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A subtle method of removing accent prejudice.

The impact of encouraging central processing for attitudinal evaluations and hirability for a Turkish-Dutch accent among Dutch speakers.

Radboud University Nijmegen, Netherlands

Student name: Tom Lüer
Student number: 1063722
Master track: Global Communication and Diversity
Assessor: dr. E.R. Felker (Emily)
Second assessor: dr. M.A. Troncoso Ruiz (Aurora)
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Abstract

The Netherlands is having a shortage of teachers for several years now and the government is trying to solve this problem. A possible solution for this problem is to increase the hiring pool by accepting non-standard Dutch accented teachers more. This study investigates the effect of two independent variables; Accent (Turkish-Dutch and Standard Dutch) and information processing type (Central route and Peripheral route) on the dependent variables Status, Likeability, Dynamism, and Hirability. Three hypotheses were tested for effects. Leading to the main research question: **To what extent will the encouragement of central processing improve the evaluation of a Turkish-Dutch accent for Dutch people?**

This study conducted an experiment in the form of a questionnaire. The questionnaire asked Dutch speakers to listen to an audio fragment of a speaker who wanted to become a Dutch teacher.

The results showed significant effects on Status, Likeability, Dynamism, and Hirability. In all cases the Turkish-Dutch accent was rated lower, and therefore more negatively, compared to the Standard Dutch accent. This study did not find a significant effect where the central processing route would remove the negative evaluations for the Turkish-Dutch accent. A manipulation check of time spent on answering the questionnaire showed no differences for the central processing condition and the peripheral processing condition, indicating that the manipulation check failed. Therefore, this study does not provide evidence that central processing improves the evaluation of a Turkish-Dutch accented speaker compared to a Standard Dutch accented speaker.

Introduction

The Dutch government has noticed that there is a large urgency regarding a shortage of teachers in the Netherlands. Primary schools, high schools and secondary vocational education all are in need of teachers (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2022). Even before the COVID-19 pandemic there was a noticeable shortage in teachers in Dutch education and the amount of people who were studying to be teachers was also stagnant. This shortage grew larger during the pandemic to a point where the Dutch government interfered. Solutions provided were ideas such as more permanent work contracts for teachers, a more forced cooperation between boards in the approach to combat the shortage and to create frameworks in guiding and training (new) teachers, in cooperation between schools and teacher education studies (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2022). A solution to this shortage of teachers could be the recruitment of Dutch people with a non-standard accent who were not yet considered to be teachers by the government, or were not yet hired by schoolboards due to the negative stigma surrounded by a non-standard Dutch accent. The non-standard Dutch accent specifically targeted is the Turkish-Dutch accent because Turkish people are the largest immigrant group in the Netherlands (CBS, 2022). Therefore the aim of this study is to find out if a subtle intervention method can reduce the negative evaluation of a non-standard Dutch accented speaker by Dutch listeners. A hiring process where accent is not a factor, could increase the amount of non-standard Dutch accented teachers. The results from this thesis will provide a method to reduce negative evaluations compared to previous obvious intervention methods.

Theoretical framework

Humans make assumptions about a person's capabilities, beliefs and attributes on the basis of just language (Cargile et al., 1994). When people speak the same language but with a different accent, people start to think that they are different from each other. This idea of feeling different from another person is the Social Identity Theory (SIT) of Taifel and Turner (1986). The SIT suggests that individuals feel collective identity based on their membership in a group, based on categories such as race/ethnicity and gender identities. This categorization leads to a "us" versus "them" group mentality (Giles et al., 2010; Taifel & Turner, 1986). Consequently, this group mentality creates a favorable bias towards an individuals' own group and a negative bias towards another group (Brewer, 1979; Hewstone, 1990; Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Brewer et al., 1993). The SIT is also applicable in communication between groups with different accents. When a speaker has a non-standard accent (i.e., accents that are considered foreign, spoken by

minority groups or spoken by lower socio-economic groups (Fuertes et al., 2012)) they are rated lower on evaluations about the speaker compared to the standard accent (i.e., the accepted accent of the majority of the population (Fuertes et al., 2012)).

Research suggests that the SIT is applicable in a communication context with accent differences. Derwing and Munro (1997) designed a study to find out how Cantonese, Japanese, Polish and Spanish accented English was evaluated by native English listeners. Derwing and Munro (1997) looked at the evaluations of accentedness, perceived comprehensibility, and intelligibility. Results showed that accent ratings were worse for non-standard accents than perceived comprehensibility ratings and intelligibility ratings. This implied that although the accent in itself was rated worse, the message was understood.

Similarly, Fuertes et al. (2012) researched accent evaluations, but conducted a meta-analysis of the empirical literature on the effects of speaker's accents on interpersonal evaluations. Here 20 studies were compared that looked at the effects of standard accents (i.e. the accepted accent of the majority of the population) versus the non-standard accents (i.e. accents that are considered foreign or spoken by minorities in society) in English on evaluations about the speakers. Where previous research was unorganized in the usage of evaluation terms, Fuertes et al. aimed to classify each of the characteristics in one of three domains: Status (e.g. intelligence, competence, ambition, education and social class), Solidarity (e.g. trustworthiness, similarity to the listener, attractiveness, benevolence) and Dynamism (e.g. level of activity and liveliness). Their results showed that on all three domains the standard accents were rated more positively compared to the non-standard accents. This study not only provided theoretical insights, but also created a template for future research about the evaluation of accented speakers based on their accent.

The non-standard Dutch accent in the Netherlands is evaluated differently compared to the standard Dutch accent. Bezooijen and Ytsma (2000) looked at regional Dutch accents compared to the 'pure' standard Dutch. This study let students evaluate speakers with the standard Dutch accent and five non-standard accent varieties on personality impressions, perceived linguistic divergence (how far does the accent stray from the standard accent), and the geographic identifiability. Results showed that for personality impressions, standard Dutch speakers were perceived to be significantly more dominant than all non-standard accented speakers. They also received significantly higher ratings on integrity than accented speakers from the south. Social attractiveness showed no difference. Linguistic divergence showed that

speakers from the south were perceived to have significantly stronger and more homogeneous accents than the speakers from the north and the west. Speakers from the south were also easiest to identify with regards to geographic origin.

This research into Dutch regional accents was continued by Heijmer and Vonk (2002). They looked into the effects of a regional Dutch accent based on the dimension competence and socialness. Here, standard Dutch, Vlaams, Amsterdams, Den Haags, Limburgs, and Twents were evaluated by a listener in a job interview setting. Results showed that the standard Dutch accent was rated significantly lower on socialness compared to all the regional accents. When the standard accent was compared to the combined regional Dutch accents and Vlaams, it seemed that the regional accents were evaluated more positively again on socialness compared to the standard accent. But this time the standard accent was also rated better on competence compared to the regional accents. These two studies both show that the standard accent is more dominant (Benzooijen & Ytsma, 2000) and also less sociable (Heijmer & Vonk, 2002) compared to the regional Dutch accents.

Hendriks and van Meurs (2021) also looked into the evaluation of regional Dutch accents and the standard accent, but this time in commercial and non-commercial contexts. Hendriks and van Meurs (2021) used the dimensions proposed by the meta-analysis of Fuentes et al. (2012). Results showed that both contexts had no effect on the evaluations of standard and regional Dutch accents. In both cases, a regional accent was evaluated more negatively than a standard accent for all attitudes towards the speaker (competence, status, dynamism) and comprehensibility.

This finding of Hendriks and van Meurs (2021) is a change compared to Benzooijen and Ytsma (2000) where there was no significant difference between regional accents and standard accents on social attractiveness and Heijmer and Vonk (2002) where the regional accents seemed to be more sociable than standard accents. Yet this lower evaluation of the regional accents does not stop regionally accented people from becoming teachers.

A non-standard Dutch accent seems to be evaluated lower compared to the standard Dutch accent as well. One study done on primary school children in the northern part of the Netherlands by Dekker et al. (2021) let children do the Implicit Association Task (IAT). This was to measure the relative attitudes of standard Dutch versus Frisian Dutch and Moroccan-Arabic accented Dutch. The results showed significantly lower ratings for Moroccan-Arabic accented Dutch and 'other languages' compared to standard Dutch.

This suggests that the regional Dutch accents are evaluated more negatively compared to the standard Dutch accent and based on a single study performed on children, a non-native

Dutch accent is also rated lower. This insight could indicate that not only children but also adults will evaluate non-native Dutch accents lower on attitudinal evaluations compared to the standard Dutch accent. This follows the Social Identity Theory that people from a different group are evaluated differently in a negative manner starting from a young age.

A more refined area of research in accent evaluation was looking at the effect of how hireable a person with or without an accent was. A meta-analysis conducted by Spence et al. (2022) concluded that standard accented job candidates are perceived as more hireable than non-standard accented candidates. Within this meta-analysis one study initiated the combination of hirability and accent evaluation. This was conducted by Deprez-Sim & Morris (2010). These researchers investigated the hirability of people with an accent in the workplace. In a US setting, the American job applicant was evaluated more favorably than the French applicant, but the Colombian applicant did not differ from both the American applicant and the French applicant. The authors explain this by lower similarity for the French applicant towards the US compared to a Colombian applicant towards the US. This is in line with the SIT.

Spence et al. (2022) stated two distinct perspectives as to what drives the lower evaluation of non-standard accents compared to standard accents in a hiring setting: (1) the perception that non-standard accents can impede job-relevant communication and/or (2) the non-standard accent signals “otherness” and therefore candidates are devalued. This second finding relates to the SIT previously mentioned where a “us” versus “them” mentality is created. Furthermore, the bias was stronger for high communication jobs according to Spence et al. (2022).

Expanding on this stronger bias, accent evaluation in an educational setting where teachers are evaluated based on their accents is valuable to look at. Jensen et al. (2017) investigated the intelligibility and accent rating of English-Medium Instruction (EMI) with a native English and non-native English accent by manipulating cognitive load. EMI is a teaching setting where English is the language that is spoken and written. In Jensen et al. (2017) two experiments the authors manipulated the complexity of tasks by making one task simple and the other task complex. The results showed that for more complex tasks intelligibility is lower in comparison to simple tasks. Accent rating was lower for the non-native English accent compared to the native English accent which is in line with other research (Fuertes et al., 2012). The authors also noted that for the non-native English accent, participants spend more time answering questions than for the native English accent questions. This implied that the

cognitive load was bigger for the non-native English accent. The usage of cognitive load is of importance for the current study and will be thoroughly explained further in the introduction.

Similarly to Jensen et al. (2017), Hendriks et al. (2021) also researched EMI but in a Dutch context. In Hendriks et al. Dutch, internationals and native English-speaking listeners evaluated fragments recorded by moderately accented Dutch English, slightly accented Dutch English and native English teachers on their accents. Results showed that the accent evaluation was less positive on the variables likeability and status for moderately Dutch accented lecturers than the slightly accented lecturers and the native English lecturers for Dutch listeners and international listeners. Whereas the native listeners did not differ their attitudes to differently accented lecturers. Dutch listeners were even more negative about moderately accented speakers than international listeners, meaning that the Dutch listeners evaluate their own accent harsher than non-Dutch listeners do. Poorer comprehensibility was found to have a negative effect on Dutch and international (but not native) listeners' evaluations of the teaching quality of moderately accented lecturers but not of slightly accented lecturers. This suggests that Dutch people are very critical of Dutch accented English, even more so than internationals and native English speakers.

Dutch listeners seem to evaluate a heavy Dutch-accented English teacher as bad, but the research on Dutch accents in a Dutch teaching setting is scarce. Grondelaers and van Hout (2010) tried to find out what Dutch people think about their own regional accents in a neutral context and a teacher context and if this different context changed evaluations. Earlier research showed that teachers were assessed lower in prestige. Grondelaers and van Hout (2010) used this as their basis for the teacher context. Results showed that both regional accent and occupation were determinants of attitude formation. Regional accent is a stronger variation determinant on speaker status and speaker competence, whereas the occupation difference (whether a person is a teacher or not) equalizes regional accent differences on the integrity dimension. These results imply that the status of speakers with a standard accent was damaged by the information that they are high school teachers, whereas the status of regional accents was enhanced by the information that they are high school teachers.

Swanenberg et al. (2022) performed an experiment with students attending a teacher training college to ask if it is allowed for a teacher to speak with an accent. The results showed that students said that accents are allowed in the Dutch classroom for a teacher, but it depends on which accent is spoken. Students perceived the native accents as better compared to the non-native accents. Intelligibility seemed to be the same, but the status for non-native accents

was lower. The three accents with the lowest rating were Turkish, Moroccan and Polish accented Dutch. The authors suggest that a reason for this might be the association with labor migrants as a lower role in society. The research on non-native Dutch accents in a teaching setting is scarce and considering the current urgency to find teachers in the Netherlands, possessing knowledge on the attitude of listeners towards non-standard accented Dutch teachers is a gap that should be researched.

In an effort to reduce this negativity bias towards non-standard accented speakers, researchers have tested different intervention methods. Weyant (2007) aimed to reduce the negative stereotyping of individuals who speak English as their second language. In this study majority native English students and some native Spanish students heard an audio recording of a native speaker of American English or of a Spanish-accented English speaker. The experimental group of participants was asked to take the perspective of the Spanish-accented speaker. Perspective taking was manipulated in such a way that participants had to write down how a day in the life of a Spanish-accented speaker would look like. The participants of the experimental group evaluated the Spanish-accented speaker better than the control group. Weyant (2007) discussed that this supports the notion of reducing negative stereotyping by blurring distinctions typically made between perceptions of the self and members of an out-group. However, Hansen et al. (2014) thought that the participants in Weyant's (2007) experiment could have been influenced by social desirability effects, whereby participants would be aware of the desired effect of the researcher—in Weyant's case, a better evaluation of the non-standard accent.

Hansen et al. (2014) tried to reduce the discrimination of non-standard accented speakers and by also removing the social desirability effect. German participants in the experimental group were met with an English speaker before the experiment. This confederate asked for simple directions in English, placing the participants in a position where they would have to communicate in their non-native language. After this interaction for the experimental group, the participants were asked to answer questions about a hiring situation for two candidates. The experimental group evaluated the Turkish accented German better compared to the control group, suggesting that the intervention worked. Hansen et al. (2014) mention that a possible mechanism responsible for the effectiveness of this intervention could be a process related to self-other overlap. In this intervention, the candidate was for a moment the non-native speaker and could experience the difficulty of having to communicate in a non-native language. This relates to the perspective taking concept proposed by Weyant (2007).

Roessel et al. (2017) introduced another intervention method. A prejudice control intervention was created. Here the awareness of participants in the experimental group was raised to remind them of negative reactions and discriminatory evaluations towards accented speakers. Roessel et al. (2017) conducted three experiments. Each experiment had German participants evaluating strong German accented English, slight German accented English and native English speakers in a hiring situation where the speaker either gave low quality arguments or high quality arguments. In the first experiment it was established that strong German accented English is evaluated worse compared to native English. The difference was so significant that the quality of arguments did not matter for strong accented speakers. The second experiment introduced the intervention method. It was again confirmed for the strong accent that the evaluation was lower, but with the prejudice control this negative evaluation was made non-significant, indicating that the prevention method worked. Results suggested that the experimental group evaluated the heavily German accented English speaker better compared to the control group. These articles suggest that interventions can have a positive effect on the evaluations of non-standard accented speakers but only in explicitly set conditions. The prejudice control method is not very subtle in implementation in practical matters. For this intervention to work, people would have to be reminded repeatedly to avoid a negative bias towards non-standard accented people. This paper aims to find a more subtle way that removes the negative spontaneous response for non-standard accented speech.

The two intervention methods discussed in the previous paragraph both try to reduce negative evaluations on non-standard accented speakers by trying to remove the initial negative reaction. Weyant (2007) tested it by letting people take the perspective, Hansen et al. (2014) tested it by putting listeners in the same position, and Roessel et al. (2017) tested it by giving a warning. All to remove the stereotyping which is done by spontaneous responding. Roessel et al. (2019) wrote in their theoretical article that “It appears that relatively controlled responding may be influenced by norms and motivations to respond without prejudice, whereas negative biases emerge in spontaneous responding.”

This idea follows the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) created by Cacioppo and Petty (1986). The ELM follows the idea that a person can process information in two manners. The first manner is through the central route. This means that the receiver of a message is consciously aware of the message that is conveyed and is willing, able and motivated to process the received information to think about it. In the context of accents in communication, the message would be sentences spoken by a person. The second manner is through the peripheral

route. This means that the receiver of a message is aware of the message but not consciously processing it and is therefore not willing, not able and not motivated to process the received information. In the peripheral route, the message is received in an automatic way without thought. These two processing routes are also known as the dual processing theory. The studies looking at intervention methods suggested that the negative bias was a result of stereotyping and prejudice. The ELM suggest that the peripheral route is in full effect when people stereotype because it is an automatic response.

Hoeken et al. (2009) wrote a book about persuasive texts – research and design where they go into detail about the dual processing theory. The authors showcase how a person can be manipulated into entering either the central route or the peripheral route. For a person to switch from automatic responding (peripheral processing route) to thought-out responding (central processing route), the authors provide three requirements. Firstly, the person must be familiar with the topic. If a person is not familiar with a topic then they cannot comprehend the topic and will turn to automatic responding. Secondly, the person has to be motivated. Often a person can process information but is not in the mood to do so. Thirdly, the person has to be able to read/see/hear everything. If it is physically impossible to process information, then this process will not take place, no matter how knowledgeable or motivated a person is. These three conditions have to be met in order for a person to change from the peripheral processing route into the central processing route.

Based on this premise, if the central route could be activated by people before interacting/evaluating people different from themselves (i.e., non-standard Dutch accent), it could be that the negative bias from stereotyping lessens.

The current study has the goal to create a more subtle intervention method that can reduce the negative evaluation bias of non-standard accented speakers. This study targets Turkish-Dutch accented speakers because research has shown that non-standard accents in the Netherlands are rated lower on status compared to standard Dutch in combination with the fact that the largest immigrant group in the Netherlands consists of Turkish people. The research question is as follows: *To what extent will the encouragement of central processing improve the evaluation of a Turkish-Dutch accent for Dutch people?*

In order to investigate this question, an experiment will be created where participants are subtly being manipulated into the central processing route by following the three conditions mentioned by Hoeken et al. (2009). This is different from previous intervention methods where participants are explicitly aware of the intervention. Previous research used method that were

direct such as a warning in the beginning of an experiment, or an intervention at the start of the experiment. The current research however will be more implicit. Participants will be implied/hinted to do something in the experiment. The research question will be answered through three hypotheses.

H1: A non-standard Dutch accent will be evaluated more negatively on Status, Likeability and Dynamism compared to a standard Dutch accent.

Following the trend of accent research done in English (Cargile et al., 1994; Derwing & Munro, 1997; Fuertes et al., 2012; Roessel et al., 2017), Danish (Jensen et al., 2017), Turkish (Hansen et al. 2014), Spanish (Weyant, 2007) and Dutch (Bezooijen & Ytsma, 2000; Heijmer & Vonk, 2002; Hendriks & van Meurs, 2021), the non-standard accent will be evaluated lower on attitudinal evaluations compared to a standard accent.

H2: A non-standard Dutch accent will be rated lower on hirability compared to the standard Dutch accent.

Following the trend in teacher setting studies (Jensen et al., 2017; Hendriks et al., 2021; Spence et al., 2022) where accents were evaluated, the person with a non-standard Dutch accent will be evaluated with a negative bias resulting in lower hirability.

H3: The negative bias for the non-standard accent will be smaller in the central processing condition, compared to the peripheral processing condition.

Following the ELM created by Cacioppo and Petty (1986), the idea that the central processing route will be conscious and therefore motivate a person to think more while evaluating another person, should reduce negative prejudice a person might have towards someone different from themselves based on accent. As is illustrated in Roessel et al. (2019) that relatively controlled responding may be influenced by norms and motivations to respond without prejudice. This hypothesis follows the findings of Roessel et al. (2019).

Methodology

Materials

This experiment with two independent variables was operationalized with two types of introductory texts and two types of audio fragments. The independent variable processing route was operationalized with two texts both written in Dutch. Both texts are shown below in table 1.

Table 1. Two introductory texts for the two processing routes.

Central processing route	Peripheral processing route
“You are part of an evaluation committee of Dutch teachers. By taking part in this survey, your input is of high value for many researchers in our Dutch society and outside our borders. You are assigned to listen to an audio fragment of a person who wants to become a high-school teacher. You are asked to evaluate the speaker on their expertise of the Dutch language. This survey has no time limit. Take all the time you need to fill in your answers. Take at least a minute to carefully think through everything.”	“This survey has an audio fragment of a person wanting to become a high school teacher. You are asked to evaluate the speaker on their expertise of the Dutch language. The research author is interested in your initial reaction, your gut feeling, so a time limit has been put in place of 2 minutes.”

The central processing route, as seen in table 1 on the left side, fulfilled the three conditions mentioned by Hoeken et al. (2009) for a person to enter the central processing route. This condition also applied the suggestion of Roessel et al. (2019) to motivate a person. This is showcased by being part of an evaluation committee of Dutch teachers and by expressing gratitude. This condition also added another dimension which was time. By giving the participant ample time and by encouraging a participant to use that time to answer the questionnaire, the central processing route was more likely to take place.

For the peripheral processing route, the introductory text is visible on the right side in table 1. This peripheral processing route did not fulfill the three conditions of Hoeken et al. (2009). This peripheral version did not provide ample time and urged the participant to finish the survey as fast as possible to incite initial response reactions.

The independent variable accent type was operationalized with two audio fragments selected from the pre-test which will be explained afterwards. The first audio fragment type was with a native Dutch accent, the second type was with a Turkish-Dutch accent. For both audio fragments, the speaker objectively introduced themselves and talked about their credentials and experience of becoming a teacher. This was a fragment of 30 seconds. The

reason for not including anything personal such as hobbies was because this could have an effect on the questions in the questionnaire, so an objective introduction of the speaker was more acceptable. The full text is visible in appendix 1.

Pre-test

The pre-test was conducted with the purpose of finding two speakers for the main experiment, one Standard Dutch accented speaker and one Turkish-Dutch accented speaker. This pre-test experiment was a verbal guise technique (Garrett, 2010), which is a method where there is one kind of text which is recorded by different speakers. This technique was used in favor of the matched guise technique, where one person speaks a text with different accent varieties, because it was difficult to find a person who can speak standard Dutch and a non-native Dutch accent both perfectly.

Three native Dutch accented speakers and three non-native Dutch accented speakers recorded an audio fragment of 30 seconds. The audio fragment used in the pre-test was the same as the audio fragment used in the main experiment for the reason that the speakers were rated in a similar manner when they speak the same voice lines. The listeners were nine native Dutch speakers. The listeners evaluated every speaker on voice quality (dynamism, pleasantness, naturalness), speech rate (slow – fast), speaker confidence (unconfident – confident) and perceived age (young – old) (scales based on (Bayard, Weatherall, Gallois, & Pittam, 2001; Jesney, 2004)). The listeners indicated where they think the speaker's accents originated from i.e., standard Dutch accented, regional Dutch accented, or non-native Dutch accented speakers. The results of the pre-test showed that one of the three Standard Dutch accented speakers was accurately recognized as a Standard Dutch accent by all pre-test participants. Participants of the pre-test also only recognized one of the three Turkish-Dutch accented speakers as a Turkish-Dutch accent. Based on this accurate recognition, these two speakers were chosen for the main experiment. The previously mentioned five variables were discarded because accent recognition was deemed to be more important than speaking manner. Accent recognition was more important because having two distinct accents which were recognized created a clearer distinction between the two accents. This was preferred over mixed accent recognitions with similar speaking manners because then the current study would no longer be Standard Dutch accent compared to Turkish-Dutch accent but something different.

Participants

A total of 146 listeners took part in the study. 36 Participants were removed for not fulfilling three criteria. The first condition was to agree to terms of participation. Two participants

declined and were therefore removed from the participant group. The second condition was to answer all the questions excluding demographic questions. This resulted in removing 16 participants from the participant group. The third condition was to listen to the provided audio once. If a listener did not listen at least 25 seconds to the audio, then this participant was removed from the participant group. This resulted in discarding ten participants. If a listener was on the audio fragment page for longer than 65 seconds, then this participant was also removed from the participant group because the instruction was to listen only once to the audio fragment. Leniency of 35 seconds was given for reading the small instruction and if the participant had not yet connected a listening device, this time was attributed towards the extra time. Eight participants listened to the audio longer than 65 seconds and were therefore removed from the participant group. The remaining 110 participants were used to calculate the demographic distribution (age in years: $M = 36.25$, $SD = 15$; range 18 – 74) 61.8% male participants. The highest achieved/current degree was a BA degree with 35.5% followed by a MA degree 21.8%. The majority of the participants live in the province Limburg 59.1% followed by Gelderland 20%. Half of the participants recognized their own accent as standard Dutch 50% followed by the regional Dutch accent 41.8%.

To test differences of the participants among the two conditions for age, a Chi-square test showed a non-significant relation between age and accent condition ($X^2(33) = 28.16$, $p = .707$) and a non-significant relation between age and processing type condition ($X^2(33) = 34.56$, $p = .393$). This showed that there was equal distribution among the accent and processing condition.

To test differences of the participants among the two conditions for gender, a Chi-square test showed a non-significant relation between gender and accent condition ($X^2(2) = 2.94$, $p = .23$) and a non-significant relation between gender and processing type condition ($X^2(2) = 4.18$, $p = .124$). This showed that there was equal distribution among the accent and processing condition.

To test the differences of the participants among the two conditions for education, A two-way ANOVA with accent and processing type showed a non-significant main effect of accent on education ($F(1, 106) < 1$). Processing type was not found to have a significant main effect on education ($F(1, 106) < 1$). The interaction effect between accent and processing type for education was not statistically significant ($F(1, 106) < 1$).

Design

This study was a 2x2 between-subjects design with Accent type and processing route being the independent variables and Status, Solidarity, Dynamism, and Hirability being the dependent variables. This resulted in the 2x2 design as shown in Figure 1. Participants were exposed to one level of an independent variable and answered questions influencing the dependent variables.

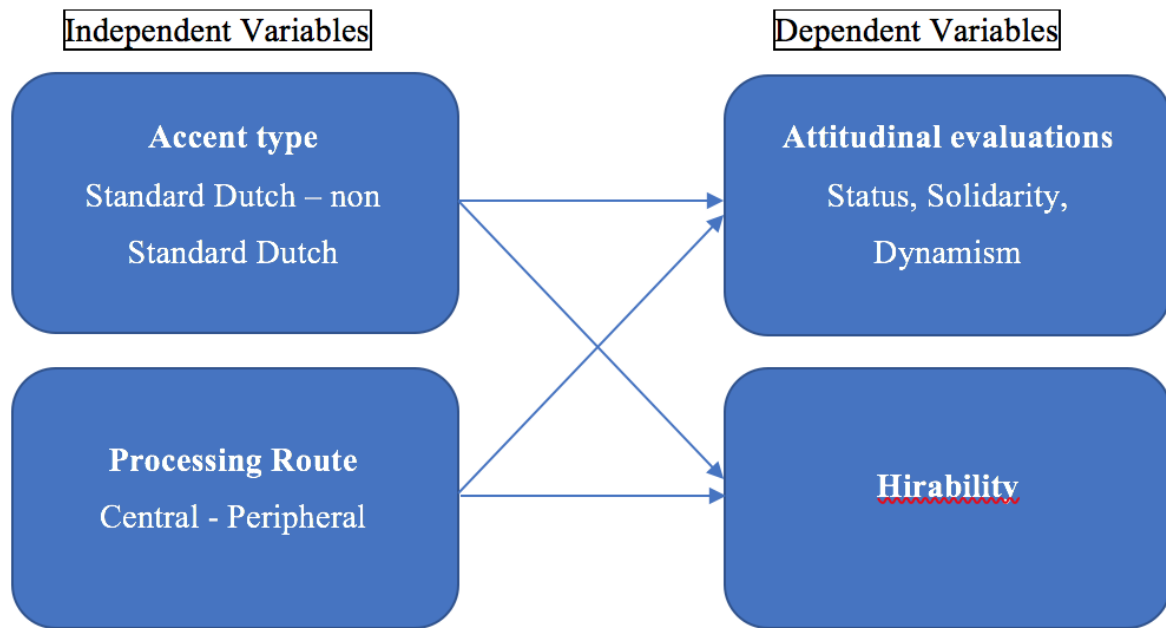


Figure 1: Analytical model of present research

Instruments

Participant information was asked about age, gender, latest achieved education and self-recognized Dutch accent with the options standard Dutch (Randstad accent), regional Dutch (South, North or Middle), or another accent.

Attitudinal evaluations towards the speaker were measured with seven-point Likert scales anchored by ‘1 = completely disagree – 7 = completely agree’ and introduced by the statement ‘The speaker sounds . . .’ (based on Bayard et al., 2001; Grondelaers et al., 2019; Hendriks et al., 2014, 2016; Nejjari et al., 2012).

Status was measured with the items ‘influential’, ‘trustworthy’, ‘self-confident’, ‘has a powerful voice’. The reliability of Status was acceptable: $\alpha = .906$.

Likeability was measured with the items ‘friendly’, ‘sympathetic’, ‘pleasing’, ‘credible’, ‘humoristic’, ‘tactful’. The reliability of Likeability was acceptable: $\alpha = .871$.

Dynamism was measured with the items ‘modern’, ‘hip’, ‘trendy’, and ‘lively’. The reliability of Dynamism was acceptable: $\alpha = .867$.

Hirability was measured with four seven-point Likert scales anchored by ‘1 = Not at all – 7 = very much’ on the items ‘satisfaction if hired’, ‘feel favorable towards the applicant’, ‘applicant would be an asset to the school’, and ‘likelihood to hire’ (adjusted from Deprez-Sims & Morris, 2010). The reliability of Hirability was acceptable: $\alpha = .948$. Deprez-Sims and Morris (2010) used seven items to measure hirability, but three items were not applicable in this experiment. These three items were ‘desire to work with the applicant’, ‘relationship with subordinates’, and ‘ability to manage’. These three items were not applicable in the current study because the participant cannot answer these items with the provided information.

Procedure

The questionnaire was administered using the online survey tool Qualtrics. Participants were asked to participate via social media, asking people on the street, phone calls and e-mail. The Dutch participants first had to check a consent form. The entire questionnaire was held in the Dutch language. After this the survey started and participants were put in one of the four conditions. All conditions started with a small introductory text where the participant was asked to evaluate a speaker on their teaching capabilities. Then two conditions had a standard Dutch accent and two conditions had a non-standard Dutch accent (Turkish-Dutch). Here participants listened to a 30 second audio fragment (where the spoken text is identical for all the conditions, but the speaker is different) and answered questions about the speaker on attitude evaluation and hirability. For the central processing condition there was a time limit where participants could not continue after spending at least 20 seconds answering the questions. For the peripheral processing condition there was a time limit of 2 minutes to answer the questions. This time limit was introduced to enhance a gut-feeling response. Then basic information was collected from the participant such as age, gender, current / last completed educational level and finally their self-recognized accent with the option standard Dutch accent, regional Dutch accent, or a non-standard Dutch accent. This survey took about five minutes to complete. There was no financial reward for participating in this survey.

Statistical treatment

Four, two-way ANOVA tests were done to try and find whether there was an effect of accent on attitudinal evaluations and hirability, and an effect of processing route on attitudinal

evaluations and hirability and whether there was an interaction effect between accent and processing route. Descriptive statistic tests were also done to find out if there were any significant difference among conditions regarding age, gender, and educational level with the use of Chi-square tests and a two-way ANOVA test.

Results

Manipulation check

A time manipulation check was implemented. The amount of time a participant spent on the questionnaire in the central processing route condition compared to the peripheral processing route condition was compared to each other. If participants spent more time in the central processing route, then it could be argued that the time manipulation check was a success. Because more time spent on a task could indicate that the initial ‘gut feeling’ response was averted. This is based on Jensen et al. (2017) where speakers for an experiment were selected based on the criteria of time. In Jensen et al. (2017) two speakers were selected based on the least amount of time spent on answering questions and on the most amount of time spent answering questions. This approach was replicated in the current study. To test this, an independent samples t-test showed a non-significant difference between central processing and peripheral processing with regard to time ($t(96.36) = 1.08, p = .224$). This means there was no statistical difference in the processing type condition for time spent on answering questions.

To test all independent and dependent variables, four two-way analyses of variance with Processing type (Central processing or Peripheral processing) and Accent (Standard Dutch accent or Turkish-Dutch accent) as factors with the dependent variables Status, Likeability, Dynamism, and hirability were conducted.

For Status, a two-way ANOVA with Processing type and Accent type as factors showed a significant main effect of Accent on Status ($F(1, 106) = 8.21, p = .005$). Processing type was not found to have a significant main effect on Status ($F(1, 106) = 1.8, p = 1.82$). The interaction effect between Processing type and Accent was not statistically significant ($F(1, 106) < 1$). Applicants with a Standard Dutch accent ($M = 4.66, SD = 1.34$) were evaluated with more Status than applicants with a Turkish-Dutch accent ($M = 3.94, SD = 1.35$) as is shown in table 2.

Table 2. Means, standard deviations and n for Status in function of processing type and accent type ((1 = totally disagree; 7 = totally agree) the higher the rating, the more status was assigned).

	Standard Dutch			Turkish-Dutch			Total		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Central processing	4.54	1.30	28	3.70	1.13	24	4.15	1.28	52
Peripheral processing	4.78	1.39	30	4.14	1.50	28	4.47	1.47	58
Total	4.66	1.34	58	3.94	1.35	52	4.32	1.39	110

For Likeability, a two-way ANOVA with Processing type and Accent type as factors showed a significant main effect of Accent on Likeability ($F(1, 106) = 6.72, p = .011$). Processing type was not found to have a significant main effect on Likeability ($F(1, 106) < 1$). The interaction effect between Processing type and Accent was not statistically significant ($F(1, 106) < 1$). Applicants with a Standard Dutch accent ($M = 4.65, SD = 1.18$) were evaluated as more likeable than applicants with a Turkish-Dutch accent ($M = 4.01, SD = 1.14$) as is shown in table 3.

Table 3. Means, standard deviations and *n* for Likeability in function of processing type and accent type ((1 = totally disagree; 7 = totally agree) the higher the rating, the more status was assigned).

	Standard Dutch			Turkish-Dutch			Total		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Central processing	4.65	1.22	28	3.92	1.00	24	4.32	1.17	52
Peripheral processing	4.65	1.17	30	4.22	1.25	28	4.44	1.22	58
Total	4.65	1.18	58	4.01	1.14	52	4.38	1.19	110

For Dynamism, a two way ANOVA with Processing type and Accent type as factors showed a significant main effect of Accent on Dynamism ($F(1, 106) = 5.04, p = .027$). Processing type was not found to have a significant main effect on Dynamism ($F(1, 106) = 1.82, p = .181$). The interaction effect between Processing type and Accent was not statistically significant ($F(1, 106) < 1$). Applicants with a Standard Dutch accent ($M = 4.19, SD = 1.32$) were evaluated with more dynamism than applicants with a Turkish-Dutch accent ($M = 3.65, SD = 1.17$) as is shown in table 4.

Table 4. Means, standard deviations and *n* for Dynamism in function of processing type and accent type ((1 = totally disagree; 7 = totally agree) the higher the rating, the more status was assigned).

	Standard Dutch			Turkish-Dutch			Total		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Central processing	3.92	1.37	28	3.58	.97	24	3.76	1.20	52
Peripheral processing	4.44	1.25	30	3.71	1.33	28	4.01	1.33	58
Total	4.19	1.32	58	3.65	1.17	52	3.93	1.28	110

The combined results of Status, Likeability, and Dynamism indicated that hypothesis 1 one is true. For all three attitudinal evaluations, the Turkish-Dutch accent was evaluated more negatively compared to the Standard Dutch accent.

For Hirability, a two-way ANOVA with Processing type and Accent as factors showed a significant main effect of Accent on Hirability ($F(1, 106) = 13.13, p < .001$). Processing type was not found to have a significant main effect on Hirability ($F(1, 106) < 1$). The interaction effect between Processing type and Accent was not statistically significant ($F(1, 106) < 1$). Applicants with a Standard Dutch accent ($M = 4.78, SD = 1.45$) were more likely to be hired than applicants with a Turkish-Dutch accent ($M = 3.77, SD = 1.54$) as is shown in table 5.

Table 5. Means, standard deviations and *n* for Hirability in function of processing type and accent type ((1 = totally disagree; 7 = totally agree) the higher the rating, the more likely the applicant would be hired).

	Standard Dutch			Turkish-Dutch			Total		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Central processing	4.68	1.45	28	3.65	1.32	24	4.20	1.48	52
Peripheral processing	4.88	1.28	30	3.88	1.73	28	4.40	1.58	58
Total	4.78	1.36	58	3.77	1.54	52	4.30	1.53	110

The results of the Hirability test indicated that hypothesis 2 is true. The Turkish-Dutch accented speaker was evaluated lower on hirability compared to the Standard Dutch accented speaker.

Hypothesis 3 was false. There was no interaction effect found between processing type and accent for Status, Likeability, Dynamism, or Hirability. This suggested that the effect of accent was not smaller in the central processing condition, relative to the peripheral processing condition.

Discussion

This study attempted to find a more subtle intervention method to reduce the negative evaluation of Turkish accented Dutch for Dutch people in a hiring setting.

Three hypotheses were created to find an answer to the main research question. The first hypothesis confirmed that the Standard Dutch accent was rated more favorably on Status, Likeability, Dynamism compared to the Turkish-Dutch accent. The second hypothesis confirmed that the speaker with the Standard Dutch accent was more likely to be hired for employment than the speaker with the Turkish-Dutch accent. The third hypothesis was not confirmed. There was no interaction effect between accent type and processing condition. This indicated that the negative bias was not removed/reduced and therefore the intervention method did not work. A possible supported reason for this is the manipulation check which was unsuccessful. Participants did not spend more time on the questions in the central processing condition compared to the peripheral processing condition. At face value this is true, but in the current research it is not possible to know if participants were motivated to think via the central processing route or not. The only observation is that participants spent an equal amount of time in both processing conditions. Conclusions cannot be drawn about the manner of thinking and the manner of evaluation.

This study shows that the evaluations of Status, Likeability and Dynamism for Turkish-Dutch accented speakers is still lower compared to the Standard Dutch accent. These findings concur with Derwing and Munro (1997), Weyant (2007), Fuertes et al. (2012), Hanssen (2014), Roessel (2017), and Hendriks et al. (2021) in an international setting where the non-standard accent was evaluated lower on these evaluations compared to the standard accent. Swanenberg et al. (2022) concluded that the non-standard accent was rated lower on Status compared to the standard Dutch accent which is identical to the current study.

Other studies have compared the regional Dutch accent with the standard Dutch accent and the differences on Status, Likeability, and Dynamism, but not with non-standard Dutch accents. This study is the first to specifically investigate the attitudinal evaluation differences between Turkish-Dutch and Standard Dutch accented speakers.

The current study suggests that Hirability is lower for Turkish-Dutch accented speakers compared to Standard Dutch accented speakers. This finding is supported by previous research

done by Spence et al. (2022) where in an international setting, the non-standard accent that was not similar to the standard accent was not hired as much as the non-standard accent that was more similar to the standard accent. This study shows that hirability is lower for the Turkish-Dutch accented speaker compared to the standard Dutch accented speaker in the Netherlands.

This study was unsuccessful in implementing a prevention method to reduce the negative evaluation for the Turkish-Dutch accent. The conditions of Hoeken et al. (2009) to nudge a participant into the central processing manner of thinking in combination with a manipulation check based on Jensen et al. (2017) to see how many seconds a participant spent on answering the questions in the survey did not succeed. The purpose of this study was to subtly change the negative manner of evaluating non-standard accented speakers. Where previous studies actively changed the way of thinking for participants, this study remained passive. Weyant (2007) specifically asked participants to take a perspective of a non-native speaker in account, Hansen et al. (2014) specifically urged participants to speak with a non-standard accent by introducing them to a non-native speaker, and Roessel et al. (2017) specifically warned participants about discrimination with a warning before the experiment. Following the finding of Roessel et al. (2019) that motivations and norms may be the source of reduced prejudice responding, the current study tried to increase motivations by including the participant in a hiring process and by expressing gratitude for participating and their input. But the current findings seem to indicate two things: (1) that the motivations are not important enough for the participant to reduce prejudice and/or (2) that motivations and norm were not involved enough for participants to make a difference in evaluating.

The contribution of the current study on a societal level is that it tried to provide a solution to resolve the teacher shortage in the Netherlands by trying to remove the negative non-standard accent bias. This study shows that the Turkish-Dutch accent is rated lower on Status, Likeability, Dynamism, and Hirability compared to the Standard Dutch accent. This suggests that the Turkish-Dutch accent is a strong cue for people to not hire a person.

On a scientific level, this study contributed a method of trying to encourage the central processing route to remove the spontaneous negative accent bias. Although the current study did not find significant results, the scientific literature suggests that the method could work. Limitations of the current methodology are described in the next section.

Limitations

A limitation of this study was the limited usability of the speakers. In this study three speakers with a Standard Dutch accent were found and three speakers with a Turkish-Dutch accent were found. The pre-test concluded that one speaker for the Standard Dutch accent was always recognized as the Standard Dutch accent and that one speaker for the Turkish-Dutch accent was always recognized as the Turkish-Dutch accent. The remaining four speakers were discarded because they were sometimes identified by listeners as a different accent. Ideally the three speakers for the Standard Dutch accent would all be recognized as Standard Dutch and afterwards be chosen based on the speaker characteristic scales of Bayard, Weatherall, Gallois, & Pittam, 2001; Jesney, 2004. The same would be done for the three speakers with a Turkish-Dutch accent. In the pre-test of this research the two chosen speakers were evaluated differently on the scales previously mentioned. For four of the five speaker characteristic scales (dynamic, pleasantness, naturalness, and confidence) there was a significant difference between the Standard Dutch accented speaker and the Turkish-Dutch accented speaker (see appendix 2 for additional testing and information). Although the two speakers differed so much on the four speaker characteristic scales, they were still used in the main experiment because the accent recognition was considered more important to maintain a clear distinction between Standard Dutch and Turkish-Dutch. The implication of this is that participants in the main experiment could attribute the significant differences for attitudinal evaluations and hirability based on speaker characteristic differences and not on the recognized accent. Therefore, in an ideal situation, the speakers should be recognized as different accents and still have the same speaker characteristics. Then the changes in attitudinal evaluations can be more accurately be attributed to the difference in accent. A suggestion for future research is to use a matched guise technique where one person speaks for both the Standard Dutch accent and the Turkish-Dutch accent. This could equalize speaker characteristics evaluations.

This limitation is connected to the verbal-guise technique. In the current research, the verbal-guise technique was used to create different audio fragments. As a result, the pre-test showed that the speaker chosen for the standard-Dutch accent had different speaker characteristics compared to the Turkish-Dutch accent. These differences could be reduced if one speaker voices the standard-Dutch accent and the Turkish-Dutch accent. This matched-guise technique could then exclude speaker characteristics and attribute more differences to the variation in accents.

A limitation regarding the implementation of the central processing route is the lack of norms. According to Roessel et al. (2019) a suggestion for removing bias is to adding motivation and

norms. The current research tried to improve motivation in the introductory text for the central processing condition by adding participants into a committee and by showing gratitude to the participant. The norms suggestion by Roessel et al. was challenging in the current experiment. Perhaps results would have been different if it was possible to increase norms or showcase norms in a manner that could somehow reduce negative bias all while remaining subtle.

A final limitation was the software used to conduct the survey. In the time frame of this research, Qualtrics, the software used to conduct a survey, did not provide an option for participants to only listen to the audio just a single time. Qualtrics only allows researcher to view how long a participant is viewing the page where the audio file is provided. Therefore it is uncertain if participants listen to the audio, or if participants listen a few seconds and pause, or only pause for 30 seconds. It is not even possible to see if the audio file was clicked to play. This is why the current research employed two time restriction where if a person was not listen long enough on the page, or was on the page for too long, this participant was removed from the participant group. Which reduced the amount of total participants this study had and also reduced the statistical power of this study. This is why in an ideal, controlled environment, it is preferred to know if a participant listens to the audio and also listens to the audio for the amounts that the researcher instructs.

For future research a suggestion is to implement a more secured manipulation check. The current research failed in implementing a manipulation check based on time spent on answering questions. Future research could improve on this by adding another manipulation check asking if the participant in the central processing condition was motivated to participate and motivated to answer the questionnaire. This could be done with the use of a Liker scale where the participant has to select how motivated he/she was after completing the questionnaire. If the first manipulation check based on time would fail again, then the next step could be to check the second manipulation check based on motivation, because Roessel et al. (2019) indicate that motivation could be the source for prejudice responding. After assessing the motivation level difference within the central processing condition, a new analysis could be conducted between motivated and not motivated participants.

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Appendix 1 – Audio fragment text

Op het voortgezet onderwijs heb ik de HAVO afgerond. Hier merkte ik dat voor de klas staan en presentaties geven mij erg goed bevielen. Dus ik koos ervoor om door te studeren in het gebied van lesgeven in combinatie met mijn favoriete vak; economie. Dit bracht mij bij de HBO lerarenopleiding economie. Dit heb ik afgerond met twee stages op basisscholen waar ik kinderen les gaf in rekenen. Tijdens mijn lerarenopleiding heb ik ook vrijwillig leerlingen op het voortgezet onderwijs geholpen met economie bijles.

Translation into English;

In high school I graduated with a higher general secondary education. Here I realized that I enjoyed standing in front of a class and to present. So I chose to continue my education in the area of teaching in combination with my favorite course; economics. This is where I ended up in higher professional education as secondary teacher training in economics. Here I graduated with two internships at primary schools where I taught children calculus. During my secondary teacher training education I also voluntarily helped students in high school with economics tutoring.

Appendix 2 – Pre-Test additional testing

To figure out the differences between the speaker with the Standard Dutch accent and the Turkish Dutch accent on dynamic, pleasantness, naturalness, speed, and confidence, several repeated measures tests were conducted to test differences within subjects.

A repeated measure analysis for Accent with as within subject factor Dynamic showed that there was a significant main effect of Dynamic ($F(1, 8) = 6.78, p = .031$). The Standard Dutch accent speaker ($M = 4.89, SD = 1.62$) was considered to be less dynamic than the Turkish-Dutch accent speaker ($M = 3.11, SD = 1.27$). Meaning that the Standard Dutch accent speaker did not change volume as much as the Turkish-Dutch accent speaker. See table 5 for additional information.

Table 5. Means, Standard Deviations and n for Dynamic in function of accent ((1 = many changes in volume; 7 = no changes in volume) the higher the rating, the less dynamic a speaker is).

Dynamic	M	SD	n
Standard Dutch	4.89	1.62	9
Turkish-Dutch	3.11	1.27	9

A repeated measure analysis for Accent with as within subject factor Pleasantness showed that there was a significant main effect of Pleasantness ($F(1, 8) = 28.99, p < .001$). The Standard Dutch accent speaker ($M = 5.11, SD = 1.05$) was considered more pleasant to listen to compared to the Turkish-Dutch accent speaker ($M = 2.56, SD = .88$). See table 6 for additional information.

Table 6. Means, Standard Deviations and n for Pleasantness in function of accent ((1 =very unpleasant; 7 = very pleasant) the higher the rating, the more pleasant a speaker is to listen to).

Pleasantness	M	SD	n
Standard Dutch	5.11	1.05	9
Turkish-Dutch	2.56	.88	9

A repeated measure analysis for Accent with as within subject factor Naturalness showed that there was a significant main effect of Naturalness ($F(1, 8) = 28.80, p < .001$). The Standard Dutch accent speaker ($M = 4.89, SD = 1.27$) was considered to be more natural compared to the Turkish-Dutch accent speaker ($M = 2.89, SD = .93$). See table 7 for additional information.

Table 7. Means, Standard Deviations and *n* for Naturalness in function of accent ((1 = very unnatural; 7 = very natural) the higher the rating, the more natural a speaker is).

Naturalness	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Standard Dutch	4.89	1.27	9
Turkish-Dutch	2.89	.93	9

A repeated measure analysis for Accent with as within subject factor Speed showed that there was a non-significant main effect of Speed ($F(1, 8) = 1.56, p = .247$).

A repeated measure analysis for Accent with as within subject factor Confidence showed that there was a significant main effect of Confidence ($F(1, 8) = 17.04, p = .003$). The Standard Dutch accent speaker ($M = 4.56, SD = 1.13$) was considered to be more confident compared to the Turkish-Dutch accent speaker ($M = 3, SD = .87$). See table 8 for additional information.

Table 8. Means, Standard Deviations and *n* for Confidence in function of accent ((1 = very unconfident; 7 = very confident) the higher the rating, the more confident a speaker is).

Confidence	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Standard Dutch	4.56	1.13	9
Turkish-Dutch	3	.87	9

Appendix 3 - Declaration plagiarism and fraud

Tom Lüer 1063722,

Master's student at the Radboud University Faculty of Arts,

declares that the assessed thesis is entirely original and was written exclusively by himself/herself. The undersigned has indicated explicitly and in detail where all the information and ideas derived from other sources can be found. The research data presented in this thesis were collected by the undersigned himself/herself using the methods described in this thesis.

Place and date:

Venlo, 8th of August 2023

Signature:



Tom Lüer

Appendix 4 Statement of own work

Student name: Tom Lüer

Student number: 1063722

PLAGIARISM is the presentation by a student of an assignment or piece of work which has in fact been copied in whole or in part from another student's work, or from any other source (e.g. published books or periodicals or material from Internet sites), without due acknowledgement in the text.

DECLARATION:

- a. I hereby declare that I am familiar with the faculty manual (<https://www.ru.nl/facultyofarts/stip/rules-guidelines/rules/fraud-plagiarism/>) and with Article 16 "Fraud and plagiarism" in the Education and Examination Regulations for the Bachelor's programme of Communication and Information Studies.
- b. I also declare that I have only submitted text written in my own words
- c. I certify that this thesis is my own work and that I have acknowledged all material and sources used in its preparation, whether they be books, articles, reports, lecture notes, and any other kind of document, electronic or personal communication.

Place and date: Venlo, 8th of August 2023

Signature:



The image shows a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads 'T. Lüer'. The signature is positioned above a horizontal line that serves as a baseline for the text.