsuratani, 2008).

2.6 **The Netherlands – the setting for the study**

First of all, the Netherlands is a multicultural country and therefore there is a high multilingual diversity where the English language, besides Dutch, has a special position (Berns, et.al. 2007). There are several reasons for this. For example, the Netherlands have a strong export orientation, a large number of multinational corporations situated mainly in Amsterdam, and because of its seaports, airports, roads, rail and waterway links, is considered a 'transit region' for international trade. Moreover, many Dutch cities, especially Amsterdam, are considered international tourist and cultural centres and serve as a meeting point (Berns et al., 2007). Consequently, the inhabitants of the Netherlands are constantly exposed to a variety of foreign languages with English having a dominant position.

Dutch education also greatly contributes to the spread of the English language. Children begin their formal English education at primary school and continue it in the secondary education. Accordingly, the higher Dutch education also offers study in the English language, with almost 50 percent of programs are taught exclusively in English (Berns et al., 2007).

What is even more essential is that Dutch people have an enormous exposure to the English language through media such as television, radio, and the internet. In the Netherlands films are subtitled, and English language programmes are very common on Dutch television.

---

\(^2\) Low-intelligence
Informal reports show that 40-60 percent of the programs on Dutch-speaking channels are in a foreign language, mainly English (Berns et al., 2007). The largest and most influential news broadcasters, such as CNN or BBC or the international news agency Reuters are often main sources of any reference in European TV-news or newspapers. Moreover, several English and American channels are offered through network cable. Gerritsen et al. (2007) showed that around 10 percent of the advertisements are entirely in English and 54 percent partially in English. Thus, the Netherlands is a country with a high level of exposure to the English language. The fact that people are familiar with Standard American and British accents is very important for the purpose of this study.

The same can be noted in multinational corporations, financial and business centres. The use of the English language is on an everyday-basis. Many native words have been replaced by their corresponding English words, such as memory stick, management, badge, or conference room. In general, many corporations and companies have international ties, and, therefore, knowing the English language is a must in order to get a good job in Europe.

Lastly, the accession to the EU of several Central and Eastern European countries in 2004 caused a massive wave of immigration to Western Europe, including the Netherlands. Since the beginning of the economic crisis in 2009, negative attitudes towards the immigrants have been growing. The Dutch far-right Freedom Party (PVV) claims that the gradual arrival of Eastern Europeans causes economic crises and calls for protection of Western labour markets. These attitudes may have an enormous influence on the perceptions of Eastern Europeans.

2.7 The present study

Taking all of the above into consideration the purpose of my study is to investigate whether the Western European accents are perceived differently than the Eastern European
ones and if these attitudes affect chances of job opportunities. Therefore, the following hypotheses have been put forward:

(1) Non-Native Speakers of the English language in the Netherlands perceive the Western European accents more favourably the Eastern European ones.

(2) Non-Native Speakers of the English language in the Netherlands will assign Eastern Europeans lower status jobs than the Western Europeans.

The study tries to answer the following research questions:

(1) Are the Eastern European accents perceived differently than the Western European ones in the Netherlands?

(2) Do Dutch speakers perceive a Western European accent to be more favourable than an Eastern European one?

(3) Does the accent determine whether or not one is applicable for a certain profession in the Netherlands?
3 Method

In order to answer the above stated dilemma the following experiment was conducted. Using the matched-guise technique as well as set of direct (closed) questions (Likert Scale) the perceptions of different accents was measured.

3.1 Materials

3.1.1 Stimulus Providers

The stimulus providers selected for this study were 5 different speakers of the 6 different accents of interest. The Eastern European accents were represented by the Polish and the Russian guises, whereas the Western European were represented by the Norwegian, Dutch, Greek and French guises. All stimulus providers are females.

All of the stimulus providers are trained linguists and have the same proficiency level of the English language. Most importantly, all of the stimulus providers possess relatively equal linguistics knowledge, which enables them to recreate the peculiarities of different accents.

All of the linguists chosen as stimulus providers for this study use their Standard American or Standard British accent if speaking the English language. The choice of whether a certain stimulus provider was using an American or British accent was based upon the personal educational experience of the speaker. The not-accented speech was artificially recreated for the purpose of the experiment. The nativeness of the stimulus providers was determined on an arbitrary basis by the researcher.

3.1.2 Languages involved in the study

In order to give an insight on each of the accents used for the purpose of this study, the general linguistic traits of each of them will be presented. First, the British and American
accents and their differences will be discussed. Subsequently, the Eastern European accents will be presented. Lastly, the Western European accents will be discussed.

**Typical traits of British English**

First of all, British English is considered as a non-rhotic accent, which means that the sound /r/ is excluded from the syllable coda before a consonant or prosodic break (Roach, 2004). For example, a speaker of the non-rhotic British accent pronounces the word *fear* as /fiə(r)/, whereas a speaker of the American rhotic accent would pronounce it as /fɪər/.

With respect to consonants in British English, according to Roach (2004) we can distinguish the following peculiarities. First of all, plosives, fricatives (with the exception of /h/) and affricates can be distinguished between voiced and voiceless. For example: /p/ is considered voiced and /b/ is considered voiceless. The nasals consonants and liquids (/m/, /n/, /ŋ/, /r/, /l/) can be syllabic in unstressed syllables. Also, voiceless plosives (/p/, /t/, /k/, /tʃ/) are aspirated at the beginning, except when a completely unstressed vowel follows. Also, aspiration does not occur when /s/ proceeds in the same syllable. Sonorants /l/, /r/, /w/, or /j/ are aspirated by partial devoicing of the sonorant. The /r/ in British is a fricative if devoiced and postvocalic. Moreover, syllable final /p/, /t/, /tʃ/, and /k/ may be either preceded by a glottal stop or fully replaced by a glottal stop as in the case of /t/, especially before a syllabic nasal (bitten[ˈbrɪtn]). Voiced plosives (/b/, /d/, /g/, /dʒ/) are partly or fully devoiced when they are utterance boundaries or adjacent to voiceless consonants. The voiced dental fricative (/θ/) is more often a weak dental plosive. Lastly /h/ becomes voiced ([fi]) between voiced sounds (Lodge, 2009).
Table 1 Consonants in British English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Labio-dental</th>
<th>Dental</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Post-alveolar</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plosive</td>
<td>p b</td>
<td>t d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>k g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricate</td>
<td></td>
<td>tf</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td>f v θ ð s z</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
<td></td>
<td>r j w</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral</td>
<td></td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With relation to the vowel system in British English, Roach (2004) and Lodge (2009) point out the following peculiarities. First of all, monophthongs can be divided in two categories: short, where a single vowel is articulated without change in quality throughout the course of a syllable, and long, when two written vowels represent a single sound.

Figure 2 Monophthongs of Received Pronunciation

Figure 3 Diphthongs of Received Pronunciation
With relation to the prosodic features of British English, the most noteworthy are the following. The lexical stress is both free and fixed and there has been no agreement on one general rule for stress placement (Roach, 2004). The intonational features are difficult to identify and there is an ongoing dispute on the nature and the number of pitch-patterns or pitch-accents. However, there is a general agreement on intonational units of one or more syllables, each of which contains one major accent. Also, different pitch-accents or tones correspond to various attitudinal or syntactic functions (Roach, 2004). It is essential to mention that the Received Pronunciation rhythm is stressed-timed and that Received Pronunciation marks differences between weak, unstressed and strong syllables (stressed or unstressed) (Roach, 2004).

In the following description of the American English accent only differences from British English will be adduced.

Standard American is a rhotic language: the phoneme /r/ is pronounced when it is before a consonant and at the end of an utterance. The most distinctive features of the consonant system of Standard American are as follows. First of all, r-coloured vowels (/ɜ:/ or /ɹ/, as in cupboard or bird). There have been several mergers in words, such as the rhythm merger of /ɑ/ and /ɒ/ as in words ‘father’ and ‘bother’ and the merger of /ɑ/ and /ɔ/ as in words cot and caught (homophones) (Mencken, 1948). There is a "short A" /æ/, in most words where A is followed by either /n/, or another consonant, or /l/, /ð/, /z/, /s/, /f/, or /θ/ (e.g. plant, pass, laugh, path), and a broad a as in words such as: calm; vase (Mencken, 1948). What also differs in Standard American in comparison to British English is the contrast between long and short vowels, which is less evident. Lastly, Yod-dropping occurs after all alveolar consonants (including /t/, /d/, /θ/, /s/, /z/, /n/, /l/), i.e. the historic /jʊː/ (from spellings u, ue, eu, ew), is pronounced /uː/ in a stressed syllable (Wells, 2000).
Figure 4 Monophthongs of Midwest American English

Figure 5 Diphthongs of Midwest American English
**The typical traits of the Standard Polish language:**

The Polish language is a Western Slavic rhotic-language. It cannot be classified as either a syllable-timed (unstressed syllables are never reduced and keep their full quality) or a stress-timed language because, although vowel reduction is rare, it does happen in spontaneous speech (Nespor, Shukla, Mehler, 2010; Rubach, Booij, 1983). The stress in the Polish language is usually fixed on the penultimate syllable. Also, the intonation is predominantly simple and the pitch range is narrow (Plebankiewicz, 2007).

As it can be seen in Figure 5 below, the vowel system is relatively simple and consists of six oral and two nasal vowels. All of the oral vowels are monophthongs (Gussmann, 2007).

![Figure 6 Vowel diagram for Polish (excluding the two nasal vowels)]
The Polish consonant system is complex and includes a series of affricates and palatal consonants that resulted from four Proto-Slavic palatalization and two further palatalizations (Gussmann, 2007).

**Table 2 Consonants system in Polish**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labial</th>
<th>Dental/</th>
<th>Retroflex</th>
<th>(Alveolo)-palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
<td>p b</td>
<td>t d</td>
<td>t d</td>
<td>t d</td>
<td>k g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricate</td>
<td>t s d z</td>
<td>t s d z</td>
<td>t s d z</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>k g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td>t v</td>
<td>s z</td>
<td>s z</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most typical features of Polish accented English are: (i) the ‘th’, is regularly mispronounced, resulting in sounds such as ‘v’, ‘f’, ‘s’ or ‘d’; (ii) /w/ pronounced as /v/; (iii) the typical Polish rolling ‘r’ instead of the English /rl/; (iv) the ending - *ing* pronounced with the emphasis on g instead of pronouncing it as η.
The typical traits of the Standard Russian language (Moscow Dialect):

The Russian language is an Eastern Slavic rhotic-language. There is an ongoing discussion whether the Russian vowel system consists of five or six vowels (some make a distinction between /i/ and /i/). The most interesting features of the Russian vowel system is that, if the vowel is unstressed, Russian speakers have a strong tendency to reduce it. The most evident reduction is in vowels /a/ and /o/; this phenomenon is called akanye. Russian consists of 34 consonants, and they can be divided into hard/plain and soft/palatalized.

Table 3 Vowel system in Russian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>(i)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 Consonants system in Russian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labial</th>
<th>Dental/alveolar</th>
<th>Palatal/alveolar</th>
<th>Velar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hard</td>
<td>soft</td>
<td>hard</td>
<td>soft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>mʲ</td>
<td>ḃ</td>
<td>ḃʲ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>pʲ</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>tʲ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricate</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>fʲ</td>
<td>ʃ</td>
<td>ʃʲ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>rʲ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾʲ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
<td>ʋ</td>
<td>ʋʲ</td>
<td>ɹ</td>
<td>ɹʲ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most noticeable differences between Russian and other Slavic languages, especially Polish, are in stress and intonation. The Russian language is a stress-timed language, and vowel reduction appears frequently. Word stress in Russian is free: in principle, it can fall on any syllable in a word, and any morpheme, root, prefix, suffix, or desinence (Svetozarova, 2001). In most instances Russian accented English will reflect the Polish one (e.g. rolling /r/); however, in contrast to the Polish accented English, it has a tremendous stress on emotions and this is reflected in the English pronunciation (Wierzbicka, 1992).
**Western European accents**

**The features of French**

French language is a rhotic and fixed-stress language. It includes thirteen oral vowels and has between three and four nasal vowels (see Figure 9). The French language has in its native phonetic inventory 21 consonants. The most distinguished feature is the pronunciation of “r” in French, which is a uvular fricative, guttural. Additionally, as can be seen in Figure 7, French also includes a velar nasal [N]. Although this consonant is not considered to be a native sound, it is used in English loanwords, such as camping, marketing (Rose & Wauquier-Gravelines, 2007).

![Figure 7 Oral vowels of French](image)

**Table 5 Consonants of French**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labial</th>
<th>Dental</th>
<th>Palato-alveolar</th>
<th>Palatal plain</th>
<th>Palatal lab.</th>
<th>Velar plain</th>
<th>Velar lab.</th>
<th>Uvular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nasal</strong></td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plosive</strong></td>
<td>p</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fricative</strong></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approximant</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lateral</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The French word stress is not distinctive, which means that two words cannot be distinguished only on the basis of stress placement (Anderson, 1982). Also, it is important to mention three phonotactic phenomena in Standard French that affect word-final sounds: **liaison, elision** and **enchaînement** (resyllabification) (Walker, 1984).
The French language is syllable-timed. What is also important to mention is that the French language has emphatic stress, which is used to draw attention to a specific element in a given context. For example, when a word such as *intéressant* is pronounced in isolation the last syllable is often reduced, breathy and may even disappear (Vaissière, 2001). This may be confusing for non-native speakers of French because it may sound as a question instead of a form of admiration. As Lian (1984) points out, in terms of intonation the French language distinguishes four primary patterns: (a) the continuation pattern; (b) finality pattern; (c) yes/no intonation; and (d) the information question intonation. It is essential to point out that French intonation patterns vary enormously from the English ones (Tranel, 1987).

**The typical features of Dutch:**

The Dutch language is a Germanic rhotic language. The language has a quite extensive vowel system, consisting of 10 plain vowels and four diphthongs. The Dutch consonant system is quite similar to the English one, however, there are some differences. First of all, Dutch misses phonemes such as /θ/; /ð/ and /g/. The latter is pronounced in Dutch as /x/ (only occurs as an allophone of k before d). Another interesting phenomenon is with pronunciation of *sch*. In Dutch it occurs quite frequently, and it is pronounced as a combination of *s* + *ch*, where *ch* is a voiceless velar fricative /x/. The Dutch /tʃ/ also differs from the English one, as it is either alveolar [r] – trilled ‘r’, or voiced velar or uvular trill [R] (Gusenhoven, 2009). Also, unlike in English, /p/ and /tʃ/ are never aspirated. Moreover, in Standard Dutch the devoicing of final consonant and a corresponding shortening in the length of preceding vowels occur. For example, *dock* for *dog*, or *leaf* for *leave*. Lastly, Dutch possesses a strong accent and is a stress-timed language. The Dutch Standard accent has a much narrower intonation range, not reaching the same low pitch areas as English.
The typical features of East Norwegian

The East Norwegian language is a rhotic language and one of the pitch accent languages, as many other Scandinavian languages. It needs to be mentioned here that the term pitch accent languages differs from the English one as the Norwegian pitch accent does not cause lexical contrast (Hilton, 2010). Therefore, in order to understand the nature of the Norwegian pitch accent, the term needs further explanation.

As Hilton (2010) states, the East Norwegian accent is often referred to as low tone dialects. She explains that this is due to the fact that primary stressed syllables in Norwegian words have a lower pitch on the secondary or unstressed syllables. The tonal accents are commonly referred to as tonal accent 1 and 2 and both have two distinct melodies (Hilton, 2010). In short, “tonal accents 1 and 2 are phonemic melodies that realise two distinctive and
lexically determined patterns which can be the only distinguishing feature between minimal pairs. The tonal accents are, however, phonetically realised on stressed syllables only; they are dependent on the stress realisation system” (Hilton, 2010:162). In relation to the vowel system, Norwegian has 19 vowels and 3 diphthongs. For details see Figure 9 and 10 below.

Figure 9 Vowel system of Norwegian

Figure 10 Diphthongs of Norwegian
The most typical traits of the Norwegian consonant system are as follows. First, there are three coronal fricatives, all voiceless, /s/, /ʂ/, /ç/, /s/ is alveolar and /ç/ is palatal (Moen & Simonsen, 2011). The /t/, /d/, /n/ sounds are apico-dental. Eastern Norwegian does not use voiceless palatal fricatives. Instead it has the voiceless postalveloar fricative /ʃ/ (Wetterlin, 2007). The velarized alveolar lateral approximant [l] (also known as “dark L”) appears after [a], [o] and [ɔ], with an exception when followed by a stressed vowel. Typically, voiceless stops are aspirated.

Table 7 Consonants in Standard Eastern Norwegian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>front unrounded</th>
<th>front rounded</th>
<th>near-front unrounded</th>
<th>near-front rounded</th>
<th>central unrounded</th>
<th>central rounded</th>
<th>near-back unrounded</th>
<th>near-back rounded</th>
<th>back rounded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>close</td>
<td>iː</td>
<td>yː</td>
<td>ʉː</td>
<td>vː</td>
<td>êː</td>
<td>eː</td>
<td>ûː</td>
<td>uː</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>near-close</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>ʉ</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>ê</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>û</td>
<td>u</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>close-mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>ʉ</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>û</td>
<td>u</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>ʉ</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>û</td>
<td>u</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open-mid</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>near-open</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open</td>
<td>æː</td>
<td>æː</td>
<td>æː</td>
<td>æː</td>
<td>æː</td>
<td>æː</td>
<td>æː</td>
<td>æː</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The typical feature of the Norwegian-accented English are (i) pronunciations of English fricative /v/ as a frictionless continuant; (ii) Norwegian intonation, in contrast to the English one, has typical "ups and downs", with the unstressed syllable(s) pronounced on a higher pitch-level than the preceding stressed one. In contrast, in American English the unstressed syllables typically have a lower pitch-level. Moreover, there is also a tendency for the voice to go up before a pause not only for questions and incomplete utterances, but also in statements (Moen, 1988). The rise before a pause can confuse a non-native speaker and a phrase may be taken as a question instead of a statement.
**Typical traits of Modern Greek**

The Standard Modern Greek is a rhotic-language. Modern Greek has a simple system of five vowels. Although phonemic length distinction is not specified, it can be noted that vowels in stressed syllables are pronounced a bit longer than in unstressed ones.

![Vowel system in Modern Greek](image)

**Figure 11 Vowel system in Modern Greek**

Joseph & Tserdanelis (2003) point out that there are several typologically noteworthy aspects to the consonants. First of all, there is an imbalance in the number of fricatives as opposed to stops. Secondly, the voiced stops have a marked status in the system, even if they are taken to be distinctive. Finally, the affricates are functionally skewed with respect to other sounds in terms of their lexical distribution (Joseph & Tserdanelis, 2003). Also, it is important to mention the Greek rhotic [r] which is prototypically an alveolar tap [ɾ], often retracted. However, it may be also a trill [r].
With regard to prosody, it is hard to determine whether Greek falls into the category of stress timed or syllable timed-languages; the opinions among the researchers vary (Avanti, 2001; Joseph & Tserdanelis, 2003; Baltazari, 2007). However, the main stress falls on one of the last three syllables.

The most typical patterns of Greek accented English are the following: (i) the pronunciation of [ð] is always transliterated as “dh”; “p” and “t” respectively, always pronounced softly, without aspiration; (iv) the tone is rising at the end of the phrase.

### 3.1.3 Speech samples and preparation of the Stimulus Recordings

All speakers were recorded separately and were asked to record a passage of the Declaration of Human Rights two times, first with a Standard British or Standard American accent, and then with a corresponding accent of their first language.

### 3.1.4 Preparation of the recordings

5 speakers used the same recording programme Audacity. Four speakers used a normal head-set, i.e. speaker phones and microphone. Only one speaker used an MP3 voice recorder.
In order to guarantee a relaxed, clear and uninterrupted delivery of the reading, the stimulus providers were given the opportunity to practice reading the passage and reported doing so 50 times prior to the actual recording.

The recordings of the guises were analysed and adjusted for the purpose of the study. The analysis and adjustment was conducted in order to check whether the recordings were of equal intensity, as well as of the same length. Recordings were cleared of noise; the length was adjusted and shortened to approximately 30 seconds each (mean of the accented recordings = 34.5 seconds; and for the not-accented speech = 31.33 seconds). They were recorded/burned to compact discs (CD).

3.1.5 The passage

The passage chosen for the stimulus providers was an extract from the Declaration of Human Rights. The reason for choosing this particular piece was to increase possible chances of the subjects focusing on the accent rather than on the content. The abstract was short in order to control for the fatigue factor. Fatigue may lead to a drop in performance and may have an effect on the results of the study. Besides the effect on mean scores, there is also possibility of it having an effect on the validity of the study (Suus and Shmiedek, 2000).

The passage can be found in the APPENDIX 1.

Table 9 Example of the Passage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stimulus Passage for the readers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world, whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1.6 **Attitudinal Survey**

The survey was constructed in accordance with the Likert Scale, and included 5 bipolar adjectives (e.g. educated vs. uneducated, odd vs. normal), each measured on a scale of 1 (the lowest) to 5 (the highest).

In the second part the participants were asked to choose the profession of the speaker, thus indicating the social status of the speaker.

**Table 10 Example of the survey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fragment 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe the speaker?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uneducated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I think this person is likely to work as a:

- shop assistant
- cleaning service
- social worker
- secretary
- lawyer
- economist
- none of the above

The survey can be found in APPENDIX 2.

3.1.7 **Questionnaire**

The questionnaire included questions regarding the age of the participant, country of origin, native language, languages that the participant can speak and finally a question in which the participants were asked to state where within the European Union they would move if they ever had to. The question was asked in order to see whether there is a correlation between the evaluation of a specific accent and the desired destination.

The Questionnaire can be found in APPENDIX 3
3.2 Subjects

A total number of 94 (M27, F67) participants took part in the research. 74 participants were the students of the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. All of the students were in the Minor course of Applied Linguistics. The remaining 20 participants were randomly chosen by the researcher. 92 participants were Dutch natives and 2 participants were of a different origin (Ukrainian and Russian). The mean age of the subjects was 22.5 years old (SD = 6.39), the youngest participant was 18, the oldest – 65. The subjects were randomly divided into three groups.

3.3 Procedures

There were two CDs: each CD contained the recordings in different order so as to control for the fatigue factor. The first group of participants (N 42) listened to Version 1, whereas the second (N 34) and third (N 18) groups listened to Version 2.

The experiment with the first two groups took place at the University of Groningen main building in one of the classrooms on two different occasions. The participants were asked to listen to the 11 recordings (see Table 11) and asked to judge on a five point scale what kind of impression speaker gives them. They were also asked to fill out the questionnaire. The experiment with the third group took place at the camping Stadspark, Groningen, the Netherlands, in the restaurant of the camping. In all of the instances the recordings were played from the computer device within the room. All of the rooms had speaker phones above the ceiling, giving a fairly equal setting for all cases. The researcher collected all of the surveys and questionnaires after recordings were played.
Table 11 list of the accented and their corresponding not-accented recordings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Not-accented English</th>
<th>Accented English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>Standard American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>British English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>Standard American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>French</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Norwegian</td>
<td>British English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>British English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the experiment, the researcher asked the students whether they guessed the accents or not. Several people reported that they had a difficulty with some of the accents (Polish and Greek in particular). The Greek one was categorised as either South American or Jamaican. For Polish, three people thought it was Indian English.

3.4 Design and Analysis

3.4.1 Variables involved in the first part of the study

The following variables were coded and entered into the SPSS programme; and there were compared within the pairs of accented and not-accented speech for each pair of the corresponding accents:

1) Educated – Uneducated
2) Friendly – Unfriendly
3) Normal – Odd
4) Intelligent – Unintelligent
5) Low class – High class
6) Rich – Poor
The data was analysed using the independent samples t-test. The effect size of each pair was extracted and compared within the speech pairs in Excel. This was done by extracting the means of two corresponding speeches. For example, the Dutch accented speech mean scores for the variable Intelligent-Unintelligent were extracted from the mean of its corresponding not accented (Standard American) speech on the same variable.

Additionally, in order to determine whether all average scores for each accented – not accented speech pairs were significant, the paired-samples t-test was conducted.

### 3.4.2 Variables involved in the second part of the study

The following variables were coded and entered into the SPSS programme and compared within the pairs of accented and not-accented speech for each pair of the corresponding accents:

1) Low status professions that included: shop assistant; cleaning service;
2) Medium status professions that included: social worker; secretary;
3) High status professions that included: lawyer; economist;
4) None-of-the-above.

The data was analysed using the Chi-square statistical test.

Lastly, the independent samples t-test was conducted in order to determine whether the order of the recordings had an influence on the ratings.

### 3.5 The drop-out rate

42 participants were deleted from the Russian – American data, due to the recognition of the voice of the stimulus provider.

34 participants were deleted from the Norwegian – British data, due to the recognition of the voice of the stimulus provider.
4 Results

4.1 Comparison between average scores for each accented and not-accented pairs

First of all, a paired-samples t-test was conducted in order to ascertain whether or not there were significant differences between the average scores for each accented and not-accented speech spoken by the same person. It was found that there was a significant effect of accent on rating scores for every language, with all not-accented spoken texts being rated significantly higher than their accented counterparts. See Table 12 for significant differences and means.
Accordingly, the independent samples t-test was conducted in order to determine whether or not the evaluation of the accented and their corresponding not accented speeches in relation to all variables was significant.

Table 12 Differences between means of Bilingual Speakers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>Paired Samples</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>$Df$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>2.7212</td>
<td>-8.725</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Russian-American</td>
<td>3.6763</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 2</td>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>2.4539</td>
<td>-10.750</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dutch-American</td>
<td>3.3103</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 3</td>
<td>Norwegian</td>
<td>3.2350</td>
<td>-9.776</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Norwegian-British</td>
<td>4.2049</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 4</td>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>2.7092</td>
<td>-13.349</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Greek-British</td>
<td>3.8759</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 5</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>2.7004</td>
<td>-5.793</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>French-American</td>
<td>3.3103</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 6</td>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>2.6738</td>
<td>-12.008</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Polish-British</td>
<td>3.8546</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.1 Evaluation of the Russian-American Bilingual

Table 13 the scores differences on each variable for Russian-American Bilingual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
<th>t (df)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Educated</td>
<td>Uneducated</td>
<td>-7.76</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Normal</td>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>-6.48</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Intelligent</td>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
<td>-5.93</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Low Class</td>
<td>High Class</td>
<td>-7.12</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Rich</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>-8.17</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12 the illustration of the difference between accented and not-accented speech in a Russian-American guise, for each variable.

What can be drawn from Table 13 and Figure 12 is that, when the speaker spoke with the Russian accent, she was evaluated significantly less positive than when speaking with the American accent. Interestingly, the Russian speech was not considered significantly unfriendly and the difference is very small, indicating that on this level both accents were seen as equally positive. The largest differences can be noticed in Education, where the American speech scored almost 4 on the scale of 1 to 5 and the Russian accent scored 2.5.
Also, Russian was considered rather odd, unintelligent. The same applies to whether the speaker was considered low or high class and rich or poor.
4.1.2 Evaluation of the Polish-British Bilingual

Table 14 the scores differences on each variable for Polish-British Bilingual

| 1) Educated | Uneducated     | t (186) = -11.28, p<0.001 |
| 2) Friendly  | Unfriendly     | t (186) = -4.19, p<0.001  |
| 3) Normal    | Odd            | t (186) = -11.05, p<0.001 |
| 4) Intelligent | Unintelligent | t (186) = -9.76, p<0.001 |
| 5) Low Class | High Class     | t (186) = -9.56, p<0.001  |
| 6) Rich      | Poor           | t (186) = -10.04, p<0.001 |

Figure 13 the illustration of the difference between accented and not-accented speech in a Polish-British guise, for each variable.

What can be drawn from Table 14 and Figure 13 above is that the Polish accented speech was perceived as rather uneducated; the difference is larger than the one for the Russian accented speech. Also, Polish was considered significantly unfriendly, whereas in other pairs, besides Greek, there was no significant difference between guises on this
particular variable. In other words, the Polish guise was not only evaluated as significantly less educated, odd, unintelligent, lower class and poorer, but also as significantly less friendly.
4.1.3 Evaluation of the Dutch-American Bilingual

Table 15 the scores differences on each variable for Dutch-American Bilingual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Educated</th>
<th>Uneducated</th>
<th>t (186) = -9.25, p&lt;0.001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2)</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>t (186) = -6.96, p&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3)</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
<td>t (186) = -7.96, p&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4)</td>
<td>Low Class</td>
<td>High Class</td>
<td>t (186) = -6.87, p&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5)</td>
<td>Rich</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>t (186) = -6.59, p&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 14 the illustration of the difference between accented and not-accented speech in a Dutch-American guise, for each variable.

What can be drawn from Table 15 and Figure 14 is that, although the accented Dutch speech was evaluated less positively on each of the variables, the differences are less evident than for the Polish or Russian accent. Moreover, although the speaker of Dutch and American guises was evaluated lower than the Russian-American and especially the Polish-British ones, this does not change the fact that the differences are smaller. This is an interesting outcome and will be broadly discussed in the Discussion chapter below.
4.1.4 Evaluation of the French-American Bilingual

Table 16 the scores differences on each variable for French-American Bilingual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable 1</th>
<th>Variable 2</th>
<th>t (186)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educated</td>
<td>Uneducated</td>
<td>-4.76</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>-7.04</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligent</td>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
<td>-4.03</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Class</td>
<td>High Class</td>
<td>-4.16</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>-4.09</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 15 the illustration of the difference between accented and not-accented speech in a French-American guise, for each variable.

In Table 16 and Figure 15 we can see that the differences, just as in the case of Dutch-American bilingual, are less evident than for the Russian and Polish bilingual. The differences are even smaller than for the Dutch-American speaker. Again, although the speaker was generally evaluated less positive than the Polish and Russian pairs the scores indicated that it was rather the speaker who did not have positive reactions, than the accents themselves.
4.1.5 Evaluation of the Greek-British Bilingual

Table 17 The scores differences on each variable for Greek-British Bilingual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Group1</th>
<th>Group2</th>
<th>t Value</th>
<th>p Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Educated</td>
<td>Educated</td>
<td>Uneducated</td>
<td>-11.19</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Friendly</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
<td>-5.53</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Normal</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>-10.58</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Intelligent</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
<td>-10.34</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Low Class</td>
<td>Low Class</td>
<td>High Class</td>
<td>-9.90</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Rich</td>
<td>Rich</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>-10.20</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 16 The illustration of the difference between accented and not-accented speech in a Greek-British Bilingual, for each variable.

What can be drawn from Table 17 and Figure 16 is that the differences are visibly larger than for the Trilingual speeches (French-Dutch/American speaker). The Greek accent is perceived as rather unintelligent, unfriendly, and odd, of lower class; the speaker was evaluated as rather poor. In terms of friendliness, the Greek accent, just as the Polish one, is
perceived significantly less positively than the corresponding not-accented speech. These findings are very interesting and will be discussed broadly in the following chapter.
4.1.6 Evaluation of the Norwegian-British Bilingual

Table 18 the scores differences on each variable for Norwegian-British Bilingual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable 1</th>
<th>Variable 2</th>
<th>t (120)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educated</td>
<td>Uneducated</td>
<td>-10.41, -10.41</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>-7.02, -7.02</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligent</td>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
<td>-6.92, -6.92</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Class</td>
<td>High Class</td>
<td>-7.69, -7.69</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>-6.80, -6.80</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 17 the illustration of the difference between accented and not-accented speech in a Norwegian-British Bilingual, for each variable.

What can be seen in Table 18 and Figure 17 is that the differences are relatively small between the two guises. The Norwegian one was considered almost as friendly as its corresponding British accent. The Norwegian accent scored slightly below 3 only in terms of Education.
4.2 **Effect sizes compared across languages**

Since it is not possible to compare two different speakers of different accents due to the fact that the speakers would be compared on the basis of their voice qualities rather than the accent, the gain scores for each language were calculated by subtracting the accented average rating from the not-accented average rating for each language. The higher the effect size, the less positive the outcome is.

### 4.2.1 Educated-Uneducated

![Educated - Uneducated](image)

**Figure 18** the illustration of the size effect between the not-accented guises in relation to the education variable.

The findings on the effect size between corresponding variables on whether or not a specific accent is perceived as more sophisticated in terms of education showed that the Polish and the Russian guises scored evidently higher than the Dutch and French guises. Interestingly, both effect sizes for the Eastern European guises are very similar. However, Norwegian and Greek were also perceived as rather uneducated, scoring even higher than Russian. The effect size of French is the lowest; the Dutch accent has also a relatively low effect size.
4.2.2 Friendly-Unfriendly

As it can be seen in Figure 19, the French accent was considered as the friendliest guise of all, having the lowest effect size in comparison with other guises. Russian was evaluated as one of the friendliest sounded guises. Dutch and Norwegian scored equally low. The Polish accent scored higher than the rest of the accents, besides the Greek accent, which scored the highest.
4.2.3 Normal-Odd

![Normal - Odd](image)

**Figure 20** the illustration of the size effect between the not-accented guises in relation to the normal variable

In the effect size on whether a certain accent sounds normal or odd, Polish scored the highest from all of the guises, as it can be seen in Figure 20. The second highest scoring accent was Greek. The rest of the guises scored similarly, with Norwegian having a slightly higher score.
4.2.4 Intelligent-Unintelligent

As it can be seen in Figure 21, the effect size for the Greek and Polish accents is the highest. The French accent, on the other hand, was evaluated as the most intelligent from all of the guises. The Norwegian, Dutch and Russian scores are exactly the same.

Figure 21 the illustration of the size effect between the not-accented guises in relation to the intelligent variable
4.2.5 Low-High Class

Figure 22 the illustration of the size effect between the not-accented guises in relation to the social class variable

As it can be seen in Figure 22, the Polish accent had the most negative effect size, scoring higher than the rest of the accents. Greek, Russian and Norwegian had equally high negative scores. The French accent had the lowest negative effect size. As to the Dutch accent the negative effect size on this particular variable was also relatively small.
4.2.6 Rich-Poor

Figure 23 the illustration of the size effect between the not-accented guises in relation to the Richness variable

As it can be seen in Figure 23, the Polish accent, again, had the most negative effect. Russian and Greek scored equally high. The Norwegian and Dutch scores were equally low. Again, the negative effect of French accent was the lowest. This is interesting as the French accent scores are consistently the lowest in respect to all variables used in this study.

Overall, the findings showed that the highest negative effect size for each of the accented speeches was concerning education, whereas the lowest were for friendliness.
4.3 *Findings on one-way ANOVA*

In order to calculate the effect size of each language compared to all other languages, a one-way ANOVA was then conducted, using the gain scores of each language as the dependent variable and the language as the independent variable. It was found that there was a significant effect of language on gain scores, $F(5, 483) = 5.493, p < .01$. A post-hoc analysis was then conducted using the Games-Howell procedure, as Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was significant. It was found that only the differences between the French gain score ($M=.610, SE=.105$), the Greek ($M=1.167, SE=.087$) and the Polish ($M=1.181, SE=.098$) gain scores were significant. Therefore, the difference between the accented and not-accented French scores was significantly lower than the differences between the accented and not-accented Greek and Polish scores.
4.4 The Profession Ratings

The Chi-Square test revealed a significant difference between accented and not-accented guises between three groups of the given professions:

4.4.1 Russian – American

$\chi^2 (3) = 19.70$, $p < 0.001$

Figure 24 social status ratings for Russian - American Bilingual

As it can be seen in Figure 24, 40% of the subjects assign the Russian speaker to low status jobs and 13% thought the speaker is suitable for high status jobs (this score is the highest from all of the foreign accented speeches). Regarding the American accent, as many as 40% of the subjects assigned the speaker to high status jobs, and 8% thought they would be suitable for low status jobs.
4.4.2 Polish – British English

\[ \chi^2(3) = 58.87, \ p < 0.001 \]

![Social Status](image)

**Figure 25 social status ratings for Polish-British Bilingual**

The Polish was specifically perceived as fitted for low status jobs; 41% respondents opted for low status jobs, whereas the same stimulus provider speaking with the Standard British accent received as many as 47% responses for high status jobs. This, after the Greek accent, is the second largest dispersion between the same speakers.
4.4.3 Dutch – American

\[ \chi^2(3) = 32.53, p < 0.001 \]

**Social Status**

![Social Status Bar Chart](image)

**Figure 26 social status ratings for Dutch - American Bilingual**

The Dutch scoring is very interesting, as it shows that 49% of the subjects assigned the foreign accented speech to low status jobs and as little as 4% to high status jobs. In relation to the American accent as many as 19% of the subjects assigned the speaker to low status jobs (higher than Norwegian, Polish, Russian and Greek), and 32% thought she would be suitable for high status jobs (this is one of the lowest scores, besides French, which scored exactly the same, from all of the not-accented speakers).
4.4.4 French – American

\(\chi^2(3) = 19.86, p < 0.001\)

![Social Status](image)

**Figure 27 social status ratings for French-American Bilingual**

As it can be seen in Figure 27, 38% of the subjects assigned the foreign accented speech to low status jobs and 9% to high status jobs. In relation to the American accent, as many as 19% of the subjects assigned the speaker to low status jobs and 32% thought she would be suitable for high status jobs. Interestingly, the results are similar to the Dutch Bilingual.
4.4.5 Norwegian – British English

\[ \chi^2(3) = 35.67, p < 0.001 \]

Figure 28 social status ratings for Norwegian-British Bilingual

As it can be seen in Figure 28, the Norwegian speaker was perceived more suitable for low status jobs (36%). However, as many as 51% of the subjects assigned Norwegian to medium status jobs. This is interesting, as no other foreign accents scored as high on this variable. In relation to the not-accented speech, as many as 38% of the subjects assigned the speaker to high status jobs, whereas only 7% to low status jobs.
4.4.6 Greek-British

$\chi^2(3) = 89.60, p < 0.001$

**Social Status**

![](image)

*Figure 29 social status ratings for Greek-British Bilingual*

The Greek accent was notably perceived as the most suitable for low status jobs. As many as 60% of the respondents opted for either the cleaning service or shop assistant professions, 26% opted for medium status jobs, and only 3% thought that the speaker could work as an economist or a lawyer. Interestingly, the same speaker when speaking with the Standard British accent, received the highest score (49%) on high status jobs.
5 Discussion

Overall the results showed that accent is a significant factor in making judgements about a speaker’s ethnicity, social class and personality. The research is in line with the previous studies that investigated the role of not-accented speech on peoples’ perceptions, showing that the Standard American and British accents were evaluated significantly better than all of the foreign accents used in this particular investigation.

In general, what can be clearly noted is that the subjects evaluated most of the accented speakers as less educated, rather odd, of lower intelligence and social class, as well as poorer. However, it must also be noted that, in contrast with previous research, the subjects were not native speakers of the English language. Whereas in the native speaking environment we may justify the negative perceptions of accented speech for reasons such as political – the manipulations of the populist politicians by blaming the immigrant work-force for economic crises; social – cultural differences; or religious – by requiring the natives to tolerate and accept a different religion, in the non-native environment the negative attitudes towards accented speech are more complicated to explain and have a different nature.

What is more, the findings of this study are in line with the social connotation hypothesis, or at least we can see the manifestation of the mentioned hypothesis by, for example, looking at the results on the American and British guises in comparison with the accented speeches. The positive perceptions can be explained by the amount of exposure to certain accents in the Netherlands. As it has been mentioned before, the Dutch cable network broadcasts mainly American shows and movies, as well as several American and British broadcasters, such as BBC or National Geographic. Moreover, in the Netherlands, all foreign films, movies, sit-coms etc. are subtitled, so the viewer is in constant exposure to the language. Therefore, a common Dutch citizen is very familiar with the Standard American and British accents and in this way also considers both accents as more mainstream than any
other European. It may be concluded that the Standard American and Standard British accents are more mainstream than the Russian or Greek ones, for example.

If we generalise that a common Dutch citizen watches 2 hours and 10 minutes of television per day (gemiddeldgezien.nl) in which the English language is used on a regular basis (Berns et al., 2007), we can conclude that the Standard American and British accents are perceived more natural, less “foreign” and, therefore, normal. This is reflected in the findings of the current study, and although I cannot generalise that each participant in the study had a positive encounter with an American or British citizen in person, I may hypothesise that, because of such an enormous exposure and of the positive outlook on both referred speeches, Dutch people perceive both significantly more positively than any other accents.

I would like to argue that American media broadcasted in the Netherlands also has influence on perception of different foreign accents. As it has already been mentioned, most of the good characters in the animation films, movies, or TV-shows speak with a Standard American accent, most of the intelligent ones speak with a British accent, whereas variations of American dialects or foreign sounding accents are used to indicate certain, specific roles, mainly negative. In this respect, Americans and the British in movies will obviously evoke more positive reactions.

Regarding the high scores of Standard American and British accents in terms of education, social status and intelligence, Westernisation and Englishisation certainly have their influence. The English language is the number one language in the academic field. Most of the scientific publications and articles are written exclusively in English, which gives an illusion of a “clever” language. As it has been already mentioned, there is a possibility to study in the English language almost everywhere in Europe; what is more, it is perceived as more prestigious and elite. In the Netherlands, almost 50% of the programs at Universities are offered in English, and even studying in Dutch means reading a lot of literature in the English
language (Berns et al., 2007). Obviously, the processes of Westernisation and Englishisation is very fast and has an enormous impact on non-native speakers of the English language.

5.1 Are Eastern Europeans accents evaluated more negatively?

Concerning the Eastern European pairs, the most notable differences within the pairs can be seen in Polish bilingual speaker. More interestingly, Polish was also considered significantly unfriendly, whereas in other pairs, besides Greek, there was no significant difference between guises on this particular variable. In other words, the Polish guise was not only evaluated as significantly less educated, odd, unintelligent, lower class and poorer but also as significantly less friendly. This could confirm the divagation on the perception of Poles after the accession to the European Union in the Netherlands, where Polish immigrants are regarded as low wage labour force, especially by populists such as Geert Wilders, a leader of the Partij Voor de Vrijheid (PVV), who publicly accused Polish immigrants of stealing jobs from the native Dutch and worsening Dutch economy. It is my belief that such politicians have a great influence on perceptions of common people, especially in more insecure times. The Netherlands is currently experiencing its deepest economic crises since the Second World War, and politicians are using different mechanisms in order to win people’s votes, cover themselves from being blamed for such turn of events, and assure people that this is a temporary situation, with causes as well as solutions. They say that one of the causes are immigrants and one of the solutions is to blame and eventually get rid of them. On this basis, it could be explained why Polish guises might have been evaluated so poorly and, in contrast to the rest of the guises, considered as less friendly.

The Russian pair, on the other hand, is more positively perceived than the Polish one. These results were surprising as it was not assumed that Russian would be perceived any different than Polish due to its similarities in English accented pronunciation. Perhaps, the more positive perception is due to the fact that, generally, Russia is seen as an important
‘player’ on the World’s arena. Also, the accent itself is probably more recognised. Since the results on the Russian pair took such an unexpected turn it was investigated afterwards why the perceptions of the Russian accent may differ from the Polish one. Interestingly, it was found that if Russians in Europe was typed into a search engine (in this case it was Google), one of the first results that appeared were questions whether Russia is a part of Europe. These search results indicated that perhaps, a common European citizen is not even aware that Russia is indeed a part of Europe. Therefore, further insight into the issue was taken and several forums were investigated. According to several posts, many people perceive Russia as an important political player, as well as a prominent business partner, indicating, however, at the same time that Russia as a nation differs from Europe. Moreover, it also appeared that Russia is perceived as a powerful country, which in fact has a very dominant position in the World. Overall, the researched opinions veered towards the perception that Russia is not a part of Europe, being a separate important player in the World’s arena. If Russia is seen as an important political and business partner, it may be assumed that people have more respect for the country and, in consequence, evaluate the accent more positively.

Also, it can be assumed that the Russian language, in contrast to Polish, was recognised by Dutch people and therefore received more positive scores. Russian accent is emphasised in media much more often than the Polish one. Even popular stand-up comedians often put on the Russian accent in order to make people laugh, whereas the Polish accent appears rarely.

If Russia is not considered a part of Europe, then the Russian language is also not considered as one of the European languages. For this reason it can be assumed that Polish and Russian should not be compared to each other. Instead, different Eastern European languages should be chosen in future studies. It would be interesting to study attitudes towards Slavic languages in general and to see how each is perceived in Western Europe.
However, if we take a closer look at the rest of the findings, it can be noted that for all of the pairs, i.e. accented and not-accented, the differences vary.

5.2 Observations on a general scale

For example, in the case of Trilingual Speaker (Dutch and French), although having generally lower means for each variable, the effect size between the corresponding Standard American guise was the lowest in comparison with the rest of the speakers. The lower means would suggest that the referred guises, i.e. Dutch and French, were evaluated generally lower than the remaining guises. However, since it is not possible to compare two different speakers, it needs to be looked at within two corresponding pairs. I assume that the lower means for both guises were due to the fact that the recordings of both the Dutch and French guises were of lower quality and the speaker was older than the rest; however, the results still indicate that the speaker herself was evaluated more positively within the pair than, for example, the Russian stimulus provider. In this respect it shows that the French and Dutch guises were in fact perceived better than all the remaining guises.

With respect to the Greek accent, the low scores and high negative effect of the accented speech may be due to the fact that currently Greece is experiencing a very serious economic crisis. Thus, it may evoke negative perceptions, especially concerning social class, and friendliness – which was also, as in case of the Polish-British pair, significant. Recently media has been reporting on the events that occur in Greece quite often and on many occasions showing a rather negative picture of the Greek people; portraying them as the ones who are responsible for their own economic crash. In a recent discussion on one of the Dutch broadcasters, politicians as well as the invited guests were discussing the recent events in Greece. Most of the gathered people were opposed to providing Greece with more money, arguing that it is not a Dutch concern and that the Greek people should manage their own country better. This example illustrates the general attitude of Dutch people towards the
Greek and could explain the negative perceptions towards the Greek accent, if recognized. Also, the fact that several subjects reported difficulties with the categorisation of the Greek accent, assuming that it might be one of the South American accents, it can be concluded that this language variety was perceived as an immigrant-sounding accent (as Mexican in the USA).

The results for Norwegian bilingual speaker are very interesting, as they were quite positive. However, if we look at the effect size between their corresponding Standard British guise, we can see some variability. For example, on Education or Social Class the effect size was relatively negative (almost as high or equally high as Polish and Greek). On the other hand, if we look at Friendliness, Intelligence, or Normality, Norwegian scored similarly to the Dutch accent, which had one of the smallest effect sizes. I believe that the Norwegian speaker’s low effect size on the sound of the language (whether it is odd or normal) is due to the relatively small linguistic distance between Dutch and Norwegian. Both languages belong to the same Germanic language family. Therefore, the results are in line with the Intelligibility Hypothesis. Dutch people evaluated the Norwegian accent more positively due to its similarities to their own language. The negative effects, on the other hand, could be due to the lack of recognition of the accent itself. Thus, the attitudes could not be formed as there was no previous encounter with the object.

The French and Dutch have the lowest effect size between the guises, which shows that Dutch people find both accents the most educated from all of the remaining speeches. These results are in line with the social connotation hypothesis. In the case of the Dutch guise, it is assumed that the majority of the students recognised their own accent and therefore, evaluated the speaker higher than the rest of the guises.

In relation to the French guise, it might be, just as in the case of the Dutch accent, assumed that the majority of the participants recognised the accent. French accent is very
common on TV and one of the most recognised accents in the World, which, considering history, it is not surprising. Before Westernisation and Englishisation, French was considered as the most influential language in the World. Also, French is an official language in 29 countries, it has around 110 million native speakers and another 190 million more second language speakers (Weber, 1997). Moreover, as it was stated above, the French language is often perceived as the language of love, and therefore, evokes positive attitudes.

5.3 The Profession Ratings

Not surprisingly, all not accented guises were definitely perceived as better suited for high status jobs. In each pair the differences were significantly notable. This confirms all of the previous studies on whether an accent has an influence on the perceptions of certain professions. Thus, it can be generalised that, in order to get a high status job, it is essential to speak without a foreign accent, most preferably with the Standard British accent, as this one received the best scores.

Perhaps, the positive evaluation of the Standard American and British accents is due to the importance of both countries in the World (Westernisation and Englishisation). Moreover, as it has been already argued, American and British media are influencing the positive perceptions of both languages.

On the other hand, all foreign accents were perceived as rather suitable for low status or medium status jobs, especially in comparison with their corresponding not-accented speeches. I assume that accented speech is associated with immigrants, at least when we refer to the unfamiliar accents for the Dutch people, such Polish, Greek, Russian or Norwegian.

In relation to the Polish speaker ratings, as it has been mentioned already, the negative attitudes are most probably due to the fact that most of the Polish immigrants in the Netherlands occupy low status jobs; and the amount of Poles that immigrated to the Netherlands in the immigration wave after the accession of Poland to the European Union is
quite substantial. As to the Russian accent, apparently the respondents could not specify whether the speaker fits medium or low status jobs, and in this respect it may be assumed that the Russian accent was evaluated more positively than any other foreign accents. Moreover, the results also showed that the Russian accent was perceived as most suitable for high status jobs (13%) from all foreign accented guises. The Russian accent, in contrast to the Polish and the rest of the Slavic accents, has a very specific intonation. Also, the Russian accent appears more frequently on television than any other Eastern European accents, due to such factors as political live disputes, mentioned above TV-shows, or movies that contain Russian characters (speaking mostly with the Russian accent). Therefore, it may be assumed that the accent is more recognised than, for example, Polish, Greek or Norwegian. Moreover, as it has already been mentioned above, the political importance of Russia and its perception as a separate country – not always as a part of Europe – may have contributed to such good responses. The fact that several people in the Netherlands thought that Poland or the Czech Republic is a part of Russia may indicate that Russia occupies the position of the dominant Eastern European country, more influential and important.

Concerning the Dutch speaker, the reasons for such a poor evaluation might be the fact that most of the students were Minors in Applied Linguistics. In other words, students of the linguistic faculties may hold prejudiced reactions towards those who are not capable to pronounce English properly. Second of all, the perception of people who speak with a heavy Dutch accent in English is rather associated with a low social status. In short, the better educated a person is in the Netherlands the higher expectations are in regards to the proper pronunciation of the English language.

The results for the Greek speaker are the most striking from all of the accented speeches. This can be explained by assuming that the Greek accent sounded really unfamiliar, and therefore evoked such strong negative reactions. In other words, it was perceived as the
accent of those who immigrated for economic reasons. Also, the Greek accent might have been incorrectly categorised as a South American – or Spanish/Mexican accent.

The results for the Norwegian speaker showed that the accent was perceived slightly better than the rest foreign accents. Again, we can assume that the relatively positive ratings were due to the linguistic similarities between the Norwegian and Dutch accents. Also, it may indicate that Norwegian was not perceived as the immigrant-sounding accent. Hence, did not evoke as extreme negative attitudes as the rest of foreign accents.

5.4 The overall findings

In terms of the Eastern European guises, unfortunately it is not possible to draw any general conclusion. This is due to the fact that the Russian speaker was generally perceived more positively than the Polish one.

However, what can definitely be seen is that the more recognisable accent, the lower the effect size. This phenomenon could be explained by several factors, such as the intelligibility hypothesis, the amount of exposure to certain accents, and, lastly, to the popularity of some accents.

Thus, the low effect size in the Dutch, French and Norwegian Bilinguals could be explained through the Intelligibility hypothesis. In relation to the first one, the Dutch participants recognized their own accent and evaluated it more positively. The low effect size in the French guise, on the other hand, can be explained by the fact that the French accent is well recognised. In addition, 29 participants out of 94 stated that they can speak the French language, whereas none of the participants stated that they could speak the Polish or Greek languages. As to the relatively low effect size on the Russian guise, I will argue that Russian is one of the most known Eastern European as well the Slavic accents and the one which is most associated with Eastern European accents generally speaking. Therefore, it can be
assumed that all of the above mentioned accents scored better in comparison with Greek, Norwegian and Polish accents.

In relation to the negative perception of the Greek accent, assuming that the participants did recognise the accent, the low scores and the high effect size may be explained by the current bad political and economic situation in Greece. However, presuming that most of the subjects did not actually recognise the accent as Greek, the negative perceptions maybe explained by the general Southern sound of the accent, often associated with low status professions. The portrayal of, for example, Mexicans in American media is in most cases very negative.

The other interesting peculiarity is the inconsistency of the evaluation of the Norwegian accent. I believe that, because of the lack of exposure to the Norwegian accent, the Dutch people did not have a meaningful evaluation of the Speaker. Additionally, the linguistic distances between those two languages are relatively small and, therefore, the responses are in line with the Intelligibility Hypothesis.

All in all, what can be drawn from the research and what is the most striking are the overall positive perceptions of the not-accented speech. In all the cases the Standard American and British accents were perceived significantly better than the other accents. What is more, whereas all accented guises were relegated to low or medium status jobs, not accented guises were relegated to high status professions.

5.5 Limitations of the research

The following obstacles were encountered during the research. Due to the recognition of some of the stimulus providers, substantial numbers of participants had to be dropped from the research, as in case of the Russian stimulus provider, who was recognised by the first group. The same applied to the scores of the Norwegian guise in the second group.
Additionally, the first group of participants were Minor students in Applied Linguistics; therefore I assume that they may have been biased in their answers. In other words, they are familiar not only with different accents, but, because of their area of interest they may have a different view on accents than the rest of the population. Moreover, they may have been familiar with this kind of study and therefore aware of the purpose of this particular experiment.
6 General Conclusion

The general aim of this study was to investigate whether the Eastern European accents are perceived differently than the Western European accents. Unfortunately, the findings did not directly answer the dilemma and, therefore, it is not possible to conclude whether the Eastern European accents are indeed less favourably perceived and less suitable for high status jobs. What is, however, possible to conclude is that speaking without a foreign accent is regarded as more prestigious and sophisticated in terms of intelligence, education, and friendliness. Moreover, it has an influence on the perceptions of whether a person is considered to be rich or poor, or from a low or high social class. The findings are even more interesting if we realise that the subjects, in contrast to the previous studies, were non-native speakers of the English language, which shows that even in non-English-speaking countries attitudes towards accented speech are rather negative.

Therefore, although it is not possible to generalise that the Western European accents are favourable in terms of job employment, it is possible to say that speaking without a foreign accent increases your chances on the job market, even in the Netherlands, where the English language does not have any official status.

The research is in line with previous studies and the results clearly indicate that speaking with Standard American or Standard British English seems to have a positive impact on every aspect of the speakers’ perception from the point of view of social status.

Therefore, although the research did not directly answer the research questions stated by the researcher, it is still very interesting to discover that Westernization and Englishisation is spreading all over Europe, resulting in prejudiced perceptions of the foreign accented speech. The fact that even Dutch people perceive their own accented English negatively, by rating their own accent very low and perceiving as not suitable for high status jobs, is quite remarkable. At the end of the day, Europe is not an English speaking continent; and the fact
that more than 50 percent of the population in Europe is capable of speaking the English language should already make Europeans feel proud as it means that more than half of the population is bilingual.

Concluding, these kinds of attitudes may have negative effects on perceptions of non-native speakers of the English language, especially when concerning immigrants who immigrated to another country for economic reasons. Negative perceptions by the locals may influence immigrants’ ability to integrate into the target society and hinder their social mobility.
References


APPENDIX 1

Stimulus Passage for the readers

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and what has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,
Dear Participant,

I am a student of the Master program in Applied Linguistics at the University of Groningen. In my study I am interested in how different accents are perceived by non-native speakers of the English language. In order to be able to gather my data, I kindly ask you to fill in my survey. Your help is very much appreciated! ☺️

In a couple of minutes you will hear different recordings of the same text. Please follow your first instinct while evaluating the speaker.

In a five point scale you will be asked to judge what kind of impression the speaker gives you.

If you, for example, think that a speaker of a particular fragment sounds intelligent then you cross a circle that is the closest to “intelligent” on a scale of “unintelligent” up to “intelligent”.

For example:

Unintelligent  ○  ○  ○  ○  ☒  Intelligent

If you, on the other hand, think that the speaker sounds unintelligent then you cross a circle that is closest to “unintelligent”:

Unintelligent  ☒  ○  ○  ○  ○  ○  Intelligent

However, if you think that the speaker sounds a little bit intelligent or a little bit unintelligent then you cross a circle between the extremes:

Unintelligent  ○  ○  ○  ☒  ○  ○  Intelligent

Or:

Unintelligent  ○  ☒  ○  ○  ○  ○  Intelligent

If you do not have any opinion about the speaker then you cross a circle in the middle.

Attention! Every recording will be played twice! After the second time you will hear a beep.
**Fragment 1**

How would you describe the speaker?

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<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>Educated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>High class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Rich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I think this person is likely to work as a:

- □ shop assistant
- □ cleaning service
- □ social worker
- □ secretary
- □ lawyer
- □ economist
- □ none of the above

----------------------------------------- BEEP ----------------------------------------

**Fragment 2**

How would you describe the speaker?

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<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>Educated</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>Normal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low class</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Rich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I think this person is likely to work as a:

- □ shop assistant
- □ cleaning service
- □ social worker
- □ secretary
- □ lawyer
- □ economist
- □ none of the above

----------------------------------------- BEEP ----------------------------------------
### Fragment 3

**How would you describe the speaker?**

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<th>✔️</th>
<th>✔️</th>
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<th>✔️</th>
<th>✔️</th>
<th>Educated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>✔️</td>
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<td>Friendly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Odd</td>
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<td>Normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<td>✔️</td>
<td>High class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
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<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>Rich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I think this person is likely to work as a:

- shop assistant
- cleaning service
- social worker
- secretary
- lawyer
- economist
- none of the above

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### Fragment 4

**How would you describe the speaker?**

<table>
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<th>✔️</th>
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<th>✔️</th>
<th>Educated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Unfriendly</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>Normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low class</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>High class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>Rich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I think this person is likely to work as a:

- shop assistant
- cleaning service
- social worker
- secretary
- lawyer
- economist
- none of the above

---
**Fragment 5**

How would you describe the speaker?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uneducated</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>Educated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low class</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>High class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Rich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I think this person is likely to work as a:

- shop assistant
- cleaning service
- social worker
- secretary
- lawyer
- economist
- none of the above

--- BEEP ---

**Fragment 6**

How would you describe the speaker?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uneducated</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>Educated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low class</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>High class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Rich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I think this person is likely to work as a:

- shop assistant
- cleaning service
- social worker
- secretary
- lawyer
- economist
- none of the above

--- BEEP ---
**Fragment 7**

How would you describe the speaker?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uneducated</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>Educated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low class</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>High class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Rich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I think this person is likely to work as a:

- [ ] shop assistant
- [ ] cleaning service
- [ ] social worker
- [ ] secretary
- [ ] lawyer
- [ ] economist
- [ ] none of the above

---------------------------------------- BEEP ----------------------------------------

**Fragment 8**

How would you describe the speaker?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uneducated</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>○</th>
<th>Educated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low class</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>High class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>Rich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I think this person is likely to work as a:

- [ ] shop assistant
- [ ] cleaning service
- [ ] social worker
- [ ] secretary
- [ ] lawyer
- [ ] economist
- [ ] none of the above

---------------------------------------- BEEP ----------------------------------------
### Fragment 9

How would you describe the speaker?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uneducated</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Educated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low class</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>High class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Rich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I think this person is likely to work as a:

- shop assistant
- cleaning service
- social worker
- secretary
- lawyer
- economist
- none of the above

---

### Fragment 10

How would you describe the speaker?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uneducated</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Educated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low class</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>High class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Rich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I think this person is likely to work as a:

- shop assistant
- cleaning service
- social worker
- secretary
- lawyer
- economist
- none of the above

---
**Fragment 11**

How would you describe the speaker?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uneducated</th>
<th>〇</th>
<th>〇</th>
<th>〇</th>
<th>〇</th>
<th>〇</th>
<th>Educated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>Normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unintelligent</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low class</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>High class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>Rich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I think this person is likely to work as a:

- shop assistant
- cleaning service
- social worker
- secretary
- lawyer
- economist
- none of the above

-------------------------------------------------- BEEP --------------------------------------------------
APPENDIX 3

**Questionnaire**

The questionnaire is anonymous and the results will be used only for the purpose of my study. However, if you wish to see the results at the end of the study, please send me an e-mail at: g.zelazna@gmail.com

Age:

Sex: Male Female

Nationality:

Native language:

Do you speak any other languages than your native language? 

No

Yes, namely:

If you ever had to move to another EU country which one would you choose?