Radboud Universiteit

Master's Thesis 2022 - 2023

The Effect of Listeners' Personality Traits on the Perceived Comprehensibility, Likeability, Competence and Hireability of Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch Speakers.

Master's degree: Global Communication & Diversity

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Date: 08-12-2023

Abstract

This study aimed to research the saliency of accentedness on the ethnic hierarchy within the Dutch labor market. This was investigated using a verbal-guise technique in which participants were asked to listen to a Standard-Dutch, Spanish-Dutch, or Mexican-Dutch accent, after which listeners were asked to evaluate the speakers on perceived comprehensibility, competence, likeability, and hireability. Moreover, this study aimed to investigate the effect of listeners' personality traits on their perceptions of non-native speakers. This was executed with the use of the HEXACO-60 personality test.

The result of this study showed that the Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch accents were perceived as less comprehensible than the Standard Dutch accent, of which the Mexican-Dutch accent was perceived to be the least comprehensible. Contrary to expectations, the listeners perceived the Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch accented speakers as equally competent and likable. However, the Mexican-Dutch speakers were considered significantly less hireable than the Spanish-Dutch and Standard Dutch speakers. This could be explained by the fact that the speakers were oftentimes associated with being Turkish, Moroccan, Surinames, or Eastern European, which is the group experiencing the highest amount of discrimination in the Netherlands.

Moreover, it was found that the personality trait Conscientiousness was a predictor for all variables. Conscientiousness, extraversion, and openness to new experiences led to an increase in likability, whereas for competence, only conscientiousness and openness were found to be significant predictors. Interestingly, for hireability, the personality trait 'agreeableness' was found to be a significant factor. This suggests that in order to be willing to provide non-Western applicants, one needs to be more forgiving, gentle, flexible, and patient.

In addition, age was found to be a significant predictor of likeability, competence, and hireability. More specifically, the older the listener, the lower the evaluations. Considering this was one of the studies to investigate the perceptions of Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch speakers in a business context and the effect of personality traits, future research on this topic is necessary to generalize the findings.

1. Introduction

With 27% of the population having a migratory background (CBS, 2023), the Netherlands is considered a pluralistic society. Due to the increased influx of migrants, such as guest workers and political and religious refugees, a political and ideological shift had taken place to deal with cultural pluralism. The adopted ideology, referred to as multiculturalism, entailed equality of the different cultural groups within Dutch society (Breugelmans & Van De Vijver, 2004). Although policies aim for equality and recognition, policies have failed to reach true multiculturalism within society (Waal, 2018). In practice, most Dutch accept cultural diversity but do not view it as highly valuable. In other words, members of Dutch society tolerate ethnic minorities and seem to believe in equal opportunities for all members of their society but expect the minorities to adapt to the dominant group while not feeling the need to facilitate the integration of minorities (Breugelmans & Van de Vijver, 2004).

Moreover, research has shown persistent inequalities within the Dutch labor market (Thijssen et al., 2021). More specifically, field experiments have shown that there appears to be an 'ethnic hierarchy' in the Dutch labor market, where natives have the largest chance of being contracted, followed by minorities and non-Western origins, respectively (Nievers et al., 2010; Thijssen et al., 2021). In particular, minorities of Middle Eastern or North African, other African, and Latin American origin face the highest levels of discrimination (Thijssen, 2021). Research on these discrimination patterns within the labor market uses fictitious applicants from various migrant backgrounds and with foreign surnames (Andriessen et al., 2012; Thijssen et al., 2021). However, more research is needed on how prejudices influence the chances of ethnic minorities in hiring decisions and what other factors, besides ethnicity, name, or skin color, can lead to employment discrimination (Andriessen et al., 2012; Thijssen et al., 2021).

According to Deprez-Sims (2010), accentedness is as salient as ethnicity, skin color, gender, and age and can result in employment discrimination. Although research has been conducted on discrimination within Dutch society on the factors mentioned above (Andriessen et al., 2020; Breugelmans & Van de Vijver, 2004; Nievers et al., 2010; Thijssen et al., 2021), little is known about the responsiveness of Dutch employers to non-native speech (e.g., Van Wijngaarden, 2001; Grondelaers, 2015; Maastricht et al., 2016; Grondelaers, 2019). To date, most accent-related research focussing on the Netherlands has investigated non-standard regional accents (e.g., Adank et al., 2007; Grondelaers et al., 2009; Grondelaers & Van Hout, 2010b; Grondelaers et al., 2018;). However, with the increase of

interactions between native and non-native speakers in the Dutch labor market, it is essential to investigate the extent to which the accentedness of non-native speakers affects perceived competence and employability.

Currently, the Netherlands counts almost 10,000 Mexicans and 55,000 Spaniards (CBS *Statline*, n.d.). The reasons for Mexicans and Spaniards migrating to the Netherlands range from partnerships to educational purposes and employability. Recent Spanish migrants to the Netherlands seem to match the profile of highly skilled migrants as they are mobile, highly educated, proficient in English, working in senior positions or studying in higher education, and mostly desire to remain only temporarily (Gijsberts et al., 2016). Moreover, most Spanish migrants indicate being satisfied with the host country, and a relatively low percentage (7%) experience discrimination against their group frequently or very frequently (Gijsberts et al., 2016). In contrast, due to Mexican immigrants being a relatively small group within the Netherlands, little is known about their social identity within the Netherlands.

Since Spanish and Mexicans have very similar linguistic backgrounds, it is interesting to study whether listeners can distinguish the different origins of speakers' accents. Moreover, taking the ethnic hierarchy in the labor market into account, it is worth studying whether a similar distinction can be made between western (i.e., Spaniards) and non-western (i.e., Mexicans) speakers based on their accents or if listeners merely make distinctions based on native and non-native accents.

However, so far, no investigations have taken place that analyze how these groups are viewed in the Netherlands. Considering the similar motivations Spaniards and Mexicans have to migrate to the Netherlands, it is essential to investigate whether their accentedness could interfere with their perceived competence and employability. The saliency of accentedness could result in Hispanics being positioned in a lower place on the hierarchical ladder. This indicates a need to understand how to reduce the potentially harmful effects of non-native accents.

Currently, research on social evaluation regarding accents focuses mainly on the role of the speaker. Due to the negative impact of accentedness on attitudes (Fuertes et al., 2011), the literature recommends that non-native speakers follow pronunciation training to reduce features of non-native accentedness (Hendriks & Van Meurs, 2017). Instead, the contribution of both the speaker and listener should be taken into account. Although the comprehensibility of the speakers' accents can interfere with the success of communication, listeners share responsibility for its success. Moreover, it is essential to remember that current research relies on assessing pronunciation and intelligibility based on listeners' perception, which is

influenced by the listeners' biases (Lindemann & Subtirelu, 2013). Therefore, research is needed on which factors related to the listener affect attitudes toward foreign accents.

A possible variable predicting attitudes towards foreign accents could be the personality traits of the listeners. The literature shows that communication behavior is directly influenced by individuals' personalities (Beatty and McCroskey, 1998; Pervin & Cervone, 2010). Assuming personality traits influence communication, it would be valuable to investigate whether personality traits affect comprehensibility and attitudinal evaluations, usually measured in traditional accent research. Up to now, only a few studies have investigated the influence of listeners' personalities on foreign accent ratings (Dawaele& McCloskey, 2013; Gaffney & Côté, 2020). A study by Gaffney and Côté (2020) showed that conscientiousness and extraversion correlate with foreign accent ratings. In addition, Dawaele and McCloskey (2013) showed that extraversion and emotional stability positively affected non-standard speaker evaluations. However, more research is needed to fully understand the role of personality in L2 assessment (Gaffney & Côté, 2020).

Although the studies mentioned above suggest a relationship between personality traits and speaker evaluations, to my knowledge, no research has yet been conducted on the impact of listeners' personalities on comprehensibility or other accent-related judgments. Moreover, it is unknown whether the perceived hireability of non-native speakers is affected by the listener's personality. Therefore, this study is the first to explore the effect of personality on comprehensibility, attitudinal evaluations, and hireability of non-native speakers.

Furthermore, considering the growing immigration to the Netherlands and, thus, the increasing number of L2 speakers of Dutch, it would be beneficial to research how foreign accents are evaluated. Since research on foreign accents within the Netherlands is limited, this is one of the first studies investigating the evaluations of non-native Dutch speakers and the first study specifically looking at Spanish-Dutch and Mexican-Dutch evaluations.

1.2 Theoretical framework

1.2.1 Accents

Research has shown that various accents are recognized within the Netherlands, ranging per region and social meaning (Grondelaers et al., 2010). Nowadays, a Randstad accent is considered standard speech (Grondelaers et al., 2010), meaning it is the accepted accent of the majority of the population (Fuertes et al., 2012). Therefore, inhabitants of the Randstad are

perceived as being prestigious, standard, non-regional, and non-accented (Grondelaers & Van Hout et al., 2015). In contrast, non-standard accents are spoken by minority groups, lower socioeconomic groups, or considered foreign (Fuertes et al., 2012). Examples of non-standard accents in the Netherlands would be Brabantian, Surinamese-Dutch, and Spanish-Dutch. Contrary to standard speech, categorizing accents as 'non-standard' leads to negative social evaluations and downgrading of the content's perceived quality and comprehensibility (Fuertes et al., 2012).

Although speakers' accents affect listeners' perceptions of the speaker (Fuertes et al., 2012), research has shown that listeners usually have difficulty identifying accents (Gnevsheva, 2017; McKenzie et al., 2019b). Likewise, Grondelaers and Van Hout (2010) found that native Dutch listeners have difficulties identifying regional accents. For instance, they mistakenly identify a Northern accent as a Randstad accent. This misconception leads to evaluations more aligned with Randstad speakers' perceptions (Grondelaers & Van Hout, 2010). Considering the difficulties native Dutch listeners can have with identifying specific accents, it is interesting to study whether they can identify foreign accents correctly. Moreover, seeing that the Dutch attach social meaning to regional accents, it would be interesting to investigate how speakers with non-native Dutch accents are perceived. By studying the attitudes towards native Dutch, Spanish, and Mexican-Dutch and the identification of these accents, it is possible to identify whether listeners merely distinguish between native and non-native speakers or between regional provenance as well.

1.2.2 Spanish-Dutch accent & Mexican-Dutch
To the best of my knowledge, no literature exists on the differences between Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch. This is, therefore, the first study to investigate whether the two accents can be distinguished in Dutch as Castilian and Mexican-Spanish or whether the L2 speakers will sound similar to each other to L1 listeners. To date, research on Spanish-accented speech has mainly been conducted in an Anglophone context due to the large percentage of Hispanics in the US (Fuertes & Gelso, 2000; Hosoda, Nguyen, & Stone-Romero, 2012; Podberesky et al., 1990). However, with the high level of Spanish emigration to the Netherlands (Gijsbert et al., 2012) and the growing group of Mexicans within the Netherlands, it would be interesting to study the perceptions of these L2 Dutch speakers.

What makes this group of Spanish L1 speakers unique is the broad range of variations of the Spanish language due to regional and social variations (Hualdi et al., 2012). Generally speaking, a distinction is made between dialect divisions of Spain and Latin America, of

which Mexico is the largest Spanish-speaking country (Hualde et al., 2012). These dialects differ in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary (Hualde et al., 2012). Within Dutch society, the Castilian dialect is the most prominent and most often taught in Spanish language courses, which can be explained by the geographical proximity of Spain. Due to the cultural prominence and geographical proximity, higher recognition accuracy can be expected among listeners (Gnevsheva, 2017).

As mentioned before, Dutch listeners have been found to have difficulty identifying specific accents (Grondelaers & Van Hout, 2010). Therefore, following previous literature (Grondelaers & Van Hout, 2010), it was expected that most participants of this study would have difficulty identifying the correct country of origin. Moreover, it was expected that the Mexican-Dutch accent would be evaluated as less native-like, and therefore less comprehensible, than Spanish-Dutch since Mexican Spanish does not include the velar fricative /x/, which is present in Castilian and Dutch pronunciation (Martínez-Celdrán et al., 2003). Considering Castilian speakers can produce the hard sound of the velar fricative, it was expected that Spanish-Dutch speakers would be perceived as less foreign and better comprehensible than Mexican-Dutch Speakers.

Although no research has been performed on Mexican-Dutch specifically, there are a few studies investigating Spanish-Dutch (Burgos et al., 2014; Van Maastricht et al., 2016; Van Maastricht et al., 2021). In a study by Burgos et al. (2014), the researchers identified a set of frequent pronunciation errors made by Spanish L2 Dutch speakers and Latin American L2 Dutch speakers. The most recurring errors are vowel errors, consisting of problems with contrasts in vowel length, vowel height, and the production of front-rounded vowels. For example, the vowel /ə/ is often deleted or replaced by the Spanish /e/, and /œy/ is realized with a /ɔu/. The differences between the Dutch and Spanish vowel systems cause these 'errors'. Examples of consonant errors are /ʋ/, substituted with a /b/ or /v/. Moreover, a /j/ is replaced with a /dʒ/, and /ʃ/ with either an /s/ or /x/. As stated by the authors, the interference of their mother tongue could cause errors that may hinder communication and, therefore, be disadvantageous for successful communication and social acceptance. However, it is important to note that one of the two transcribers was a native Spanish speaker familiar with Spanish-Dutch and a phonology teacher. At the same time, the other was native Dutch and unfamiliar with Spanish-Dutch. Moreover, large within-group differences between participants were found, but the study did not specify whether the speakers' origin could have played a role in the results. Therefore, it is interesting to study whether native-Dutch listeners would be able to hear the differences between Spanish-Dutch and Mexican-Dutch speakers.

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A study by Van Maastricht et al. (2016), in which Dutch listeners had to rate Spanish-Dutch speakers, has shown that a higher proficiency level of the speaker could be processed faster by L1 listeners. Moreover, the L1 listeners rated L2 speech as more difficult to understand, less native-like, and more foreign-accented than L1 speech. However, interestingly, comprehensibility was rated less severely than accentedness and nativeness. However, research has not yet determined what implications foreign accentedness and nativeness might have for L2 Dutch speakers.

Although so far, no research exists concerning the effects of Spanish-accentedness in Dutch on attitudinal evaluations or hireability, there is an extensive body of literature showing that Hispanic-accented English speakers are downgraded in the US (e.g., Dailey et al., 2005; Purkiss et al., 2006; Hosoda & Stone-Romero, 2010; Dragojevic & Goatley-Soan, 2020;). Moreover, Hosoda et al. (2012) found that Hispanic-accented applicants were disadvantaged when applying for a software engineering job and were less likely to be promoted to a managerial position than native American-English speakers. This raises the question of whether Dutch listeners would downgrade Hispanic-Dutch speakers similarly due to the associations Dutch listeners might have with Hispanic-Dutch speakers, the degree of accentedness, or whether they would evaluate them equally to the Standard Dutch speakers.

1.2.3. Perceived Comprehensibility

The success of communication is based on both understandability as well as attitudes. Understandability is often measured in the literature using comprehensibility and intelligibility. Comprehensibility can be defined as the ability to understand the entire utterance and the experienced ease of processing the information (Gaffney & Côté, 2020). Comprehensibility can be measured by testing listeners' understanding of the content of the message (Nejjari et al., 2012) or by means of perceived comprehensibility, i.e., asking how well the listeners think they comprehend the speaker (Hendriks et al., 2015; Hendriks et al., 2016; Hendriks & Van Meurs, 2017). On the other hand, intelligence is described as the extent to which the speaker's message is understood in terms of the understandability and recognizability of individual words (Munro & Derwing, 1995a). Since the degree of accentedness can vary per individual, some might transfer more or fewer elements of their mother tongue in their L2 (Vermeulen & Kellerman, 1998), impeding the speaker's understandability.

So far, little is known about how the accentedness of Dutch L2 speakers influences the understandability of Dutch L1 listeners. However, a study by Van Wijngaarden (2001)

examined Dutch-speaking Americans' phoneme and sentence intelligibility compared to native Dutch speakers using Dutch listeners. The results showed degradation of speech intelligibility due to confusion in vowels, especially vowels that do not exist in American English. These results indicate that L2 speakers of Dutch can have trouble producing certain sounds, leading to decreased understandability of a message. Bearing in mind that Dutch is a Germanic language, it can be expected that the production of Dutch vowels can be more challenging for L2 speakers of Dutch with a Roman language background and can thus result in decreased comprehensibility. Nonetheless, it is important to bear in mind that the abovementioned results are based on actual comprehensibility, whereas this study examined perceived comprehensibility.

Although, to my knowledge, no previous research has been conducted on the perceived comprehensibility of Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch speakers, it has been found that native listeners tend to perceive non-native speakers to be less comprehensible. A study by Munro and Derwing (1999) showed how native listeners were assigned harsher scores to accented speakers with regard to perceived comprehensibility. Moreover, the study found that the listeners perceived the speakers' comprehensibility as lower than their actual comprehensibility. Likewise, a study by Hendriks et al. (2021) found that native-Dutch listeners perceived German-accented speakers as less comprehensible.

However, is important to note that perceived comprehensibility and accentedness are subjective measures and can have repercussions since speech patterns trigger attributional processes (Kang & Rubin, 2009). To illustrate, a study by Rubin (1992) showed how listening comprehension significantly declines, and highly accented speech is reported when listeners mistakenly believe they are listening to a non-native speaker of English. In other words, listening comprehension processes are susceptible to stereotypes (Kang & Rubin, 2009). Moreover, it raises the question of the extent to which listeners themselves are responsible for the perceived comprehensibility.

1.2.4. Attitudinal Evaluations

The effects of non-native accentedness can be measured through attitudinal evaluations (e.g., Cargile & Giles, 1998; Dragojecvic et al., 2017; Hendriks et al., 2015; Hendriks et al., 2016; Nejjari et al., 2012). Attitudinal evaluations are often measured based on the speakers' capabilities or personality traits (Hendriks & Van Meurs, 2017). These dimensions are in the literature generally measured with elements such as status (e.g., intelligence, social class, ambition), competence (e.g., competent, confident, skillful),

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dynamism (e.g., liveliness, hip, trendy), and likeability (e.g., trustworthy, kind, sincere) (Cargile & Giles, 1998; Dragojecvic et al., 2017; Fuertes et al., 2012; Hendriks et al., 2015; Nejjari et al., 2012).

The findings of the meta-analysis by Fuertes et al. (2012) show that non-native accents are evaluated more negatively than standard speakers with regard to the constructs mentioned above. In other words, standard speakers have an advantage over non-standard speakers and are more likely to make positive impressions. Moreover, the study showed that effects were strongest in formal settings such as employment, where standard accents were strongly favored. Therefore, non-native speakers may experience employment discrimination based on their accent. Based on what research has shown, it seems likely that Dutch listeners will evaluate the native-Dutch speakers more positively than the Spanish-Dutch and Mexican-Dutch speakers.

It has previously been observed that comprehensibility affects attitudinal evaluations of the speaker (Dragojevic et al., 2017; Hendriks et al., 2021). The literature shows that more intelligible speakers can be seen as more pleasant, friendly, and considerate (Nejjari et al., 2012). Additionally, Hendriks and Van Meurs (2017) have shown that native listeners evaluate stronger accents more negatively than native accents with regard to the speakers' personality traits (e.g., dynamism, attractiveness, pleasantness).

1.2.4. Personality and perceptions

As mentioned, a study by Hendriks and Van Meurs (2017) recommended pronunciation training to help L2 learners reduce features of strong non-native accentedness. However, several studies on accentedness focus on pronunciation training for non-native speakers (e.g., Burgos et al., 2014; Neri et al., 2006). This recommendation emphasizes the speaker's contribution to communication even though communication is two-way. Intelligibility and comprehensibility are often considered characteristics of the speaker, but by doing this, the jointly achieved effort of both the speaker and listener is neglected (Lindemann & Subtirelu, 2013). In other words, whether a speaker is perceived to be comprehensible depends on the susceptibility of the listener as well. As Derwing and Munro (2009) mentioned, L1 listeners share responsibility for communication success. More specifically, Munro (2008) states that ratings of L2 speech are influenced by the speech itself, factors related to the listeners, and other contextual factors. However, most research is focused on the speakers' proficiency, but the extent to which listeners have an influence on

comprehensibility remains unclear. Therefore, this study will explore a factor related to listeners that possibly affects the perception of L2 speech.

A few studies have identified that listeners' personality traits affect their perceptions of speech samples (Dawaele & McCloskey, 2015; Gaffney & Côté, 2019; Yoon, 2021). Dawaele and McCloskey (2015) examined the participants' characteristics in attitudes toward their own and others' foreign accents. Gaffney and Côté (2019) examined L1 listeners' foreign accent ratings, and Yoon (2021) examined the relationship of teachers' personality traits with fluency ratings.

Although the body of literature on personality traits in non-native accent evaluations seems to be growing, research on the role of listeners' personality traits on speech evaluations is still very limited, and little is known about the relationship between listeners' personality and their perceived comprehensibility or social perceptions. As a result, this study aims to examine the extent to which listeners' attitudinal evaluations and perceived comprehensibility. Moreover, no research has concentrated on this relationship in a business context, even though previous research has shown that non-standardness is downgraded severely in employment (Fuertes et al., 2012). Thus, this study will conduct an analysis of the relationship between listeners' personalities and the perceived hirability of the speaker.

Personality traits are often measured using the Big Five factor model (Goldberg, 1993); another widely used model is the HEXACO Personality Inventory, which consists of six factors (Ashton & Lee, 2007). This model was developed in lexical studies of personality structure in diverse languages in which self- or peer ratings of familiar personality-descriptive adjectives were analyzed (Ashton & Lee, 2009). Due to time constraints, the present study used its adapted, shorter version, the HEXACO-60 (Ashton & Lee, 2009), containing sixty statements to measure the six different factors. The HEXACO-60 scales are correlated to the Big Five factors but are recommended when time is limited (Ashton & Lee, 2009). The dimensions of the HEXACO-60 are as follows: **H**onesty-Humility (i.e., sincerity, fairness, greed-avoidance, and modesty), **E**motionality (i.e., fearfulness, anxiety, dependence, sentimentality), E**x**traversion (i.e., social self-esteem, social boldness, sociability, and liveliness), **A**greeableness (i.e., forgiveness, gentleness, flexibility, and patience), **C**onscientiousness (i.e., organization, diligence, perfectionism, and prudence), and **O**penness to experience (i.e., aesthetic appreciation, inquisitiveness, creativity, and unconventionality).

Although little is known about the effects of personality on foreign accent ratings, a study by Gaffney and Côté (2020) investigated the correlation between the Big Five personality traits and foreign accent ratings. The study showed that conscientiousness and

extraversion were significantly correlated with the foreign accent ratings Anglophone listeners provided. Conscientiousness was shown to be positively correlated with the foreign accent ratings, whereas extraversion was found to be negatively correlated. In other words, participants with higher scores in Conscientiousness were found to evaluate the accents as being more heavily foreign than those with lower scores in Conscientiousness. More extroverted participants were found to be less strict in foreign accent ratings than the less extroverted participants.

Moreover, the dimensions of agreeableness, openness to experience, and conscientiousness have been found to be predictors of active-empathic listening, which occurs when speakers perceive that listeners are actively involved in listening to them, and speakers show empathy while listening (Sims, 2017). Considering active-empathic listening is crucial for foreign accent ratings since active listening is needed to comprehend and understand the speaker, and empathic listening can be linked to results in attitudinal evaluations, it is expected that the dimensions will influence L1 listeners' ratings of L2 speakers.

Furthermore, extroverted people have been shown to be more accepting of foreign accents (Dewaele & McCloskey, 2015), and low levels of emotionality have been shown to be linked to prejudices and a more negative attitude toward immigrants (Sibley et al., 2010; Gallego & Pardos-Prado, 2014). For this reason, it is expected that low emotionality and extraversion will have an effect on the listeners' ratings.

Although the studies mentioned earlier show that personality affects individuals' beliefs about the accentedness of L2 speakers and their attitude toward immigrants and may even help predict the degree to which personality traits might influence listeners' attitudes toward foreign accents, direct causal factors of foreign accent ratings and attitudes toward L2 speakers remain speculative. Moreover, previous studies were set out in an Anglophone context, and it is unclear whether similar effects can be found in a Dutch context. For this reason, this study will examine the relationship between Dutch L1 listeners' personality traits, attitudinal evaluations, and hireability toward Dutch L2 speakers.

1.3 Purpose
Hopefully, this thesis will contribute to understanding the effects of listeners' personalities on the attitudinal evaluations and hireability of foreign-accented speakers. This will be operationalized by investigating how native-Dutch listeners evaluate Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch speakers regarding comprehensibility, likeability, competence, and hireability.

So far, accent-related research has consistently shown that non-standard accents (i.e., accents of minorities, foreign accents, or lower socioeconomic groups) receive more negative social evaluations than a dominant and, thus, standard accent. Due to the negative perceptions of non-standard speakers, non-standard accented speakers can experience discriminatory behavior in employee evaluations (Fuertes, Gottdiener, Martin, Gilbert, & Giles, 2012). This is a form of prejudice in which negative attitudes are justified by incomprehensibility and other communication problems related to accentedness (Roessel, Schoel & Stahlberg, 2020). Moreover, accentedness can have consequences for the education, employability, and even citizenship of foreign-accented speakers (Kang & Rubin, 2009).

Although there is a growing body of literature on the effects of accentedness, the aforementioned studies were conducted in an anglophone context. Therefore, whether Dutch listeners will similarly evaluate foreign accents is yet to be determined. More specifically, it has not yet been investigated whether Spanish-Dutch and Mexican-Dutch will evoke more negative attitudes than native-Dutch speakers among Dutch listeners. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Mexican-Dutch speakers experience being associated with lower socioeconomic positions, drug-related crimes, and laziness. However, more qualitative research is needed to understand L1 Dutch speakers' perceptions of Mexican and Spanish-Dutch speakers. However, since little is known about the social identity of Hispanics in the Netherlands, this study aims to take a closer look at how these groups are evaluated.

Moreover, since there is a general knowledge gap between perceived competence and employability of non-native speakers of Dutch, this study set out to understand the possibly negative effect of foreign-Dutch accents. Since biases and negative attitudinal evaluations toward foreign accents can influence the hirability ratings of the speaker, it can lead to a lack of diversity in the workplace (Roessel et al., 2017). Therefore, addressing the biases toward foreign accents and investigating the underlying factors, such as the listener's personality traits, is necessary.

Assuming personality traits influence communication, it can be expected that Dutch listeners' personality traits influence the evaluations of non-native Dutch speakers. However, only a few studies have investigated the influence of listeners' personalities on foreign accent ratings. Therefore, more research in this area is needed (Gaffney & Côté, 2020). The effect of personality traits on attitudes could be considered an important element when aiming for more diversity within a company. It is plausible that the personality traits of people responsible for recruitment interferes with their openness to people with non-native accents.

Moreover, anecdotally, foreign-accented Dutch people have shared how they experience that some L1 listeners continue to have difficulty understanding them even after being exposed to their accent for a longer period, leading to frustration and sometimes even unwillingness to communicate with them. This anecdotal evidence aligns with the mixed results of previous research concerning the degree of listeners' familiarity, comprehension, and attitudinal evaluations (Kang & Rubin, 2009; Nejjari et al., 2012; Hendriks et al., 2018). Investigating the effect of personality traits on evaluations of foreign-accented speakers could provide an explanation for the mixed results. In addition, it could provide insight for foreign-accented speakers as to why some of the interactions are repeatedly unsuccessful— understanding the factors influencing the success of interactions can, over time, aid in improving communication between foreign-accented speakers and native speakers.

RQ1: To what extent are Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch speakers evaluated differently than native Dutch speakers on perceived comprehensibility, attitudinal evaluations (i.e., likeability and competence), and hireability in a job application context by native Dutch listeners?

RQ2: To what extent are native Dutch listeners' perceived comprehensibility, attitudinal evaluations (i.e., likeability and competence), and hireability of Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch affected by their personality traits (based on HEXACO-60)?

Figure 1. Analytical model
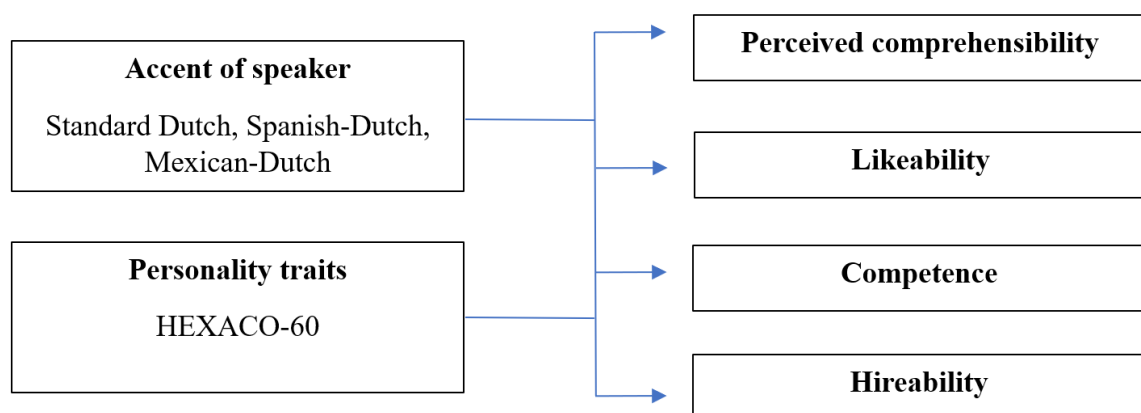
2. Method

In this study, a between-subject design experiment was conducted in the form of a verbal guise experiment. Native Dutch listeners were asked to evaluate Mexican, Spanish, or Dutch female recordings in a job application context, after which participants were asked to complete a personality traits test (See Figure 1 for an analytical model).

2.1 Materials

A verbal-guise technique was adopted to operationalize the independent variable 'accentedness'. Seven audio files were recorded. Three native-Dutch speakers (one was a filler), two Spanish-Dutch speakers, and two Mexican-Dutch speakers performed a job pitch. The Spanish and Mexican speakers were all born and raised in their country of origin and did not learn the Dutch language until adulthood. All speakers were middle-aged adults, except for SP 1, who was a young-adult. In order to eliminate the confounding variable of gender, all speakers were female. Both Spanish-Dutch speakers are lecturers at the university. One of the Mexican-Dutch speakers is a secondary school teacher, whereas the other Mexican-Dutch speaker is a warehouse employee.

The filler was used to familiarize the participants with the task and as a benchmark for the Standard-Dutch accent. All but the filler text reflected the business context (based on Nejjari et al., 2020). The job pitch and the filler text were adapted to the study of Nejjari et al. (2020; see Appendix A). The texts were translated from English to Dutch and checked for correctness concerning grammar and translation accuracy by a Dutch and English language expert.

In order to measure the predictor variables of personality traits, the HEXACO-60 was used (Ashton & Lee, 2009). Listeners' personality traits were measured on honestly-humility, emotionality, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience.

2. 1.1.Pre-test:

This study would have preferred a matched guise to account for confounding variables such as voice characteristics. However, no speakers were available who could mimic the Standard Dutch, Spanish, and Mexican Dutch accents. Therefore, a verbal guise technique was adapted, in which participants were asked to evaluate different speakers for different accents (Nejjari et al., 2019).

To develop the stimuli for the experiment, pre-tests were conducted in which experts were asked to evaluate the recordings of the speakers. The audios of the three native-Dutch speakers were reviewed by a Dutch and Academic Communication professor on the standardness of the speakers' accents. All three speakers' pronunciation was categorized as modern Standard Dutch, meaning that their pronunciation was both Standard-Dutch and in line with the pronunciation of young native Dutch people.

Moreover, the Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch speakers' accents were evaluated by three Spanish experts, namely lecturers of the Spanish language. The first expert (E1), an Assistant professor of Language and Communication and lecturer in Spanish, was asked to indicate the speaker's country of origin and respond to statements on a 7-point Likert scale. These statements were as follows, 'the speaker sounds like a native speaker of Dutch' and 'the speaker has a foreign accent in her Dutch' with the anchor points 'completely disagree-completely agree'. Moreover, the expert (E1) was asked to comment on remarkable phonetic elements to clarify the ratings. The expert (E1) was not able to recognize the Mexican-Dutch accent. The first speaker was categorized as Surinamese or Caribbean, whereas the second speaker's origin was unidentifiable. Since the expert (E1) indicated knowing the Spanish speakers, bias could have played a role in the recognition of the accent. Therefore, two other experts, both lecturers in Spanish, were approached and asked to participate in the pre-test. Unlike the first expert, these experts were asked to respond to the statement 'The speaker has elements of (Mexican-) Spanish in her speech' on a 7-point Likert scale in addition to the two aforementioned statements.

The pre-test showed mixed results in the recognition of the speakers' accents. The second expert (E2) recognized a Spanish-speaking background in the first audio due to phonetic elements as mentioned below but noted that it was impossible to differentiate between the Mexican-Spanish and Castilian accents. For the second speaker, the expert (E2) characterized the speech as sounding more Caribbean rather than Mexican-Spanish sounding but was able to distinguish Spanish phonetic elements. The third expert (E3), who lived in Mexico and was expected to be more familiar with the Mexican accent, indicated being unable to distinguish between Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch. However, the expert (E3) could distinguish typical Spanish phonetic elements in the speech of all speakers. Moreover, the expert (E3) noted that if a distinction could be made between the accents, it would most likely be due to staccato and the rhythm rather than actual pronunciation 'errors'.

Overall, all of the experts could hear the Spanish accent and distinguished several features typically associated with Spanish in the stimuli of the Spanish speakers. Moreover,

Spanish-sounding elements were recognized in the Mexican-Dutch speakers' speech samples. The recognized features in the speech of the speakers were:

- Staccato, Spanish intonation pattern

- /R/ pronounced as /r/

- /h/ pronounced as /x/

- /oey/ pronounced as /ɔi/

- /x/ pronounced as /k/

- /j/ pronounced as /dʒ/

Although the typically Spanish-sounding elements were identified, the results were inconsistent which could be caused by differences in the accents. Another possible explanation for the inconsistency of the pre-test results could be that although the experts are acquainted with Spanish phonology, they are not as familiar with the Spanish-Dutch or Mexican-Dutch accent. Possibly, the phonological differences between the Spanish and Dutch languages were too prominent for these experts to make a proper distinction. Moreover, as the focus here in the Netherlands is mainly on Castilian, it is possible that it is more difficult for Dutch listeners, and even Spanish-speaking Dutch listeners, to recognize the Mexican-Spanish accent. Unfortunately, locating an expert in this specific domain was impossible despite diligent efforts.

So far, no further research has been conducted on the differences between Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch. Therefore, it is difficult to say to what extent the speakers' L1 influences their Dutch. Since the pre-test results suggested a slight difference between the speakers' accents, it was decided to investigate whether the Dutch could differentiate the accents and evaluate them differently.

Due to the inconsistent results, participants in the experiment were asked to indicate their familiarity with the accent to investigate whether this would influence the recognition of the accent. This was conducted using three statements on a 7-point Likert scale based on Hendriks et al. (2021). The statements were 'I am familiar with this accent,' 'I often meet people with this accent', and 'I regularly talk to people with this accent'.

2.2. Subjects

The primary inclusion criteria for the respondents were that they had to be Dutch and/or Dutch-speaking and at least 18 years old. Participants were asked to indicate whether they had experience with hiring. The age of the participants ranged between 18-63 ($M = 32.25$, $SD = 13.54$). Moreover, 109 participants identified as female, 54 participants identified as male, 1 as non-binary, and 1 participant indicated 'prefer not to say'. The background variables age (χ^2 (185) = 163.38, $p = .872$) and gender (χ^2 (15) = 163.38, $p = .498$) were all equally distributed across conditions.

The sample was recruited through social media (i.e., Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook), SurveySwap, and SurveyCircle. In order to recruit respondents familiar with either the Mexican-Dutch and/or Spanish-Dutch accent, the survey was shared in the Facebook groups *Mexicanos en Holanda, Españoles viviendo en Holanda, Españoles y Latinos en los Paises Bajos* and *Empleos en Holanda.* Moreover, the survey was shared in the Facebook groups *Respondenten Gezocht, SurveySwap*, *SurveyCircle,* and *Mozaiek0318.* In addition, participants were recruited on campus, at the Refter, on 6 and 7 July 2023.

2.3. Design

This study used a mixed design. The between-subject factors consisted of *accent* (3 levels) and the within-subject variable HEXACO-60 *personality dimensions*. The native-Dutch accent (NL 1 & NL 2) was used as the control condition, and the Spanish-Dutch (SP 1 & SP 2) and Mexican-Dutch (MEX 1 and MEX 2) accents as the experimental conditions. All participants were randomly but evenly assigned to one of the six conditions.

Table 1. Distribution of participants (*n* = number of participants).

		n
Condition		
Spanish-Dutch	SP 1	28
	SP2	30
	Total	58
Mexican-Dutch	MEX 1	30

	MEX 2	31
	Total	61
Dutch	NL1	31
	NL2	30
	Total	61
Total		180

2.4. Instrumentation

The participants were asked to complete an online questionnaire in Qualtrics. The participants were asked to evaluate the filler speech sample and the job pitches on the understandability of the message and attitudinal evaluations and react to statements of the HEXACO-60 (Ashton & Lee, 2009).

The variable *Comprehensibility* was measured using four statements (adapted from Hendriks et al., 2016; Munro et al., 2006; Nejjari et al., 2020), 'I have to listen very carefully to the speaker', 'The speaker speaks clearly', 'The speaker is difficult to comprehend', and 'I have problems understanding what the speaker means', which was being followed by 7-point Likert scales with the anchor points 'completely disagree-completely agree'. The reliability of '*Comprehensibility*' comprising four items was good: $\alpha = .87$. Consequently, the mean of all four items was used to calculate the compound variable '*Comprehensibility*', which was used in further analyses.

The *attitudinal evaluations* were measured with the items *likeability* and *competence* using 7-point Likert scales (adapted from Bayard et al., 2001; Nejjari et al., 201; Hendriks et al., 2018; Nejjari et al., 2020). All items were introduced with 'In my opinion, the speaker sounds', followed by the anchor points 'completely disagree-completely agree'. *Likeability* was measured using the items 'warm', 'tactful', 'irritating', and 'unfriendly'. The reliability of '*Likeability*' comprising four items was acceptable: $\alpha = .72$. Consequently, the mean of all four items was used to calculate the compound variable '*Likeability*', which was used in further analyses.

Competence was measured using the items 'intelligent', 'reliable', 'hardworking', and 'educated'. The reliability of '*Competence*' comprising four items was acceptable: α = .75. Consequently, the mean of all four items was used to calculate the compound variable '*Competence*', which was used in further analyses.

Moreover, *hireability* was measured with five statements on a 7-point Likert scale with the anchor points 'completely disagree-completely agree' (Based on Roessel et al., 2019). The statements were as follows, 'I would recommend employing this job applicant', 'I have a very positive impression of the job applicant', and 'The job applicant is professionally qualified'. The reliability of '*Hireability*' comprising four items was good: α = .87. Consequently, the mean of all four items was used to calculate the compound variable '*Hireability*', which was used in further analyses.

Furthermore, participants were asked to indicate the speaker's country of origin with a drop-down menu and their familiarity with the accent with the aforementioned statements.

In the following section, participants were asked to complete the HEXACO-60 personality test consisting of 60 items measuring the six dimensions of *honesty-humility*, *emotionality*, *extraversion*, *agreeableness*, *conscientiousness*, and *openness to experience* (based on Ashton & Lee, 2007), using 5-point Likert scales. All six dimensions comprised ten items. The reliability of '*Honesty-Humility*' (α = .70), 'Emotionality' (α = .79), 'Extraversion' (α = .69), Agreeableness (α = .69), Conscientiousness (α = .69) and 'Openness' (α = .77) was acceptable. Consequently, the mean of all ten items per dimension was used to calculate the compound variables and was used in further analyses.

Lastly, participants were asked to provide demographic information about age, gender, and previous hiring experience.

2.5. Procedure

Participants who agreed with the experiment's terms and conditions could participate. Participants were not made aware of the aim of the study. Each participant listened to the filler first, followed by a Standard-Dutch speaker, Mexican-Dutch speaker, or Spanish-Dutch speaker. However, before listening to the audio fragments, participants were given instructions and asked to evaluate the speakers' communication skills.

Participants were first asked to listen to the filler audio fragment, after which they had to answer a set of questions before being able to listen to the next audio fragment. After listening to the second audio fragment, participants were asked to answer a set of questions

identical to the ones for the filler. After completing the questions regarding the characteristics of the speakers, participants were asked to self-assess their personality traits. This was done using the HEXACO-60 (Ashton & Lee, 2009).

At the end of the experiment, participants were asked to provide background information on themselves concerning age, gender, and hiring experience. The average time spent on the questionnaire was rather high ($M = 37.7$ minutes, $SD = 128.5$ minutes) due to outliers who spent more than an hour on the questionnaire. Contrary to the mean, the median was 12.7 minutes.

2.6. Statistical treatment

After the data collection procedure, data were assembled to run statistical analyses using SPSS 27.0. Before the statistical analyses, items were reverse-coded when necessary. Subsequently, based on Cronbach's alpha reliability test, composite variables were formed for comprehensibility, likeability, competence, and hireability.

Multiple one-way analyses of variance were performed to investigate how the accents were evaluated in terms of comprehensibility, likeability, competence, and hireability (RQ1). To analyze the effect of the personality dimensions on the evaluations (RQ2), based on Cronbach's alpha reliability, composite variables were used for each personality dimension. Multiple regression analyses were performed with the composite variables to calculate the effects on comprehensibility, likeability, competence, and hireability. Moreover, multiple regression analyses were performed, accounting for the factor of age.

3. Results

The following results are divided into three sections. The first results show to which country listeners appointed the speaker. The second part provides the findings with regard to research question 1 and shows how comprehensible, likable, competent, and hirable the listeners perceived the speakers. The results were obtained by conducting one-way analyses of variance. The third part provides the findings of regression analyses regarding the predictor effect of personality traits (RQ2).

3.1. Country of origin speakers

To determine whether the participants could differentiate the accents, they were asked to indicate the speakers' country of origin. Moreover, participants were asked whether they recognized the accent. Crosstabulations revealed that the filler sample was correctly identified as Dutch by 95.2% of the participants.

For stimulus 1 (SPNL 1), cross-tabulations revealed that Spanish-Dutch speaker was correctly identified as Spanish by 14.3% of the participants within the condition. In addition, 14.3% of the participants identified the speaker as Argentinian, and 10.7% identified the speaker as Polish. For stimulus 2 (SPNL2), crosstabulations showed that Spanish-Dutch speaker was correctly identified as Spanish by 13.3%. Moreover, the speaker was identified as Turkish (13.3%), Polish (10%), and Argentinian (10%). Likewise, stimulus 3 (MEXNL1) was correctly identified by 13.3% of the participants as Mexican. However, the speaker was identified as Turkish by 30% of the participants and as Moroccan by 16.7%. For stimulus 4 (MEXNL2), the speaker was correctly identified by 12.9% of the participants as Mexican. Moreover, the speaker was identified as Polish (12.9%), Spanish (9.7%), and Surinames (9.7%). Stimulus 5 (NL1) was correctly identified as Dutch by 100% of the participants, and stimulus 6 (NL 2) was correctly identified as Dutch by 93.3% of the participants within the condition.

Table 1. Crosstabulations of identified country of origin speakers (N = number of participants)

SP-NL 1		SP-NL 2		MEX-NL1		MEX-NL 2		NL 1		NL2	
Country	N (%)	Country	N (%)	Country	N (%)	Country	N (%)	Country	N (%)	Country	N (%)
Spain	4 (14.3)	Spain	4 (13.3%)	Mexico	4 (13.3%)	Mexico	4 (12.9)	NL	29 (100)	NL	28 (93.3)
Argentina	4 (14.3)	Turkey	4 (13.3%)	Turkey	9 (30%)	Poland	4 (12.9)			Turkey	1 (3.3)
Poland	3 (10.7)	Poland	3 (10%)	Morocco	5 (16.7%)	Spain	3 (9.7)				
		Argentina	3 (10%)			Suriname	3 (9.7)				

RQ1: To what extent are Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch speakers evaluated differently than native Dutch speakers on perceived comprehensibility, attitudinal evaluations (i.e. likeability and competence), and hireability in a job application context by native Dutch listeners?

In order to answer the first research question, multiple analyses of variances were conducted to determine the effect of the type of accent on the listeners' perceived comprehensibility and attitudinal evaluations (i.e., likeability, competence, and hirability).

3.2.1. Perceived comprehensibility

A one-way analysis of variance showed a significant effect of 'Type of Accent' on perceived comprehensibility (F (5, 170), = 38.52, $p < .001$). The perceived comprehensibility of the Dutch accent ($M = 5.39$, $SD = 1.24$) was higher than the Mexican-Dutch accent ($p < .001$, Bonferroni correction; $M = 3.47$, $SD = 1.21$) and the Spanish-Dutch accent ($p < .001$, Bonferroni correction; $M = 4.04$, $SD = 1.17$). The comprehensibility of the Mexican-Dutch accent was lower than the Spanish-Dutch accent ($p = .037$, Bonferroni correction). This means that native Dutch was considered the most comprehensible and Mexican-Dutch the least comprehensible.

Table 2. Means (*M*), standard deviations (*SD*), and number of participants (n) for 'comprehensibility' with 'accent' as the independent variable (1 = low, 7 = high).

		M	*SD*	n	
Comprehensibility	Spanish	4.04	1.17	58	
	Mexican	3.47	1.21	57	
	Dutch	5.39	1.24	58	
	Total	4.31	1.44	173	

3.2.2. Attitudinal Evaluations: Likeability and Competence

A one-way analysis of variance showed no significant effect of 'Type of Accent' on Likeability (F (2, 170) < 1) or Competence (F (2, 170 < 1). Therefore, no differences were found in the attitudinal evaluations based on the accents. The table below provides an overview of the means and standard deviations.

Table 3 Means (*M*), standard deviations (*SD*), and number of participants (n) for 'likeability' and 'competence' with 'accent' as the independent variable (1 = low, 7 = high).

		M	*SD*	n	
Likeability	Spanish	5.41	.78	58	
	Mexican	5.20	.93	57	
	Dutch	5.29	.83	58	
Competence	Spanish	5.07	.78	58	
	Mexican	4.75	.88	57	
	Dutch	5.09	.87	173	

3.2.3. Hireability

A one-way analysis of variance showed a significant effect of 'Type of Accent' on 'Hireability' (F (2, 170) = 6.92). The hireability of the Dutch (M = 5.09, SD = .96) was significantly higher than the Mexican (p < .001, Bonferroni-correction; M = 4.41, SD = .99). There was no difference between the hireability of the Mexicans and the Spaniards (M = 4.67, SD = .96, p = .491) nor between the Spaniards and the Dutch (p = .069, Bonferroni-correction).

Table 4. Means (*M*), standard deviations (*SD*), and number of participants (n) for 'hireability' with 'accent' as the independent variable (1 = low, 7 = high).

		M	*SD*	n
Hireability	Spanish	4.67	.96	58
	Mexican	4.41	.99	57
	Dutch	5.09	1.00	58
	Total	4.72	1.02	173

RQ2: To what extent are native Dutch listeners' attitudinal evaluations and comprehensibility of Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch affected by their personality traits?

To answer the second research question, multiple regression analyses were performed to determine the effect of personality traits, based on the HEXACO-60 dimensions, on comprehensibility, attitudinal evaluations, and hireability. Moreover, multiple regression analyses were performed, accounting for the listeners' age and the accent's recognizability.

3.3.1. Comprehensibility

A multiple regression analysis showed that the variable Personality dimensions explained 3.6% of the variance in perceived comprehensibility (F (6, 159) = 2.02, p = .066). Personality dimensions were not shown to be a significant predictor of perceived comprehensibility. However, conscientiousness was shown to be a significant predictor of perceived

comprehensibility (β = .24, *p* = .004). If conscientiousness increases with 1 *SD*, perceived comprehensibility increases with .24 *SD*, given that all other variables are kept constant. In other words, participants who scored higher on conscientiousness gave higher ratings on perceived comprehensibility than those who scored lower on conscientiousness.

The concurring β- and *p*-coefficients of the personality dimensions as predictors for perceived comprehensibility can be found in the table below.

A second multiple regression analysis accounted for 'age'. The analysis showed that 'age' (β = -.15, *p* = .088) was no significant predictor of Comprehensibility. However, Conscientiousness (β = .25, *p* = .003) was shown to be a significant predictor of comprehensibility even when controlled for 'age'.

A third multiple regression analysis accounting for 'recognizability of the accent' showed that recognizability (β = -.115, *p* = .146) was no significant predictor of Comprehensibility.

3.3.2. Attitudinal Evaluations - Likeability

A multiple regression analysis showed that the variable Personality dimensions explained 18.3% of the variance in likeability (F (6,159) = 7.17, *p* < .001). Extraversion (β = .18, *p* = .013), Conscientiousness (β = .31, *p* < .001), and Openness (β = .19, *p* = .011) were shown to be significant predictors of likeability. This means that if extraversion increases with 1 *SD,* likeability increases with .18 *SD*, given that all other variables are kept constant. If Conscientiousness increases with 1 *SD,* likeability increases with .31 *SD*, given that all other variables are kept constant. If Openness increases with 1 *SD,* likeability increases with .19 *SD*, given that all other variables are kept constant. Therefore, participants who were more conscientious, extraverted, or open to new experiences would give higher scores on the evaluations than those with lower scores on the dimensions.

A second multiple regression analysis accounted for 'age'. The analysis showed that 'age' (β = -.15, *p* = .051) was a significant predictor of Likeability. So as age increased, likeability ratings decreased. Moreover, Extraversion (β = .20, *p* = .006), Openness (β = .16, *p* = .027), and Conscientiousness (β = .32, *p* <.001) were shown to be significant predictors of likeability even when controlled for age.

A third multiple regression analysis accounting for 'recognizability of the accent' showed that recognizability (β = .07, *p* = .337) was no significant predictor of Likeability.

3.3.3. Attitudinal Evaluations - Competence

A multiple regression analysis showed that the variable Personality dimensions explained 7.3% of the variance in competence (F (6,159) = 3.165, p = .006). Conscientiousness (β = .17, p = .038) and Openness (β = .18, p = .023) were significant predictors of Competence. This means that if Conscientiousness increases with 1 *SD*, Competence increases with .17 *SD*, given that all other variables are kept constant. If Conscientiousness increases with 1 *SD*, likeability increases with .19 *SD*, given that all other variables are kept constant. In other words, more conscientiousness and openness to new experiences led to higher scores in competence.

A second multiple regression analysis accounted for 'age'. The analysis showed that 'age' (β = -.18, p = .030) was a significant predictor of Competence. This means that if Age increases with 1 *SD*, Competence decreases with .18 *SD*. Moreover, Openness (β = .15, p = .048), and Conscientiousness (β = .18, p = .030) were shown to be significant predictors of 'competence' even when controlled for age.

A third multiple regression analysis accounting for 'recognizability of the accent' showed that recognizability (β = .055, p = .479) was no significant predictor of Competence.

3.3.4. Hireability

A multiple regression analysis showed that the variable Personality dimensions explained 15.2% of the variance in hireability (F (6,159) = 5.93, p <.001). Agreeableness (β = .17, p = .032), Conscientiousness (β = .27, p <.001), and Openness (β = .21, p = .006) were shown to be significant predictors of hireability. This means that if Agreeableness increases with 1 *SD*, hireability increases with .17 *SD*, given that all other variables are kept constant. If Conscientiousness increases with 1 *SD*, likeability increases with .27 *SD*, given that all other variables are kept constant. If Openness increases with 1 *SD*, likeability increases with .27 *SD*, given that all other variables are kept constant.

A second multiple regression analysis accounted for 'hiring experience'. The analysis showed that 'hiring experience' (β = -.11, p = .184) was no significant predictor of hirability. However, Agreeableness (β = .16, p = .041), Openness (β = .19, p = .010), and Conscientiousness (β = .27, p < .001) were shown to be significant predictors of hireability even when controlled for hiring experience.

A third multiple regression analysis accounted for 'age'. The analysis showed that 'age' (β = -.17, p = .039) was a significant predictor of hirability. This means that if Age increases with 1 *SD,* hireability decreases with .17 *SD*, given that all other variables are kept constant. Agreeableness (β = .15, p = .045), Openness (β = .18, p = .016), and Conscientiousness (β = .28, p <.001) were shown to be significant predictors of hireability even when controlled for 'age'. Moreover, Extraversion (β = .14, p = .055) was shown to reach significance when accounted for age.

Another multiple regression analysis accounting for 'recognizability of the accent' showed that recognizability (β = .03, p = .730) was no significant predictor of Hireability.

To conclude, participants who self-identified as being more agreeable, conscientious, and open to new experiences would give the speakers higher ratings with regard to hireability. Moreover, the older the participants, the lower the perceived hireability of the speaker.

Table 5. Regression analyses for HEXACO-60 dimensions as predictors of understandability and attitudinal evaluations.

	Understandability								Attitudinal Evaluations							
	Comprehensibility				Likeability				Competence				Hireability			
Variable	B	$SE\ B$	β	p	B	$SE\ B$	β	p	B	$SE\ B$	β	p	B	$SE\ B$	β	p
Intercept	.11	1.82		.95	-.47	1.00		.638	1.3	1.06		.222	-1.24	1.21		.306
Honesty-Humility	.04	.23	.02	.857	.07	.12	.04	.590	-.13	.13	-.07	.345	-.154	.15	-.08	.307
Emotionality	-.19	.18	-.08	.305	.02	.10	.02	.809	.02	.11	.01	.883	.10	.12	.06	.433
Extraversion	.18	.22	.06	.428	.30	.12	.18	.013*	.18	.13	.10	.177	.23	.15	.12	.112
Agreeableness	.19	.25	.06	.453	.16	.14	.08	.266	.27	.15	.15	.068	.37	.17	.17	.03*
Conscientiousness	.62	.21	.24	.004*	.46	.11	.31	<.001*	.26	.12	.17	.038*	.48	.139	.27	<.001*
Openness to Experience	.04	.19	.02	.829	.26	.10	.19	.011*	.25	.11	.18	.023*	.34	.124	.21	.006*
R^2	.07				.21				.07				.18			
F	2.020				7.169*				3.165*				5.925*			

* p = significant

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4. Discussion & Conclusion

The present study was one of the first to examine the relationship between listeners' personality traits and the evaluations of non-native speakers. Moreover, it was the first study to consider whether Dutch listeners could identify a difference between Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch. The study aimed to examine the effects of non-native accentedness in a Dutch business context and to seek a possible factor influencing listeners' perceptions of L2 speakers. By considering two foreign accents, one of which is considered from a Western country and the other from a non-Western country, the study aimed to research the saliency of accentedness on the ethnic hierarchy within Dutch society. This was examined by comparing native-Dutch accents with Spanish-Dutch and Mexican-Dutch accents on the variables of understandability, likeability, competence, and hireability. Moreover, the impact of personality traits was determined based on the HEXACO-60 personality test.

4.1. Perceived Comprehensibility

The first research question of this study sought to determine the extent to which Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch speakers were evaluated differently than native Dutch speakers on (perceived) comprehensibility, attitudinal evaluations (i.e., likeability and competence), and hireability in a job application context. With respect to perceived comprehensibility, it was found that the comprehensibility of the native-Dutch speakers was rated as significantly higher than that of the Spanish-Dutch and Mexican-Dutch speakers. In addition, the perceived comprehensibility of the Mexican-Dutch speakers was evaluated as significantly lower than the Spanish-Dutch speakers. Moreover, the recognizability of the accent did not have an effect on the perceived comprehensibility.

It is important to note that this study aimed to examine the perceptions of comprehensibility rather than actual comprehensibility. This means the respondents had to estimate how much the message was understood (Nejjari et al., 2012). It may be that the respondents' actual comprehensibility of the message was higher or lower than what they self-assessed. Therefore, it is unknown whether the native-Dutch speakers were actually more comprehensible than the Spanish-Dutch and Mexican-Dutch speakers and if the Spanish-Dutch speakers were more comprehensible than the Mexican-Dutch speakers. However, since this study aimed to look at the listeners' perceptions and factors influencing these perceptions rather than the listeners' skills to comprehend a message, actual comprehensibility was not considered.

The findings of this study were in line with the expectation that the interference of the speakers' L1 would diminish the understandability of the message (Van Wijngaarden 2001). In addition, these findings are consistent with those of other studies showing that non-native speech is perceived as less comprehensible than native speech (Fuertes et al., 2012; Hendriks et al., 2015; Hendriks et al., 2016; Hendriks & Van Meurs, 2017; Munro & Derwing, 1995).

Moreover, this finding supports Van Maastricht et al.'s (2016) study, which found that Spanish-Dutch speech was more difficult to understand than native-Dutch speech. However, it is difficult to pinpoint what could explain the differences between the Spanish-Dutch and Mexican-Dutch speakers. Contrary to expectations, familiarity with the accents did not influence the perceived comprehensibility.

4.2. Attitudinal evaluations

With regard to the attitudinal evaluations, this study found no significant differences between the native Dutch, Spanish-Dutch, and Mexican-Dutch speakers in terms of likeability or competence. These findings are somewhat surprising given the fact that other research shows that non-native accents are evaluated more negatively than native accents (e.g., Fuertes et al., 2012). For instance, the meta-analysis by Fuertes et al. (2012) discussed how non-standard accents are more negatively evaluated than standard accents. Moreover, a Hendriks et al. (2021) study showed that Dutch listeners rated moderate non-native accents as significantly less competent and likable than native accents in an EMI context. In addition, Nejjari et al. (2012) showed how more intelligible speakers were considered more pleasant, friendly, and considerate. Likewise, Dragojovic et al. (2017) implied that a stronger degree of foreign accentedness results in more negative evaluations.

In contrast, the finding does align with Hendriks, Van Meurs, and Van Gelder (2021), who showed that Dutch listeners did not rate strongly accented German-Dutch speakers as less competent or less likable than Standard-Dutch speakers. According to the authors, the finding could have been attributed to a positive effect of stereotyping. It is difficult to say whether this could have affected the results of this study, considering the listeners had a hard time identifying the speakers' nationalities, which resulted in a broad range of answers, making it questionable what kind of biases based on stereotypes affected the results.

Although no significant differences were found with regard to these attitudinal evaluations, the results did show that listeners' age was a significant predictor of the

perceived likeability and competence of the speaker. In both instances, the findings showed that as the age of participants increased, the perceived likeability and competence decreased.

Interestingly, a significant difference was found between the speakers regarding hireability. The native-Dutch stimuli were evaluated as significantly more hireable than the Mexican-Dutch stimuli. In contrast, the difference between the Spanish-Dutch and native-Dutch stimuli only neared significance ($p = .069$), and no significant difference was found between the Spanish-Dutch and Mexican-Dutch. Moreover, the results showed that 'age' significantly predicted the perceived hireability of the speaker.

A possible explanation for the differences in the perceived hireability could be the difference in comprehensibility between the speaker groups. As mentioned, the Mexican-Dutch stimuli were perceived to be less comprehensible than the Spanish-Dutch and native-Dutch stimuli. A possible explanation can be found in a study by Roessel et al. (2019), which showed that comprehensibility mediated affect and competence, which mediated hireability. Therefore, the degree of comprehensibility could have influenced the perceived hireability negatively.

It remains speculative why there was only a significant difference between the speakers concerning hireability. However, it is plausible that the ethnic hierarchy that prevails in the Dutch labor market played a role in the evaluations of the Mexican-Dutch speakers. Although the Spanish-Dutch speakers and Mexican-Dutch speakers were to some extent identified as having the same origin, the Mexican-Dutch speakers were more often identified as Turkish or Morrocan. This is an interesting finding, especially when considering the socioeconomic context in which the Dutch listeners reside. Within the Dutch workforce, Turkish, Moroccan, Surinames, Middle and Eastern Europeans, and Antillians seem to experience the highest amount of discrimination (between 48-59%), whereas migrants with a Western background experience a similar amount of discrimination as Dutch people without a migratory background (Andriessen et al., 2012). It is possible that listeners associated the Mexican-Dutch speakers more with the non-Western migratory groups than the Spanish-Dutch speakers, leading to decreased perceived hirability. These findings concur with the tentative expectation that accentedness plays a role in placing migrants lower on the ethnic hierarchy within the Dutch labor market.

4.3. The effect of personality Traits

The second research question aimed to determine whether listeners' personality traits could have a predictive effect on the perceptions of non-native speakers with regard to comprehensibility, attitudinal evaluations, and hireability. The results of this study showed that Conscientiousness was a significant predictor in all instances. Surprisingly, the results show a positive relationship, indicating that the more conscientious a listener is, the higher the accents were evaluated. This is surprising because other research showed that more conscientiousness led to harsher foreign accent evaluations (Gaffney & Côté, 2020).

According to Gaffney and Côté (2020), people with higher levels of conscientiousness would have high expectations of themselves and others, leading to more negative evaluations of L2 speech. However, it is important to note that in the Gaffney and Côté (2020) study, unlike this study, participants were specifically instructed to judge the accents and asked to rate the foreign accent on a scale of 1 to 5. In this study, participants were instructed to answer questions on the communicative skills of the speaker, and mentions of a foreign accent were avoided. Given that conscientious people are diligent, careful, and prudent (Ashton & Lee, 2009), their answers are likely to be very task-specific, meaning that since participants were not directly asked to judge the accent in this study, their answers might not have been influenced by the accent (strength) but more so on the content of the message.

Another possible explanation for the positive relationship between conscientiousness and the evaluations could be related to the study by Sims (2017), which found that conscientiousness is a predictor of active empathic listening, meaning that conscientious people are actively involved when listening to speakers and show empathy. Since participants of this study were asked to listen to audio fragments and answer statements based on the communicative skills of the speaker, it could have been that their 'active empathic listening' was activated, which resulted in more positive evaluations.

With regard to perceived comprehensibility, the regression analyses showed that besides conscientiousness, no other personality trait was found to be a significant predictor. In other words, perceived comprehensibility increased when conscientiousness increased, and vice versa. It seems possible that these results are due to perceived comprehensibility being more related to the listeners' skills and conscientiousness being a more task-oriented characteristic. In contrast, the other personality traits lean more toward social skills, sentimentality, and flexibility.

The results regarding the predictor effect of personality traits on the attitudinal evaluations showed that aside from Conscientiousness, Extraversion and Openness to new experiences were significant predictors of Likeability and accounted for 18.3% of the variance. In other words, the increase in Extraversion, Conscientiousness, and Openness led to an increase in Likeability. However, with regard to competence, only the personality traits of Conscientiousness and Openness were shown to be significant predictors and accounted for 7.3% of the variance. These results partially corroborate with previous research. Previous observations have shown that extroverted people are more likely to be accepting of foreign-accented people (Dewaele & McCloskey, 2015). Moreover, according to Gaffney and Côté (2020), Extraversion was negatively correlated with foreign-accent ratings, meaning that more extroverted participants were less strict toward accented speech.

The regression analyses for hireability showed that conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness were significant predictors and explained 15.1% of the variance, meaning that participants with higher levels of these dimensions would give higher ratings to the speakers with regard to hireability. A study by Sims (2017) showed that openness and agreeableness were predictors of active-empathic listening, resulting in active involvement and empathy. This could be a possible explanation as to why participants who are more open and agreeable are more inclined to hire foreign-accented speakers. Moreover, Openness to experience has been shown to be an important trait for intercultural competence (Leung et al., 2014). Therefore, those with a lower score in Openness may experience the language barrier/foreigner as a 'threat' or 'challenge'. In contrast, those with higher scores may be more intrigued or interested. In addition, agreeableness is characterized by being forgiving, gentle, flexible, and patient, which could be considered important traits when working with non-natives or in intercultural settings. Likewise, the study by Gaffney and Côté (2020) showed that Agreeableness was negatively correlated with foreign accent-ratings.

Since agreeableness was only a significant predictor for hireability and not for the attitudinal evaluations, it is plausible that 'hireability' is considered an 'extra' step in accepting foreign accents/foreigners. It seems as if it is necessary to be more forgiving of mistakes in L2 speakers' utterances to be willing to provide them with the same opportunities as native speakers. This indicates that people should be made aware of their own biases toward foreign accents in order to be able to see through them.

4.4. Practical implications

This study was the first to investigate the comprehensibility, attitudinal evaluations, and hireability of Spanish-Dutch and Mexican-Dutch, but adds to the growing body of literature surrounding the evaluations of non-native accents. Moreover, it is one of the first studies examining the effects of listeners' personality traits on the evaluations of non-native accents. Since no previous research had looked at Spanish-Dutch and Mexican-Dutch, it was unclear whether the speakers' native accents could be distinguished in their Dutch. Since listeners indicated different countries of origin for the stimuli, it seems like Spanish-Dutch and Mexican-Dutch should be considered two separate types of accents rather than one 'Spanish accent'.

Furthermore, the findings showed that the Spanish- and Mexican-Dutch accents were considered less comprehensible than the native-Dutch accent, with the Mexican-Dutch accent being the least comprehensible. However, the non-native accents were evaluated similarly to the native accents regarding likeability and competence. With regard to hireability, the Mexican-Dutch accent was evaluated significantly lower than the Spanish and native-Dutch accents. It seems plausible that the perceived lower level of comprehensibility created a glass ceiling for Mexican-Dutch speakers. Even though the Mexican-Dutch speakers were perceived as equally competent, listeners did not perceive them as qualified enough.

In addition, age was found to be a significant predictor for likeability, competence, and hireability. The results showed that as the age of the participants increased, the ratings decreased. Therefore, awareness of biases toward foreign accents should be especially raised among older people.

Moreover, the results of this study showed that the personality dimensions conscientiousness, openness, extraversion, and agreeableness can be considered predictors in the evaluations of non-native speakers. This suggests that the attitudinal evaluations are not only based on the speaker but on inherent aspects of the listeners as well. Moreover, it shows that based on personality traits, some listeners can be more accepting of a foreign accent. As mentioned in the introduction, anecdotal evidence had already suggested that some people have more trouble understanding and are less accepting of foreign-accented speech. The effect of personality traits can now explain this.

Considering that the study used job pitches as stimuli, the results provide implications for selection and recruitment processes. The finding suggests that the Dutch should be made aware of possible (unconscious) biases with regard to recruitment. Indicating non-natives are equally competent or likable does not guarantee that it is reflected in behavior (i.e., hiring). Therefore, to actively tackle discrimination in the labor market, it would be useful for

organizations to organize trainings in which biases against foreign accents are discussed. On the other hand, the findings showed that Spanish-Dutch speakers are evaluated similarly to native Dutch speakers in all aspects, insinuating that discrimination based on accent is no threat to them. This shows the prominence of the ethnic hierarchy in the Dutch labor market.

Besides bias training, it is necessary for companies that aim to diversify their staff to consider the type of person in charge of the recruitment and selection processes. The findings of this study suggest that younger people who are more conscientious, agreeable, and open to new experiences are more likely to welcome someone with a foreign accent than someone who is older and does not possess these personality traits. Considering agreeableness seems to be the deciding factor in perceived hireability, it is essential that recruiters either possess and/or train their forgiveness, gentleness, flexibility, and patience.

4.5. Limitations and recommendations for future research

Although a matched-guise technique is preferred in this study, finding a speaker who could reproduce the Mexican-Dutch, Spanish-Dutch, and native-Dutch accents was impossible. Therefore, it was necessary to use several speakers for the stimuli. Since voice characteristics were not measured, it is difficult to say whether this could have influenced the results. In addition, although native speakers of Mexican-Spanish and Castilian-Spanish were used, it was challenging for experts in the Spanish language to identify the differences in the accents properly. Considering the accents were evaluated differently, more research is needed to identify how the Spanish dialects influence the L2 accent and how they can be differentiated.

Another possible limitation of this study is the length of the questionnaire. Quite a large number of participants did not finish the study and could, therefore, not be included. No incentives were used in this study that could have been used as an external motivation for the participants. This combination made it challenging to get enough respondents.

As it did not fall in the scope of this study, participants were not asked to rate the accents on factors such as 'accent strength'. However, this distinction is often made in the field of accentedness studies. Since, to my knowledge, no other research has been conducted with regard to foreign accents within a Dutch business context; it would be interesting for future studies to take accent strength into consideration and examine whether this influences the perceptions of foreign-accented speakers.

Considering this is one of the few studies investigating the evaluations of non-native Dutch accents, it is important for future research to conduct more experiments among a Dutch listener group to gain greater accuracy on the matter. By taking a closer look at the attitudinal

evaluations, it is possible to gain more insight into factors contributing to workplace discrimination. In addition, so far, most research focuses on the speakers rather than the listeners, who also have a part to play in communication. Therefore, it is recommended that future studies incorporate personality trait tests, such as the HEXACO-60, into their studies. Likewise, more research is needed to generalize the effects of personality traits on comprehensibility, attitudinal evaluations, and hireability.

4.6. Theoretical implications and contributions

The findings of this study provide some tentative initial evidence that accentedness is a salient factor in the so-called ethnic hierarchy within the Dutch labor market. Although the Standard Dutch, Mexican-Dutch, and Spanish-Dutch speakers were evaluated as equally competent and likable, the Mexican-Dutch speakers were perceived to be less hireable. These findings raise intriguing questions regarding perceived competence and hireability, as both variables led to different results. There appears to be a difference between perceiving someone as competent and actively wanting to work with them or seeing them as qualified for the job. This challenges the perceptions within Dutch society with regard to ethnic minorities and job fit.

Even though it is difficult to compare results directly with previous research, the results could possibly be linked to Breugelmans & Van de Vijver (2004). According to their study, Dutch people tend to tolerate minorities but expect the minority group to adapt to the majority and do not feel the need to facilitate them in their integration process actively. This tolerance may be reflected in the equal evaluations of likeability and competence across all speaker accents, whereas the lack of inclination to facilitate the integration themselves is mirrored in the lower perceptions of hireability. Moreover, the results showed how the listeners' agreeableness appears to be the missing link between perceiving a non-native speaker as competent or hireable.

The results suggest that listeners' personality traits have an influence on the perceived comprehensibility, attitudinal evaluations, and hireability of non-native speakers. Conscientiousness was found to be positively linked to the evaluations of non-native speakers, in contrast to Gaffney and Côté (2020). Moreover, extraversion, openness to new experiences, and agreeableness were found to be significant predictors. This indicates that not only are non-native speakers responsible for improving their communication skills, but listeners contribute to the success of communication.

Besides the listeners' personality traits, their age also affected their perceptions of the speaker. This finding provides evidence for the notion that listeners' characteristics influence

perceptions. Considering that research is often conducted with participant groups consisting of students, it is questionable to what extent their age influenced the results.

Moreover, seeing that respondents often associated the Mexican-Dutch and Spanish-Dutch accents with countries such as Marrocco, Turkey, Poland, and Suriname, it raises the question of the extent to which the listeners' socio-economic context influences their perceptions of foreign-accented speakers. Considering the countries with which the speakers were associated are the largest minority groups within the Netherlands, it is questionable how much this affected the perceptions. Therefore, more research is needed to observe the relationship between listeners and their perceptions of non-native speakers.

Bearing in mind that this was one of the first studies examining the perceptions of non-native speakers of Dutch listeners within a business context, and to my knowledge, the first study to examine Spanish-Dutch and Mexican-Dutch separately, as well as one of the first studies to examine the effects of listeners' personality traits on perceived comprehensibility, likeability, competence, and hireability, additional research is needed to be able to generalize these findings.

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Appendix A: Job pitch speech sample text (English version)

Filler

What is marketing? Many people think of it simply as the process of selling and advertising. But selling and advertising are only two functions of marketing. The simplest definition is this: marketing is the delivery of customer value and satisfaction profit. In other words, finding customers, keeping them happy, and making money out of the process.

Wat is marketing? Veel mensen zien het simpelweg als het proces van verkopen en adverteren. Maar verkopen en adverteren zijn slechts twee functies van marketing. De eenvoudigste definitie is deze: marketing is het leveren van klantwaarde en tevredenheidswinst. Met andere woorden, klanten vinden, ze tevreden houden en er geld mee verdienen.

Verbal guise (Standard Dutch speaker, Mexican-Dutch speaker, Spanish Dutch Speaker):

I'm strong in developing training programs and loss prevention techniques. I would say that my greatest strength is that I always try to stay involved with both the project and the employees I'm working with. Creating a safe and pleasant environment is crucial for increasing the productivity of the employees and the organization as a whole. Moreover, I would say that I'm easygoing and handle stress well. I try not to overthink the situation too much while still being critical while strategizing on a sale.

Ik ben sterk in het ontwikkelen van trainingsprogramma's en verliespreventietechnieken. Ik zou zeggen dat mijn grootste kracht ligt in het altijd betrokken proberen te blijven bij zowel het project als de medewerkers waarmee ik werk. Het creëren van een veilige en prettige omgeving is cruciaal voor het verhogen van de productiviteit van de medewerkers en de organisatie als geheel. Bovendien zou ik zeggen dat ik makkelijk in de omgang ben en goed met stress om kan gaan. Ik probeer niet te veel na te denken over de situatie terwijl ik toch kritisch ben terwijl ik een strategie voor een verkoop uitstippel.

Appendix B

<u>SDNL</u>
ɪk ben stɛrk ɪn hɛt ɔntˈwɪkələ(n) van ˈtrenɪŋsproˈxramas en vərˈlis prəˈvɛn(t)sitɛxˈnikə(n).
ɪk ˈdɛŋk dat mɛin xrotstə kraxt lɪxt ɪn hɛt ˈaltɛit [bəˈtrɔkə(n) proˈberə(n) tə ˈblɛivə(n) [bɛi [zoˈwɛl hɛt proˈjɛkt als də ˈmedəwɛrkər warˈme ɪk wɛrk.
hɛt kreˈjerə(n) van en ˈvɛiləxə en ˈprɛtəxə ɔmˈxevɪŋ ɪs krysiˈjal vor hɛt vərˈhoxə(n) van
də prodʏktiviˈtɛit van də ˈmedəwɛrkərs en də ɔrxaniˈza(t)si als xəˈhel.
bovənˈdin fɪnd ɪk dat ɪk makɛlɪjk ɪn də ˈɔmxaŋ ben en xut mɛt strɛs ɔm kan xan.
ɪk proˈber nit tə vel na tə dɛŋkə(n) ˈovər də sityˈwa(t)si tɛrˈwɛil ɪk tɔx ˈkritis ben tɛrˈwɛil ɪk en ˈvɛrkopstratəˈxi ˈœytstɪpəl.

<u>SP1</u>
ik bɛn ɛsterk ɪn hɛt ɔntˈwɪkələ(n) van ˈtrenɪŋsproˈxramas en vərˈlisprəˈvɛn(t)sitɛkˈnikə(n).
ɪk ˈdɛŋk dat mɑin xrotstə kraxt lɪxt ɪn hɛt ˈaltɛit bəˈtrɔkə(n) proˈberə(n) tə ˈblɛivə(n) bɛi zoˈfɛl
hɛt proˈdʒɛkt als də ˈmedəwɛrkərs ʻwarˈme ɪk ʻwɛrk.
hɛt kreˈjerə(n) van en ˈvɑiləxə en ˈprɛtɛxə ɔnˈxevɪŋ ɪs kryʃiˈjal vor hɛt vərˈhoxə(n) van
də prodʏktiviˈtɛit van də meʻdəwɛrkərs en də ɔrxaniˈza(t)si als xəˈxel.
ʻbovəndin fɪnd ɪk dat ik makɛlɪjk ɪn də ˈɔnxaŋ ben en xut mɛt ɛstrɛs ɔm kaŋ xan.
ɪk proˈber nit tə vel na tə dɛŋkə(n) ˈovər də ɛsityˈwa(t)si tɛrˈwɑil ɪk tɔx ˈkritiʃ ben tɛrˈwɑil ɪk en ˈvɛrkopstratəˈxi ˈœytstipəl.

<u>SP2</u>
ik ben ɛstɛrk ɪn hɛt ɔntˈwɪkəlɪŋ van ˈtrenɪŋsproˈxramɑs ɛn vərˈlis prəˈbɛn(t)sitɛkˈnikə(n).
ik ˈdɛŋk dat mɛin xrotstə krɑxt lɪxt ɪn hɛt ˈaltɛit [bəˈtrɔkə(n) proˈberə(n) tə ˈblɛibə(n) bɛi
zoˈwɛl hɛt proˈjɛkt als də ˈmedəwɛrkər warˈme ɪk wɛrk.
hɛt kreˈjerə(n) van en ˈvɛiləxə en ˈprɛtəxə ɔmˈxevɪŋ ɪs krysˈjal vor hɛt vərˈxoxə(n) van
də prodʏktibiˈtɛit van də ˈmedəwɛrkərs en də ɔrxaniˈzasi als xəˈxel.
bobənˈdin find ik dat ɪk ʻmaklɪjk ɪn də ˈɔmxaŋ ben en xut mɛt ɛstrɛs ɔm kaŋ xan.
ɪk ʻprober nit tə vɪl na tə dɛŋkə(n) ˈovər də sityˈwɑsi tɛrˈwɛil ɪk tɔx ˈkritis ben tɛrˈwɛil ɪk en ˈvɛrkopstratəˈxi ˈœytstipəl.

<u>MEX1</u>
ik bɛn ɛsterk ɪn hɛt ɔntˈwɪkələ(n) van ˈtrenɪŋsproˈxramɑs ɛn vərˈlis prəˈvɛn(t)sitɛkˈnikə(n).
ɪk ˈdɛŋk dat mɛi xrotstə kraxt lɪxt ɪn hɛt ˈaltɛit bəˈtrɔkə(n) proˈberə(n) tə ˈblɛivə(n) bɛi zoˈwɛl
hɛt proˈjɛkt als də ˈmedəwɛrkərs warˈme ɪk wɛrk.
hɛt kreˈjerə(n) van en ˈvɛiləxə en ˈprɛtəxə ɔŋˈxevɪŋ ɪs krysiˈjal vor hɛt vərˈxoxə(n) van
də prodʏktiviˈtɛit van də ˈmedəwɛrkərs en də ɔrxaniˈzasi als xəˈxewl.
bovənˈdin fɪn ik da(t) ik ʻmakɛlɪjkɛ ɪn də ˈɔmxaŋ ben en xut mɛt ɛstrɛs ɔm kan han.
ɛk proˈbɛr nit tə vel na tə dɛŋkə(n) ˈovər də sityˈwasi tɛrˈwɛil ɪk ɛkritiʃ ben tɛrˈwɛl en ˈvɛrkopɛstratəˈxi ˈœytstɪpəlt.

<u>MEX2</u>
ɪk ben ɛsterk ɪn xɛt ɔntˈwɪkələ(n) van ˈtrenɪŋsproˈxramas ɛn vərˈlis prəˈvɛn(t)sitɛkˈnikə(n).
ɪk ˈdɛŋ dat mɛin xrotstə krax(t) lɪxt ɪn hɛt ˈaltɛit [bəˈtrɔkə(n) proˈberə(n) tə ˈblɛivə(n) [bɛi [zoˈwɛl hɛt proˈjɛkt als də ˈmedəwɛrkərs warˈme ɪk wɛrk.

hɛt kreˈjerə(n) van en ˈvɛiləxə ɛn ˈprɛtəxə ɔmˈxevɪn ɪs krysiˈjal vor xɛt vərˈhoxə(n) van
də prʊdʏktiviˈtɛit van də ˈmedəwɛrkərs en də ɔrxaniˈzasi als xəˈxel.
bovənˈdin fɪn ɪk dɑt ɪk makɛlɪjk ɪn də ˈɔmxɑŋ ben en xut mɛt ɛstrɛs ɔm kɑŋ xan.
ɪk proˈber nit tə vel ʼna tə dɛŋkə(n) ˈovər də sityˈwasi tɛrˈwɛil ɪk tɔx ˈkritiʃ ben tɛrˈwɛil ɪk enen

vɛrʼkopstratəˈxi ˈœytstɪpəl.