



Are the Dutch as rudely direct as their stereotype?

Research into the expression and perception of politeness in text-only messages from native
Dutch speakers

Laura E. M. Teller

Snr 2045177

Master's Thesis

Communication and Information Sciences

Specialization Communication and Cognition

School of Humanities and Digital Sciences

Tilburg University, Tilburg

Supervisor: Dr. N. Braun

Second Reader: Dr. L. Oversteegen

February 2022

Abstract

Dutch people are frequently referred to as very direct by comparison in both scientific and public debate. However, scientific evidence to assume that Dutch people are more direct than people from other cultures is lacking. To provide insights into this issue, the current study examined whether the perception of politeness in Dutch and English text-only messages from native Dutch speakers differed cross-culturally. It was a two-part study. In the first part, native Dutch speakers (N = 55) wrote text-only request emails in Dutch and English to fictional colleagues and supervisors. This type of messages was chosen to mimic realistic everyday business communication. In the second part, native and non-native Dutch readers (N = 89) rated the request emails on politeness. As expected, the results revealed that non-native Dutch readers perceived text-only request emails from native Dutch authors as less polite than native Dutch readers did. In line with the expectations, no significant difference in the politeness perception of Dutch and English request emails was found. An unexpected result was that no interaction effect of the reader's language (Dutch as L1 or L2) and the language of the request email was found. Participants' cultures scores on power distance and individualism did not significantly influence the outcomes. Neither did hierarchy differences between the author and the addressee of the emails. This study can contribute to a more thorough comprehension of the cross-cultural perception of politeness in multilingual text-only communication, which is necessary for effective communication via text-only mediums.

Keywords: directness, Dutch, politeness perception, requests, text-only communication, culture, language

Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Are the Dutch as rudely direct as their stereotype?	5
Theoretical Framework	8
Politeness & Requests	8
The Dutch Culture & Politeness.....	9
Language & Politeness	10
Language, Culture, & Politeness	12
Cultural Dimensions & Politeness	13
Additional factors for Politeness Perception	15
Method	17
Design.....	17
Materials	20
Measures.....	20
<i>Control Measures</i>	21
Procedure.....	22
Data Analysis	24
Results	26
Reader Language, Text Language, & Politeness.....	26
Power distance & Individualism	28
Hierarchy	29
Additional data exploration: control variables	30
Discussion and Conclusion	32
The Dutch Culture & Politeness.....	32
Language & Politeness	33
Language, Culture, & Politeness.....	34

Cultural Dimensions & Politeness	34
Additional factors for Politeness Perception	36
Theoretical and Practical Implications	37
Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research.....	38
Conclusion.....	40
References	42
Appendices	45
Appendix A. Survey for Part I of the study.....	45
Appendix B. Surveys for Part II of the study	64
List of Tables and Figures	200

Are the Dutch as rudely direct as their stereotype?

Dutch people are often considered to be verbally straightforward, confrontational, even aggressive, and very argumentative in comparison according to research by Labrie et al. (2020). Even though the stereotype of the direct Dutch person is often mentioned in both public and scientific debate, empirical evidence to support the claim that Dutch people are fundamentally more direct than people from other cultures, is lacking (Labrie et al., 2020). Detecting a person's intended tone can be difficult, especially in text-only communication because of the lack of non-verbal cues (Hautasaari et al., 2014). In the Netherlands, just like almost everywhere else in the world, people use text-only communication such as email on a daily or even hourly basis. Email is namely a convenient and fast way for people to keep contact, do business, and gather information (Kruger et al., 2005). It is especially useful for professional distance communication, which could even be international, multilingual, and cross-cultural. However, there are a lot of challenges for multilingual and cross-cultural distance communication, especially in text-only mediums (Hautasaari et al., 2014). Gestures, voice, facial expressions, and context augment the richness of communications which increases the probability of correct interpretation (Riordan & Trichtinger, 2017). As mentioned, detecting the intended tone in text-only communication can be tough because of the lack of non-verbal cues in text-only mediums (Hautasaari et al., 2014). Previous research suggests that this limitation is frequently underestimated, so people are inclined to think they are able to communicate more efficaciously than they really are via text-only mediums (Kruger et al., 2005). Therefore, politeness is important in these social interactions and is expressed through language (Lau, 2019). Politeness can be defined as taking account of the feelings of others (Brown, 2014). It is related to directness (Wijst, 1995), and the Dutch are renowned for their directness (Rottier et al., 2010).

One way to explain the perceived directness of a Dutch person in multilingual distance communication is with cultural aspects. To try and give a cultural explication for Dutch directness, Hofstede's cultural dimensions can be used (Hofstede Insights, 2019; Labrie et al., 2020). The Dutch culture is characterized by, amongst other things, a low score on the dimension called *power distance*, according to Hofstede. Power distance “is defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (Hofstede Insights, 2019). In cultures with a low score on power distance, equality in relationships is usually favored, which results in a direct and participatory communication style (Labrie et al., 2020). The Netherlands further score rather high on *individualism*, which is “the degree of interdependence a society maintains among its members” (Hofstede Insights, 2019). In individualistic cultures, speaking one's mind is considered healthy and expressing personal opinions is expected. Additionally, the Dutch culture is defined by high indulgence, and freedom of speech is frequently regarded as especially important in indulgent cultures. Furthermore, the Dutch culture has a high score on long term orientation, which indicates a pragmatic nature (Labrie et al., 2020). These cultural factors, the described effects of a low score on power distance and a high score on individualism in particular, might explain the cross-culturally perceived directness of the Dutch.

However, sometimes misunderstandings even occur between first language (L1) speakers trying to convey messages via text-only mediums. When most of the communication is via text-only mediums like email or instant messaging, misunderstandings between L1 speaking authors and nonnative (L2) receivers can negatively affect interpersonal and work relationships (Hautasaari et al., 2014). According to Lapierre (2020), understanding what appropriate language and communication types to use when one enters a new workplace can be a challenge to new employees, especially for those whose L1 is different from the language

used in the workplace. Using appropriate language is frequently a key determining factor in how one is perceived by colleagues and how successfully one fits into the social component of work. As a part of this social component, requests are necessary in the workplace, but the imposing nature of requests can make them tough to form (Lapierre, 2020). Emails primarily sent to make a request, also called request emails, have been reported as intimidating for employees in a new workplace (Leopold, 2015).

To my knowledge, previous research has not investigated possible differences in the politeness perception of text-only messages, like request emails, among L2 Dutch speakers who have stayed in the Netherlands for a longer time (Hautasaari et al., 2014). These L2 Dutch speakers have had some exposure to the Dutch culture and ways of communicating. It would be interesting to explore if this exposure to the culture influences their perception of the politeness of L1 Dutch message authors. Since it has not been done before, previous research also suggested that it would be interesting to investigate how Dutch people express politeness in English and to compare how much their politeness in English differs from their native language, Dutch. This way the relation between language, culture and politeness can be further explored (Lau, 2019). Bicultural bilingual people incorporated at least two cultures within themselves and speak the corresponding languages. When they are cued by a particular language, these people activate different sets of culture-specific concepts, or mental frames (Luna et al., 2008). Therefore, it would be interesting to research the discrepancies between how L2 Dutch speakers, with all kinds of different cultural backgrounds, who have stayed in the Netherlands for a longer time, perceive politeness in text-only communication, and how L1 Dutch speakers express it as message authors. This study therefore answers the following research question: To what extent does text language (English/Dutch) of a text-only interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author affect the politeness

perception of L1 and L2 Dutch readers, and what is the role of the L2 Dutch readers' cultures (power distance, individualism) in the perception of politeness?

Theoretical Framework

Politeness & Requests

Since politeness is a sociolinguistic phenomenon linking language and its users to the social world around them, according to Eelen (2001), politeness can yield insights into the organization of social reality and the procedure that establishes and maintains this. Due to its emphasis on ethical sides of social contact, politeness can also reveal the essence of morality in people's daily lives. Politeness therefore touches on a multiplicity of issues (Eelen, 2001). According to Kruger et al. (2005), social judgment namely is essentially egocentric. When someone tries to imagine the feelings, thoughts, or perspective of another, more and more evidence indicates that people use oneself as a reference point (Kruger et al., 2005). Meanwhile, during social interaction, people say many things that the addressee does not want to hear or read. These include such things as requests, which threaten the receiver's future freedom of action, and criticisms, which threaten the receiver's self-esteem. One of the functions of politeness is to redress such threatening acts, making them less unpleasant for the receiver (Brown, 1992).

Requests are quite usual in daily communication and according to Forgas (1999) they have a key function in managing personal relationships and social situations, reaching interpersonal goals, and coordinating social behavior. Although a lot of standard conversations can be processed rather mindlessly, requests frequently demand more extensive processing. Due to the ever-present risks of offending or rejection, requests are usually made in a way that allows partakers to present and keep a proper social appearance (Forgas, 1999). Knowledge of all the different forms and mitigation devices that make a request (like politeness markers, hedges, and grounders) is useful when

forming requests. An example of a common politeness marker is the word "please", hedges are a mitigation device to soften the language, and a grounders can be a reason, justification, or explanation. At the same time, the requester also needs to have the ability to use appropriate language for a situation in a specific setting to apply the conventions of requests in a successful way that is perceived as appropriate by others (Lapierre, 2020). Therefore, requests involve strategic communication and oblige participants to actively interpret and oversee the social circumstances and to choose their words such that they communicate the optimal degree of politeness suitable for the situation (Forgas, 1999).

Notwithstanding the immense diversity of requests in content and form, according to Forgas (1999) most requests can easily be characterized by one important psychological aspect: the level of directness or politeness. Directness is the level of immediacy in the formulation of requests and politeness is a pragmatic, normative construct. Request politeness and directness are closely and inversely connected properties and are used interchangeably because of high consensus regarding the degree of politeness indicated by a more or less direct request formulation (Forgas, 1999).

The Dutch Culture & Politeness

Dutch people are cross-culturally perceived as direct in their multilingual distance communication. According to Labrie et al. (2020), this can be explained by several cultural aspects. For example, in the Netherlands, equality in relationships is mostly preferred, which leads to a direct and participatory communication style. Additionally, speaking one's mind is considered healthy and expressing individual opinions is expected. Furthermore, freedom of speech is regarded as especially important in the Netherlands and the Dutch are characterized by a pragmatic nature (Labrie et al., 2020). This combination of cultural values and characteristics applies specifically to the Netherlands. Other countries and cultures can have

different values and characteristics, which can result in different language use and communication styles.

According to Lapierre (2020), understanding what appropriate language and communication types to use in the workplace can be extra challenging to employees whose L1 is different from the language used in the workplace. Meanwhile, using appropriate language is often a key determining factor in how one is perceived by colleagues (Lapierre, 2020). Previous research additionally suggests that overconfidence in effectively communicating via text-only mediums comes from egocentrism, meaning the difficulty of disconnecting from one's own perspective whilst assessing the perspective of another (Kruger et al., 2005). As mentioned, speaking one's own mind is seen as healthy and expressing individual opinions is expected in the Netherlands (Labrie et al., 2020). Text-only interpersonal professional request emails from a L1 Dutch author, with Dutch cultural values and characteristics, are therefore expected to be perceived as less polite by L2 Dutch readers than by L1 Dutch readers regardless of the language in which the L1 Dutch author has written such email. Since the mentioned values and characteristics of the Dutch culture could foster the cross-culturally perceived directness of Dutch people, the following hypothesis was developed regarding the perceived politeness in a text-only interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author:

H1. *L2 Dutch readers perceive a text-only interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author as less polite than L1 Dutch readers do.*

Language & Politeness

Language and culture are connected, which is expressed in politeness. In interactions, the choice of words and phrasing of sentences can indicate how people perceive their relationship with one another or how they would want it to be perceived (Lau, 2019). For example, the Dutch and the English language have a common Germanic

origin, but according to Rottier et al. (2010) L1 English speakers use particular manners to express values and opinions, from which the meaning is sometimes unclear to others. Especially with the Dutch, who are known for their directness, this can create confusion. Most Dutch people are less used to these ways to express values and opinions (Rottier et al., 2010). L1 English speakers have been found to use more mitigators, more modal constructions and hedged expressions, and a greater frequency and variety of politeness strategies in request emails than L1 Dutch speakers (Leopold, 2015).

Previous research has investigated the differences and similarities in politeness in English and Dutch. In business, the Dutch are known as direct and even a bit rude (Lau, 2019). However, despite this stereotype of Dutch people, previous research by Le Pair (2005) on politeness in Dutch has found a preference for indirect requests. It was found that L1 Dutch speakers mostly use indirect requests (Le Pair, 2005). The findings contradict the stereotypical image of Dutch people being direct and rude (Lau, 2019). Moreover, research regarding the language use of native English speakers, native Dutch speakers, and Dutch learners of English in requests found that native Dutch speakers formulated relatively few direct requests compared to native English speakers (Hendriks, 2002). Given these findings, the Dutch seem to be even less direct than native English speakers in comparison. That contradicts the stereotype. Due to the dominance of their L1 culture, it is expected that L1 Dutch authors use similar indirect, linguistic strategies for both Dutch and English request emails. Therefore, the following hypothesis was developed:

H2. *A Dutch text-only interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author will be perceived as equally polite as an English text-only interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author.*

Language, Culture, & Politeness

Research has found that bicultural bilingual people activate different sets of culture-specific concepts when they are cued by a particular language (Luna et al., 2008). So given the values and characteristics of the Dutch culture, when L2 Dutch readers see a Dutch request message from a L1 Dutch author, they might expect a rather direct, participatory, and pragmatic communication style. Research has found that English is cross-culturally perceived as rather polite (Lau, 2019). However, understanding what appropriate language and communication types to use in the workplace can be extra challenging to employees whose L1 is different from the language used in the workplace (Lapierre, 2020). Furthermore, request emails, have been reported as intimidating for employees in a new workplace (Leopold, 2015). With this in mind, L2-readers are expected to perceive Dutch request emails from a L1 Dutch author as less polite than English request emails from a L1 Dutch author. L2 Dutch readers might namely have a different cultural and linguistic background as the author. Since it is expected that L1 Dutch authors use similar linguistic strategies for both Dutch and English request emails, it is also expected that L1 Dutch readers will perceive English and Dutch request emails from a L1 Dutch author as equally polite since they have the same cultural and linguistic background as the author. Therefore, the following hypotheses were developed:

H3a. *L2 Dutch readers perceive a text-only interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author as less polite than L1 Dutch readers do, especially if the interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author is in Dutch.*

H3b. *L1 Dutch readers will perceive English and Dutch interpersonal professional request messages from a L1 Dutch author as equally polite.*

Cultural Dimensions & Politeness

Politeness is expressed substantially differently in different cultures (Lau, 2019). Brown and Levinson (1987) have proposed a theory of politeness in which they suggest that politeness is determined by three factors: the power relationship between the requester and the requestee, the social distance between them, and the level of imposition the request poses on the requestee (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The first two of these factors are intricately linked to the cultural dimensions of power distance and individualism. Power distance namely indicates the extent to which people in a country expect and accept that power in relationships is distributed unequally. Individualism refers to the degree of interdependence among the members of a society (Hofstede Insights, 2019), indicating the expected relationship and social distance between these members. The scores of the Dutch culture on these two dimensions has been described to explain the cross-culturally perceived directness of Dutch people (Labrie et al., 2020). Compared to other countries the Netherlands score low on power distance, with a score of 38 out of 100, and high on individualism, with a score of 80 out of 100 (Hofstede Insights, 2019). The direct image of the Dutch would therefore likely be stronger for people from cultures that score very differently on the same dimensions. For this reason, culture-related moderating effects among L2 Dutch readers on the perception of politeness of requests are expected to appear regardless of the language in which a request is made. Thus, the following hypotheses were developed:

H4. *The effect of the language of the reader (Dutch as L1 or L2) is moderated by power distance and individualism such that the higher the culture of the L2 Dutch reader scores on power distance and the lower the culture of the L2 Dutch reader scores on individualism the less polite the L2 Dutch reader perceives a text-only interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author than L1 Dutch readers.*

H4a. *The effect of the language of the reader (Dutch as L1 or L2) is moderated by power distance such that the higher the culture of the L2 Dutch reader scores on power distance the less polite the L2 Dutch reader perceives a text-only interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author than L1 Dutch readers.*

H4b. *The effect of the language of the reader (Dutch as L1 or L2) is moderated by individualism such that the lower the score of the culture of the L2 Dutch reader on individualism the less polite a L2 Dutch reader perceives a text-only interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author than L1 Dutch readers.*

As mentioned before, the three factors that determine politeness according to Brown and Levinson (1987) are the power relationship between the requester and the requestee, the social distance between them, and the level of imposition the request poses on the requestee. The Netherlands score low on the dimension of power distance, which indicates that equality in relationships is usually favored, resulting in a participatory communication style according to Labrie et al. (2020). This means that employees in a Dutch organization might communicate with their supervisors in a similar way as they communicate with their colleagues. The Dutch culture also scores high on the dimension of individualism, which indicates that speaking one's mind is considered healthy and expressing personal opinions is expected (Labrie et al., 2020). Thus, the following hypothesis was developed to account for possible effects of hierarchy differences in the workplace between the author and the addressee on the perceived politeness of a text-only interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author:

H5. *Dutch and English text-only interpersonal professional request messages from a L1 Dutch author to a supervisor will be perceived as equally polite as Dutch and English text-only interpersonal professional request messages from a L1 Dutch author to a colleague by L1 and L2 Dutch readers.*

Additional factors for Politeness Perception

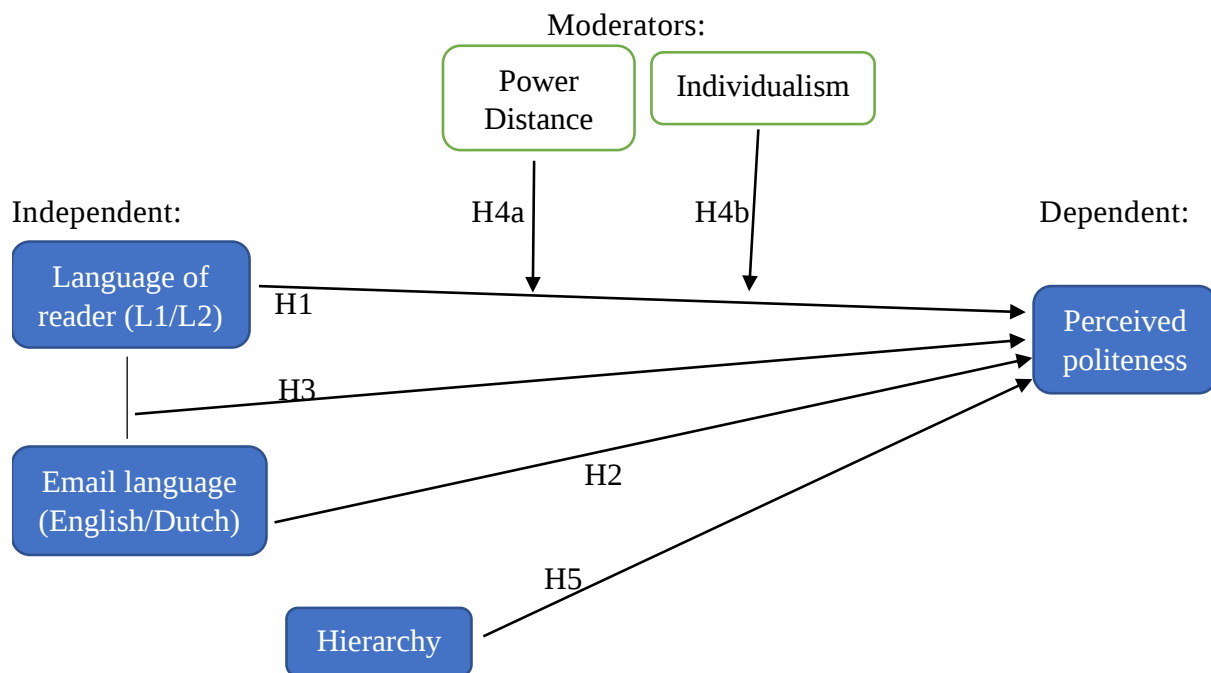
Furthermore, there are other factors that may influence people's perception of politeness according to Batson (2009). Sometimes people feel empathic concern, which is an other-oriented emotional reaction elicited by and consistent with the perceived well-being of another. Empathic concern comes in when someone adopts the perspective of the other person. This involves imagining how things look from the other's point of view. The perspective taking that induces empathic concern entails imaginatively perceiving another's position (Batson, 2009). Even though they are frequently confused, presuming how someone else feels and presuming how you would feel are different ways of perspective taking with other emotional effects. Batson et al. (1997) found that the first elicits empathy and the second both empathy and distress. So, imagining how the other feels produces empathy, which prior research found to provoke altruistic motivation, while imagining how you would feel produces empathy, but it additionally produces personal distress, which prior research found to provoke egoistic motivation (Batson et al., 1997). Therefore, the extent to which someone feels empathic concern might influence their expression or perception of politeness in a request message. Hence, this study controls for the felt empathic concern of request authors and readers.

It was also found in previous research that responses to a request demonstrate a noteworthy mood-congruent bias, which is greater for an impolite request that requires more substantial processing (Forgas, 1998). While facing a complicated communication task like formulating a request, one must undertake elaborate, intrinsic processing to comprehend the circumstances and create the proper type of message. Therefore, affect infusion should be a significant aspect of making requests (Forgas, 1995). According to a study by Forgas (1999), happy people might underrate the probability of offending and formulate more direct and less polite requests due to selective priming and larger

readiness of constructive memories and experiences regarding previous comparable, successful situations. In turn, people in a negative mood may selectively remember moments when they experienced a damaged image due to too direct requests and might formulate more careful, indirect, and polite requests. Furthermore, positive as well as negative mood influences on requesting are expected to be larger in situations that require more detailed, substantial processing, like more complicated interpersonal circumstances. Situational difficulty is therefore predicted to enlarge the influences of positive as well as negative moods on requests (Forgas, 1999). Therefore, this study controls for the mood of the authors and readers of request emails. A visualization of the hypotheses can be found below in the conceptual model of the current study in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Conceptual model of the current study



Method

Design

In order to identify key problems in interpersonal multilingual and cross-cultural distance communication, I designed a two-part (online) study that uses participants ratings of the politeness in text-only messages to explore whether the perception of politeness in text-only messages differs between L1 and L2 Dutch-speakers. In the first part, L1 Dutch-speaking participants produced short interpersonal text-only request messages in Dutch and English. In the second part, L1 and L2 Dutch-speaking participants rated the messages from the first part on politeness.

This study has a mixed 2x2 design with one within-subjects independent variable and one between-subjects independent variable. The within-subjects independent variable is the language of the message:

- Dutch
- English

The between-subjects independent variable is the language of the readers:

- L1 Dutch
- L2 Dutch

The dependent variable is the perceived politeness of the messages.

The politeness perception of the of the different readers has two moderators:

- The score of the reader's culture on the dimension of power distance
- The score of the reader's culture on the dimension of individualism

A separate variable is the addressee of the message:

- Supervisor
- Colleague

Participants

In the first part of the study, 55 participants (49 women, $M_{age} = 20.80$, $SD = 2.26$) were instructed to perform two writing tasks in Dutch and two in English such that a total of 220 messages was created. These participants were L1 Dutch speakers who learned Dutch as their first language. All participants also had at least a B1 level of English, so they were functionally bilingual enough to produce the different text messages. Participants self-evaluated their level of English according to the Common European Framework of Reference, which is called Europees Referentie Kader (ERK) in Dutch, from the Council of Europe (2021). The level of English of the participants was either B1 ($N=9$), B2 ($N=17$), C1 ($N=25$), or C2 ($N=4$). The highest completed education level was either secondary education ($N=12$),

HBO Bachelor/Master (N=25), or WO Bachelor/Master (N=17). The years of working experiences varied from 0 to 7 ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 2.04$).

In the second part of the study, 89 participants (65 women, $M_{age} = 21.60$, $SD = 7.11$) rated the texts from the first part of the study. Half (44) of these participants were L2 Dutch speakers, while the other half (45) of these participants consisted of L1 Dutch speakers. All participants had at least an A2 level of English and the L2 Dutch speaking participants all had at least an A1 level of Dutch, so they were functionally bilingual enough to read and rate the text messages. Participants self-evaluated their level of Dutch and English according to the Common European Framework of Reference, which is called Europees Referentie Kader (ERK) in Dutch, from the Council of Europe (2021). The level of Dutch of the L2 Dutch-speakers was either A1 (N=4), A2 (N=1), B1 (N=2), B2 (N=3), C1 (N=4), or C2 (N=30). The level of English of all the participants was either A2 (N=3), B1 (N=21), B2 (N=28), C1 (N=25), or C2 (N=12). The highest completed education level was either secondary education (N=32), MBO (N=1), HBO Bachelor/Master (N=15), or WO Bachelor/Master (N=40). The years of working experiences varied from 0 to 30 ($M = 4.19$, $SD = 5.18$). The participants were from eight distinct cultures. The country where participants had lived the longest was either the Netherlands (N=79), Argentina (N=1), Germany (N=1), Iran (N=1), Poland (N=3), Romania (N=2), Slovakia (N=1), or the United Kingdom (N=1).

Participation in this study was on a voluntary basis. Participants were recruited via Tilburg University's Human Subject Pool for the first part of the study. For the second part participants were recruited via Tilburg University's Human Subject Pool and via the researcher's personal network. The ones who participated via Tilburg University's Human Subject Pool received 0.5 credits for their efforts. Participants from the researcher's personal network did not obtain compensation for their efforts.

Materials

This research involves a two-part online study. The first part of the study was a writing task in which L1 Dutch-speaking participants were instructed to write short interpersonal text-only messages. The text messages were written in Dutch and English and involved requests in interpersonal professional business communication. Instructions for writing the text-only message were: 'Imagine that you are working for a multinational company in the Netherlands. Some of your colleagues and superiors understand Dutch, some only understand English. In the box below, please write a Dutch/ English email of about a 150 characters or about 3 longer sentences to your superior/colleague at work in which you ask (either for a day off due to personal circumstances during a busy period for the company, *or* for your superior or colleague to join you on a day-long customer visit coming up because you think it will help persuade this important customer to buy more products from your company, *or* for your colleague to take over a late night shift from you). Please take all the time you need.'

Participants were provided a text box including a standard text editor menu to write the message. The described request scenarios were chosen because they represent common everyday interpersonal professional requests based on research by Kim and Lee (2017), Wigglesworth et al. (2007), and Wijst (1995). In this first part of the study, all 55 participants wrote four messages, two in Dutch, one to a supervisor and one to a colleague, and two in English, one to a supervisor and one to a colleague, resulting in a total of 220 texts produced. Instructions and stimulus materials for participants were always in Dutch in this part of the study. This was key to avoid priming cultural values other than the Dutch ones.

Measures

Readers of the produced texts rated the requests they received on politeness on six 7-point bipolar scales (*polite-impolite*, *direct-indirect*, *friendly-unfriendly*, *unusual-common*, *agressive-nonagressive*, *great imposition-no imposition*). These scales were based on studies

by Forgas (1998; 1999). The reliability of the scales was good, $\alpha = .90$. This way, readers' perceptions of politeness could be compared across cultures.

Participants self-evaluated their level of English and Dutch according to the Common European Framework of Reference, which is called Europees Referentie Kader (ERK) in Dutch, from the Council of Europe (2021). The level of Dutch of the L2 Dutch-speakers was either A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, or C2. The level of English of all the participants was either A2, B1, B2, C1, or C2.

Control Measures

Participants were furthermore asked to indicate their self-identification with individualistic and collectivistic values on a 7-point Likert scale. This was done based on the eight most relevant items for horizontal and vertical dimensions of individualism and collectivism from the theoretical and measurement refinement of Singelis et al. (1995) to control for the cultural dimension of individualism. The reliability of the scale was okay, $\alpha = .54$. Participants were also asked to indicate their mood at that moment on a slider from 0 to 100 (bad to good) since the participant's mood can influence the politeness in their writing and the rating and the content of the messages they read might have influenced their mood.

After the writing tasks, participants were asked whether, how often, and how long ago they had written similar emails before and whether they had worked in a multinational environment before as this experience might have influenced their fluency in the task. Participants were additionally requested to specify how much empathy they feel towards the addressee or author of the message since this can influence the politeness in the writing and the rating as well. This was done with 10 items describing distinct emotional states. For every item participants specified how much (1 = not at all; 7 = extremely) they felt that emotion whilst writing or reading the text message. The first six of the included emotional states (sympathetic, softhearted, warm, compassionate, tender, and moved) were found in previous

research to indicate cognitive empathy and the last four (distressed, upset, troubled, and grieved) were found to indicate affective empathy according to Batson et al. (1997). A higher average score on this scale was a sign for more empathy. The reliability of the scale was good, $\alpha = .79$.

In the second part of the study participants were then asked if there were spelling errors or grammar mistakes in the text they read as spelling and grammar errors can affect how people perceive authors, especially when there are many errors (Kreiner et al., 2002). This was indicated on 7-point Likert scales (1= no spelling errors, 7 = a lot of spelling errors) and (1=very grammatically incorrect, 7= completely grammatically correct). After the rating tasks participants were also asked whether, how often, and how long ago they had read similar emails before and whether they had worked in a multinational environment before as this experience might have influenced their fluency in the task. Furthermore, participants were asked demographic questions regarding age, gender, level of education, years of work experience, and the country where they had lived the longest.

Procedure

The first part of the study which consisted of the text production was executed via an online Qualtrics survey. All participants completed this survey in the lab so they would not get distracted during the writing tasks. Participants were first informed about the study and asked to give their consent. The participants were also asked to indicate their level of proficiency in English. Then, participants were asked to specify their self-identification with individualistic and collectivistic values. After that, participants were asked to designate their mood on a slider from 0 to 100 (bad to good) at that moment since the participant's mood can influence the politeness in their writing. Then, instructions were given for the writing tasks and two Dutch and two English text-only messages were produced. Therefore, each participant wrote four text-only messages: two in Dutch, one to a supervisor and one to a

colleague, and two in English, one to a supervisor and one to a colleague, in a random order. After the writing tasks participants were asked whether, how often, and how long ago they had written similar emails before and whether they had worked in a multinational environment before as this experience might have influenced their fluency in the task. Participants were also requested to specify how much empathy they feel towards the addressee of the professional request messages. Subsequently, demographic questions regarding age, gender, years of work experience, level of education, and country of longest residence were asked, then participants were thanked and debriefed (see Appendix A for the survey).

In the second part of the study which consisted of the rating of text messages from other participants, two groups of bilingual participants (L1 Dutch-proficient English and L2 Dutch-proficient English) rated the text messages that were produced in the first part of the study. This was done via two separate online Qualtrics surveys: a Dutch survey for the L1 Dutch speaking participants and an English survey for the L2 Dutch speaking participants. This was important to avoid language effects. Both surveys consisted of the same instructions, stimulus materials, and questions (see Appendix B for the surveys).

First participants were informed about the study and asked for consent. The participants were then asked to designate their level of proficiency in Dutch and English. Subsequently, participants were asked to specify their self-identification with individualistic and collectivistic values. After that, participants were requested to indicate their mood at that moment on a slider from 0 to 100 (bad to good) since the participant's mood can influence the rating. Every participant was then randomly allocated to one of 22 text bins. Each text bin contained five Dutch and five English messages in a random order. Hence, every participant read 10 messages in total. This design resulted in each text being read by two L1 Dutch readers and two L2 Dutch readers. Five of the 10 messages in each condition were addressed

to a supervisor and the other five were addressed to a colleague. These different types of messages were presented in a random order. Readers were not informed about the addressee of the messages to ensure this knowledge would not influence their rating. This way a possible difference in perceived politeness between messages to supervisors and messages to colleagues could be measured. After each message, participants were asked 10 questions for the rating task. The first six of these 10 questions concerned the politeness of the message. Subsequently, participants were requested to specify how much empathy they feel towards the author of the message. Participants were furthermore asked to designate their mood again on the same mood validation slider that was used before as the text message might have influenced their mood. Then, participants were asked if there were spelling errors or grammar mistakes in the message they read. Participants could take as much time as they needed for the task and use an online dictionary if necessary. After the rating, participants were asked whether, how often, and how long ago they had read similar emails before and whether they had worked in a multinational environment before as this experience might have influenced their fluency in the task. This part of the study ended by asking demographic questions regarding age, gender, years of work experience, level of education, and country of longest residence and again the participants were thanked and debriefed.

Data Analysis

To test the relationship between the language of the readers, the language of the request email, and the perceived politeness (hypothesis 1-3) as the baseline model of this study, a Factorial ANOVA was performed. The dependent variable for hypotheses 1-3 was the politeness rating. The independent variables for hypotheses 1-3 were the language of the readers (Dutch as L1 or L2) and the language of the message (Dutch or English).

A one-way ANCOVA was conducted as the full model of this study to test for possible moderating effects of differences in scores on the cultural dimensions of power distance and

individualism among L1 and L2 Dutch readers on perceived politeness (hypotheses 4 a-b). The dependent variable for hypotheses 4 a-b was the politeness rating. The respective moderators for hypothesis 4 were the Hofstede score on the cultural dimensions of Power Distance and Individualism of the countries where the participants had lived the longest. The moderator for hypothesis 4a was the Hofstede score on the cultural dimension of Power Distance of the countries where the participants had lived the longest. The moderator for hypothesis 4b was the Hofstede score on the cultural dimensions of Individualism of the countries where the participants had lived the longest.

To test whether Dutch and English text-only interpersonal professional request messages from a L1 Dutch author to a supervisor will be perceived as equally polite as Dutch and English text-only interpersonal professional request messages from a L1 Dutch author to a colleague by L1 and L2 Dutch readers (hypothesis 5), a paired sample t-test was performed. The dependent variable for hypothesis 5 was the politeness rating. The independent variable for hypothesis 5 was the addressee of the message (Supervisor or Colleague).

Since the study comprises a mixed design and multiple raters for each text, a linear mixed model would usually be needed to analyze the data, which is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, when the texts and the participants were added to the models as random effects or covariates to account for within-participant and within-text variation, this made the models too complex and resulted in an error in SPSS. Therefore, the ANOVA, ANCOVA, and t-test described above were the only way to test the hypotheses aside from mixed modeling.

Pearson correlations were executed to check for effects of empathic concern, mood, spelling and grammar errors, experience with similar emails, and experience with working in a multinational company on perceived politeness.

Results

Reader Language, Text Language, & Politeness

To test the relationship between the language of the readers, the language of the request email, and the perceived politeness (hypothesis 1-3), the baseline model of this study, a Factorial ANOVA was conducted. The data was not normally distributed for both L1 Dutch readers of English emails ($Z_{\text{skewness}} = -3.46$ and $Z_{\text{kurtosis}} = 0.25$) and L2 Dutch readers of English emails ($Z_{\text{skewness}} = -2.67$ and $Z_{\text{kurtosis}} = 0.13$). Additionally, the data was also not normally distributed for L1 Dutch readers of Dutch emails ($Z_{\text{skewness}} = -3.05$ and $Z_{\text{kurtosis}} = 0.74$). The assumption of normality is violated. Therefore, bootstrapping was performed.

The ANOVA showed a significant main effect of the language of the readers, $F(1, 846) = 4.75, p = .030, \eta^2 = .006$. Perceived politeness scores for L1 Dutch readers were higher ($M = 4.58, SD = 0.86$) than for L2 Dutch readers ($M = 4.45, SD = 0.89$). There was no significant main effect of the language of the request email, $F(1, 846) = 0.65, p = .421, \eta^2 = .001$. Perceived politeness scores for English emails were higher ($M = 4.54, SD = 0.90$) than for Dutch emails ($M = 4.49, SD = 0.85$). Finally, there was no significant interaction effect, $F(1, 846) = 0.61, p = .434, \eta^2 = .001$. Means and standard deviations can be found in Table 1. As can be seen in Figure 2, the first language of the readers and the language of the request email do not significantly interact.

Therefore, it can be concluded that H1 is supported by the data: L2 Dutch readers perceived a text-only interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author as less polite than L1 Dutch readers did. H2 is also supported by the data: Dutch and English text-only interpersonal professional request emails from a L1 Dutch author were perceived as equally polite. Furthermore, H3b is supported by the data: L1 Dutch readers perceived English and Dutch interpersonal professional request messages from a L1 Dutch author as equally polite. However, H3a is not supported by the data as L2 Dutch

readers did not perceive a text-only interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author as less polite if it was in Dutch.

Figure 2

Mean scores on perceived politeness by reader language and email language

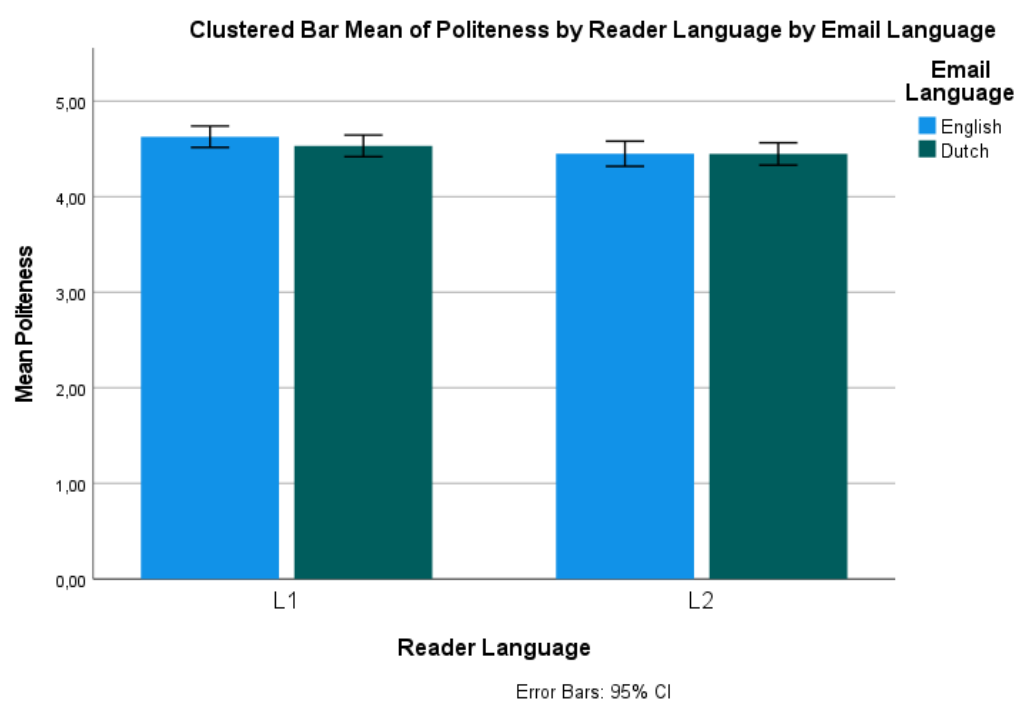


Table 1

Means, Standard deviations, and bootstrapped CIs around the means

Reader Language	Email Language	Politeness	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper
L1	English	<i>M</i>	4,63	4,52
		<i>SD</i>	0,85	4,74
	Dutch	<i>M</i>	4,53	4,43
		<i>SD</i>	0,86	4,65
	Total	<i>M</i>	4,58	4,50
		<i>SD</i>	0,86	4,66
L2	English	<i>M</i>	4,45	4,32
		<i>SD</i>	0,95	4,58
	Dutch	<i>M</i>	4,45	4,33
		<i>SD</i>	0,83	4,56
	Total	<i>M</i>	4,45	4,37
		<i>SD</i>	0,89	4,53
Total	English	<i>M</i>	4,54	4,46
		<i>SD</i>	0,90	4,63
	Dutch	<i>M</i>	4,49	4,41
		<i>SD</i>	0,85	4,58
	Total	<i>M</i>	4,52	4,46
		<i>SD</i>	0,88	4,58

Power distance & Individualism

To test for possible moderating effects of differences in scores on the cultural dimensions of power distance and individualism among L1 and L2 Dutch readers on perceived politeness (hypotheses 4 a-b), a one-way ANCOVA was conducted as the full model of this study. The data was not normally distributed for both L1 Dutch readers of English emails ($Z_{\text{skewness}} = -3.46$ and $Z_{\text{kurtosis}} = 0.25$) and L2 Dutch readers of English emails ($Z_{\text{skewness}} = -2.67$ and $Z_{\text{kurtosis}} = 0.13$). Additionally, the data was also not normally distributed for L1 Dutch readers of Dutch emails ($Z_{\text{skewness}} = -3.05$ and $Z_{\text{kurtosis}} = 0.74$). Homoscedasticity was also not met. Therefore, bootstrapping was performed.

The ANCOVA showed a significant main effect of the language of the readers, $F(1, 843) = 7.88$, $p = .005$, $\eta^2 = .009$. The adjusted perceived politeness scores for group L1 Dutch readers were higher ($M = 4.60$, $SD = 0.86$) than for L2 Dutch readers ($M = 4.43$, $SD = 0.89$).

There was no significant main effect of the language of the request email, $F(1, 843) = 0.70$, $p = .403$, $\eta^2 = .001$. The adjusted perceived politeness scores for group English emails were higher ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 0.90$) than for Dutch emails ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 0.85$). There was no significant interaction effect, $F(1, 843) = 0.57$, $p = .450$, $\eta^2 = .001$.

There was a marginally significant moderating effect of differences in scores on the cultural dimensions of Power Distance as the ANCOVA showed that it was a marginally significant covariate by interaction with the language of the reader $F(1, 843) = 3.16$, $p = .076$, $\eta^2 = .004$. There was no significant moderating effect of differences in scores on the cultural dimensions of Individualism as the ANCOVA showed that it was a non-significant covariate by interaction with the language of the reader $F(1, 843) = 0.35$, $p = .555$, $\eta^2 = .000$. Therefore, it can be concluded that H4a and H4b were not supported by the data.

Hierarchy

To test whether Dutch and English text-only interpersonal professional request messages from a L1 Dutch author to a supervisor was perceived as equally polite as Dutch and English text-only interpersonal professional request messages from a L1 Dutch author to a colleague by L1 and L2 Dutch readers (hypothesis 5), a paired sample t-test was performed. The data was not normally distributed for emails to a supervisor ($Z_{\text{skewness}} = -3.13$ and $Z_{\text{kurtosis}} = -0.39$) and emails to a colleague ($Z_{\text{skewness}} = -4.80$ and $Z_{\text{kurtosis}} = 1.41$). Therefore, the p-value may not be reliable and more weight should be placed on the bootstrapped 95% confidence interval that will be provided. On average, the perceived politeness rating of emails to a supervisor ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 0.54$) was lower than the perceived politeness rating of emails to a colleague ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.53$). This difference was not significant ($Mdif = 0.04$, $t(84) = 0.65$, $p = .528$) and does not generalize to the population as the bootstrapped 95% confidence interval crosses zero (95% CI $[-.163, .070]$). Therefore, it can be concluded that hypothesis 5 is supported by the data.

Additional data exploration: control variables

To check for effects of empathic concern, mood, spelling and grammar errors, experience with similar emails, and experience with working in a multinational company on perceived politeness, Pearson's correlation tests were executed. The mean scores, standard deviations, and z-scores can be found in Table 2. As can be seen in Table 2, the data was not normally distributed for the perceived politeness, experience with similar emails, and experience with working in a multinational company. Therefore, the p-values may not be reliable and more weight should be placed on the bootstrapped 95% confidence intervals that will be provided.

Table 2

Means, Standard deviations, and z-scores for additional data exploration

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Z_{Skewness}</i>	<i>Z_{Kurtosis}</i>
Perceived Politeness	4.52	0.88	-0.43	2.06
Empathic concern	2.76	0.94	1.64	-0.25
Mood	65.63	13.29	-1.00	-1.21
Spelling errors	2.01	0.70	1.40	-0.92
Grammatical correctness	4.85	1.04	-1.15	-0.20
Experience with similar emails	3.42	1.37	-1.15	-2.44
Experience in a multinational company	1.84	1.23	3.92	-1.43

The analysis showed no significant correlation between perceived politeness and the score on empathic concern, Pearson's $r = -.036$, $p = .743$. As the bootstrapped confidence interval crosses zero (95% CI [-.248, .161]) the results cannot be generalized to the population. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was no relationship between empathic concern and the perceived politeness.

The analysis showed no significant correlation between perceived politeness and the mood score, Pearson's $r = -.064$, $p = .558$. As the bootstrapped confidence interval crosses zero (95% CI [-.266, .135]) the results cannot be generalized to the population. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was no relationship between mood and the perceived politeness.

The analysis showed a significant moderate negative correlation between perceived politeness and the score on spelling errors, Pearson's $r = -.279$, $p = .005$. 7.8% of the variance in perceived politeness is accounted for by spelling errors. As the bootstrapped confidence interval does not cross zero (95% CI [-.441, -.081]) the results can be generalized to the population. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a medium negative relationship between spelling errors and the perceived politeness: the more spelling errors, the lower the perceived politeness.

The analysis showed a significant moderate positive correlation between perceived politeness and the score on grammatical correctness, Pearson's $r = .314$, $p = .003$. 9.9% of the variance in perceived politeness is accounted for by grammatical correctness. As the bootstrapped confidence interval does not cross zero (95% CI [.100, .521]) the results can be generalized to the population. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a medium positive relationship between grammatical correctness and perceived politeness: the more grammatical correct, the higher the perceived politeness.

The analysis showed no significant correlation between perceived politeness and the score on experience with similar emails, Pearson's $r = -.118$, $p = .282$. As the bootstrapped confidence interval crosses zero (95% CI [-.320, .104]) the results cannot be generalized to the population. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was no relationship between experience with similar emails and perceived politeness.

The analysis showed no significant correlation between perceived politeness and the score on experience with working in a multinational company, Pearson's $r = -.039$, $p = .720$.

As the bootstrapped confidence interval crosses zero (95% CI [-.235, .153]) the results cannot be generalized to the population. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was no relationship between experience with working in a multinational company on perceived politeness.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the aim was to investigate differences in the perceived politeness of Dutch and English interpersonal professional request emails from L1 Dutch authors among L1 and L2 Dutch readers. In relation to the research question, the most important finding was that on average, L2 Dutch readers perceived interpersonal professional request emails from L1 Dutch authors as less polite than L1 Dutch readers did, although there was no effect of the language of the interpersonal professional request email from a L1 Dutch author found in this study. However, the size of the significant effect of the language of the reader was rather small, which means that the relevance of this result should probably not be overestimated. Below, possible explanations of the results are discussed. Then, theoretical and practical implications are described, followed by the limitations of this study and suggestions for further research. Ultimately, concluding remarks are provided.

The Dutch Culture & Politeness

Prior research (Kruger et al., 2005; Labrie et al., 2020; Lapierre, 2020) suggested that the values and characteristics in the Dutch culture, combined with egocentrism and the challenges of understanding what is appropriate language in the workplace cross-culturally, could explain the cross-culturally perceived directness of Dutch people. These factors might namely reflect in the way L1 Dutch authors express themselves. Therefore, the first hypothesis in this study was that L2 Dutch readers would perceive a text-only interpersonal professional request email from a L1 Dutch author as less polite than L1 Dutch readers. This hypothesis was supported by the data in this study. However, the found effect sizes are small. These small effect sizes suggest that Dutch people might not be

as impolite as they are cross-culturally perceived according to the literature. All L2 Dutch readers in this study however had exposure to the Dutch culture to such an extent that they could read the language. Therefore, the result suggests that exposure to the Dutch culture might reduce the stereotypes and misunderstandings that are described in the literature by Hautasaari et al. (2014), Kruger et al. (2005), Labrie et al. (2020), and Lapierre (2020). This confirms the findings in prior research by Luna et al. (2008). Literature by Singelis et al. (1995) also suggests that the extent to which exposure to a culture eventually reduces stereotypes and misunderstandings might depend on someone's self-identification with the culture and its values. Simply being from or living in a certain culture does namely not necessarily mean that you condone the commonly attributed values (Singelis et al., 1995).

Language & Politeness

Former studies about the connection between language and culture that is expressed in politeness (Hendriks, 2002; Lau, 2019; Le Pair, 2005) also revealed that L1 Dutch authors are likely to use similar, indirect, linguistic strategies in writing both Dutch and English interpersonal professional request emails. Therefore, the second hypothesis in this study was that Dutch and English text-only interpersonal professional request emails from a L1 Dutch author are perceived as equally polite. This hypothesis was supported by the data from this study, which suggests that the perceived politeness of professional request emails from L1 Dutch authors is language independent. This finding is in line with the literature. It namely indicates that L1 Dutch authors do indeed tend to use similar linguistic strategies in writing both Dutch and English interpersonal professional request emails. However, the extent to which a L1 Dutch author uses similar linguistic strategies or not in Dutch and English request emails might also depend on the amount of exposure the author has had to English-speaking cultures (Luna et al., 2008).

Language, Culture, & Politeness

The third hypothesis in this study was an interaction hypothesis of the independent variables regarding an effect of the language of the reader on the perceived politeness of Dutch and English interpersonal professional request emails from L1 Dutch authors. It was namely hypothesized that L2 Dutch readers would perceive text-only interpersonal professional request emails from L1 Dutch authors as less polite as L1 Dutch readers would, especially if the interpersonal professional request email from a L1 Dutch author was in Dutch. This hypothesis was not supported by the data, which suggests that the language of the request email does not influence the perceived politeness of professional request emails from L1 Dutch authors, also not when taking the language of the reader into account. Whether Dutch people express the request in their own native language, Dutch, or in English did not influence the perceived politeness for L1 or L2 Dutch readers in this study. This can be explained by L1 Dutch authors using similar linguistic strategies in both Dutch and English request emails and that the L2 Dutch readers could read both Dutch and their L1. Research namely found that bicultural bilingual people activate different sets of culture-specific concepts when they are cued by a particular language (Luna et al., 2008). This suggests that once you get to know the culture and language, "the Dutch are rude" is just a stereotype. This can be considered a good sign for cross-cultural and multilingual workplace communication. There was however a small effect of the reader's language found in this study. So L1 and L2 Dutch readers still seem to differ at least slightly in their politeness perception. As the literature suggests, the difference might diminish by exposure to the Dutch culture and language (Luna et al., 2008).

Cultural Dimensions & Politeness

Based on the literature about determinants of politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and cultural dimensions (Hofstede Insights, 2019; Labrie et al., 2020), the direct image of

the Dutch was expected to be stronger for people from cultures that score very differently on the cultural dimensions of power distance and individualism than the Dutch culture. Therefore, culture-related moderating effects among L2 Dutch readers on the perception of politeness of requests were expected to appear regardless of the language in which a request is made. Since the Dutch culture scores low on power distance and high on individualism, it was hypothesized that the effect of the language of the reader is moderated by power distance and individualism such that the higher the culture of the L2 Dutch reader scores on power distance and the lower the culture of the L2 Dutch reader scores on individualism the less polite the L2 Dutch reader perceives a text-only interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author than L1 Dutch readers. This hypothesis was not supported by the data, which suggests that the effect of the language of the reader is not moderated by power distance and individualism. In this study, there was no significant effect or influence of these cultural dimensions on the perceived politeness of interpersonal professional request messages from L1 Dutch authors among L2 Dutch readers. This finding contradicts the expectations based on studies by Brown & Levinson (1987) and Labrie et al. (2020). It namely indicates that the perceived politeness of the Dutch was not affected by different scores on the cultural dimensions of power distance and individualism among L2 Dutch readers. Since the effect of power distance was marginally significant, not finding a significant result might be explained by the setup of this study. In a larger sample, a significant moderating effect of power distance might be found.

In regard to the same literature (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Labrie et al., 2020), it was hypothesized that interpersonal professional request messages from a L1 Dutch author to a supervisor will be perceived as equally polite as text-only interpersonal professional request messages from a L1 Dutch author to a colleague. This hypothesis was supported

by the data since there was no significant difference in the perceived politeness of emails to a supervisor and emails to a colleague. It suggests that Dutch employees in a Dutch organization communicate with their supervisors in a similar way as they communicate with their colleagues. This is in line with the mentioned literature and expectations in this study.

Additional factors for Politeness Perception

Research also found other factors that may influence people's perception of politeness, such as their mood or empathic concern for the author or reader of a request email (Batson, 2009; Batson et al., 1997; Forgas, 1995, 1998, 1999). In this study, no significant relationships between empathic concern or mood and the perceived politeness of text-only interpersonal professional request messages from a L1 Dutch author were found. Not finding a relationship between the politeness perception and empathic concern or mood of the authors and readers contradicts the mentioned literature. This study did find a significant relationship between spelling errors and perceived politeness and between grammatical correctness and perceived politeness. There was a medium negative relationship between spelling errors and perceived politeness and a medium positive relationship between grammatical correctness and perceived politeness. This means that if the reader of a message noticed more spelling errors, the message was perceived as less polite. If the reader of a message perceived it as more grammatically correct, the message was perceived as more polite. This is in line with the literature by Kreiner et al. (2002). Lastly, no significant relationships between experience with the type of emails or working in a multinational environment and the perceived politeness of interpersonal professional request messages from a L1 Dutch author were found in this study.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The primary theoretical implication of this study is contributing empirical evidence to the open question whether Dutch people are less polite than people from other cultures or not. It has been assumed in both scientific and public debate that Dutch people are more direct than others, but scientific evidence for this claim was lacking. This study mostly provides scientific evidence against this assumption. By analyzing the perceived politeness of Dutch and English text-only interpersonal professional request emails from L1 Dutch authors among L1 and L2 Dutch readers, valuable new insights are yielded as to how polite the written distance communication of L1 Dutch speakers is perceived cross-culturally. So far previous research has namely not investigated possible differences in politeness ratings of text-only messages of L1 Dutch authors among L2 Dutch speakers who have stayed in the Netherlands for a longer time. Previous research only focused on differences in perceived politeness between specific contrasting cultures (Hautasaari et al., 2014). Including L2 Dutch readers with various kinds of cultural backgrounds therefore reduces a gap in the literature. It had also not yet been investigated how much the expression of politeness of Dutch people in English differs from in their native language, Dutch. By exploring this factor, this study therefore reduces another gap in the literature. This way the relation between language, culture, and politeness is further explored than before (Lau, 2019). The results of this study namely showed that there were differences found in the perceived politeness of L1 Dutch authors between L1 and L2 Dutch readers. The differences do however not seem to be as large as the stereotype makes them out to be, especially in a sample that is familiar with the Dutch culture and language. Furthermore, L1 Dutch authors did not seem to express politeness differently in English than in Dutch in this study.

Practical implications of this study concern having more knowledge on and being aware of cultural variations in the expression and perception of politeness, which can improve

cross-cultural communication. The study results are potentially helpful for everyday communication between Dutch and non-Dutch individuals via text-only mediums. Communication via text-only mediums, like email, is namely more likely to cause misunderstandings in intended politeness than communication that includes gestures, voice, or facial expressions (Riordan, & Trichtinger, 2017). This is even more relevant if the communication is between native and non-native Dutch speakers (Hautasaari et al., 2014). The results of this study might improve native and non-native Dutch speakers' estimation of the intended and perceived politeness in text-only messages from L1 Dutch authors. Of course, the results of this study are especially applicable for interpersonal professional request messages. As a part of the social component of work, requests are necessary in the workplace, but the imposing nature of requests makes them tough to formulate (Lapierre, 2020). Request emails namely often require people to detach themselves from their own perspective and evaluate the perspective of another (Kruger et al., 2005). However, requests are quite usual in daily communication and have a key function in reaching interpersonal goals and coordinating social behavior (Forgas, 1999). For these reasons, from a societal perspective, comprehending better how exposure to a culture influences the expression and interpretation of interpersonal professional request messages with the appropriate level of politeness via text-only mediums improves the effectiveness and meaningfulness of cross-cultural communication.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Even though this study was carefully designed, some limitations have to be taken into account while interpreting the results. First of all, the participants in both parts of this study were mostly young female university students with little working experience and a European cultural background. Among these participants were only five exceptions who were middle-aged. They had more working experience. These exceptions were however also highly

educated. In the second part of the study, which required L2 Dutch readers, one participant was from Argentina and one was from Iran. All the other participants were from the Netherlands or other European countries. The results can therefore not be generalized to the population. The participants were namely younger, more highly educated, and more western in cultural background than the population on average.

Future research should therefore investigate differences in perceived politeness among a more diverse sample of L1 and L2 Dutch readers. This sample should consist of people with more different educational and cultural backgrounds and more variety in ages and years of working experience. Since the participants in this study were mostly female, a replication study is recommended to also include more men and other genders to clarify if there are gender effects on politeness perception. This future study should ideally include people from countries and cultures all over the world to include all sorts of cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, it would be interesting for a future study to investigate the cross-cultural perception of politeness in professional request messages from L1 Dutch authors among a working population instead of students to investigate effects of age and working experience.

A second potential limitation of the data analysis procedure in this study is related to the design with multiple raters for each text. Usually, a linear mixed model would be required to analyze the data because the participants and the texts would have to be considered as random effects. However, when Text and Participant were added as random effects or covariates to account for within-participant and within-text variation, this made the models too complex and resulted in an error in SPSS. Thus, it is recommended that a future study uses a linear mixed model to be able to account for within-participant and within-text variation.

Another potential limitation has to do with the design of this study. To find out what the most dominant cultural background of the participants was, they were asked in which

country they had lived the longest. For the L2 Dutch readers in the study, the language of this country did not necessarily correspond to their L1 language. Therefore, a future study should also include the L1 language of the L2 Dutch readers. This should clarify if the L1 language of a reader influences the perception of politeness in professional request messages from L1 Dutch authors.

Interesting research questions for further research can focus on where the stereotype of the rude and direct Dutch comes from. Therefore, future research would have to run the study in English only. This would clarify if the issue might be a classic “Lost in translation” one. All readers in this study had been exposed to the Dutch culture to such an extent that they could read the language. People who have not been as exposed to the culture, such as tourists or new expats who just started working in the Netherlands, might have a different politeness perception. It would therefore be interesting to compare the politeness perception of Dutch-exposed and Dutch-unexposed non-Dutch participants in a future study.

Conclusion

This thesis shows that finding an answer to the question: 'To what extent does the language of a text-only interpersonal professional request message from a L1 Dutch author affect the politeness perception of L1 and L2 Dutch readers, and what is the role of the L2 Dutch readers' cultures in the perception of politeness?' is not simple. Hypotheses testing only yielded significant results for an effect of the first language of the readers, with small effect sizes, in this study. A cautionary conclusion is that there are no major differences in the perception of politeness of Dutch and English text-only interpersonal professional request messages from L1 Dutch authors between L1 and L2 Dutch readers. Accounting for possible effects of hierarchy between the author and the intended addressee, and the cultural dimensions of power distance and individualism did not influence this outcome. This study therefore suggests that Dutch people are not much more impolite than others and hereby

contributes empirical evidence to the scientific and public debate regarding the stereotype of the "direct Dutch person".

References

- Batson, C. D. (2009). Two forms of perspective taking: Imagining how another feels and imagining how you would feel. In K. D. Markman, W. M. P. Klein, J. A. Suhr (Eds.), *Handbook of imagination and mental stimulation* (pp. 267-279). New York: Psychology Press.
- Batson, C. D., Early, S., Salvarini, G. (1997). Perspective taking: imagining how another feels versus imagining how you would feel. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 23(7), 751-758.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language use*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, R. (1992). *On saying unpleasant things: an experimental investigation of politeness theory*. <https://www.elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=5869780>
- Brown, R., & Gilman, A. (1989). Politeness theory and Shakespeare's four major tragedies. *Language in Society*, 18(2), 159-212. doi:10.1017/S0047404500013464
- Brown, R. (2014). Politeness Theory: Exemplar and Exemplary. In Rock, I., *The Legacy of Solomon Asch: Essays in Cognition and Social Psychology*, (pp. 23-36). Psychology Press.
- Council of Europe. (2021). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages>
- Eelen, G. (2001). *A Critique of Politeness Theory: Volume 1* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315760179>
- Forgas, J. P. (1998). Asking nicely? The effects of mood on responding to more or less polite requests. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 24(2), 173-185.

- Forgas, J. P. (1995). Mood and judgment: The Affect Infusion Model (AIM). *Psychological Bulletin*, 116, 39-66.
- Forgas, J. P. (1999). On feeling good and being rude: Affective influences on language use and request formulations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 76(6), 928-939. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.76.6.928>
- Hautasaari, A. M., Yamashita, N., & Gao, G. (2014, April). " Maybe it was a joke" emotion detection in text-only communication by non-native English speakers. In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 3715-3724).
- Hendriks, B. (2002). *More on Dutch English... please?: A study of request performance by Dutch native speakers, English native speakers and Dutch learners of English*. Nijmegen: University Press.
- Hofstede Insights. (2019). *Country comparison*. <https://www.hofstedeinsights.com/country-comparison/>
- Kim, S. H., & Lee, H. (2017). Politeness in power-asymmetrical e-mail requests of Korean and American corporate employees. *Intercultural Pragmatics*, 14(2), 207-238.
- Kreiner, D.S., Schnakernberg, S.D., Green, A.G., Costello, M.J., & McClin, A.F. (2002). Effects of Spelling Errors on the Perception of Writers. *The Journal of General Psychology*, 129(1), 5-17.
- Kruger, J., Epley, N., Parker, J., & Ng, Z. (2005). Egocentrism over e-mail: Can we communicate as well as we think? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 89(6), 925–936.
- Labrie, N., Akkermans, A., & Hample, D. (2020, October). A Dutch dose of dissent. Exploring the role of gender, education, and culture on Dutch students' argumentative

- predispositions. *Journal of Argumentation in Context*, 9(2), 219 - 242.
- <https://doi.org/10.1075/jaic.19009.lab>
- Lapierre, N. (2020). Workplace requests: A critical literature review. *Horizontes*, 38(1), e020003-e020003.
- Lau, M. (2019). *Dutch Directness and British Politeness*.
- <https://dspace.library.uu.nl/handle/1874/383834>
- Leopold, L. (2015). Request strategies in professional e-mail correspondence: Insights from the United States workplace. *TESL Canada Journal*, 32(2), 1-29
- Le Pair, R. (2005). Politeness in the Netherlands: Indirect requests. *Politeness in Europe*, 66-81.
- Luna, D., Ringberg, T., & Peracchio, L. A. (2008). One individual, two identities: frame switching among biculturals. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35(2), 279–293.
- Riordan, M.A., & Trichtinger, L.A. (2017). Overconfidence at the Keyboard: Confidence and Accuracy in Interpreting Affect in E-Mail Exchanges. *Human Communication Research*, 43(1), 1-24.
- Rottier, B. L., Ripmeester, N., Bush, A. (2010). Separated by a common translation? How the British and the Dutch communicate. *Pediatric Pulmonology*, Wiley, 46 (4), 409.
- Singelis, T. M., Triandis, H. C., Bhawuk, D. P., & Gelfand, M. J. (1995). Horizontal and vertical dimensions of individualism and collectivism: A theoretical and measurement refinement. *Cross-cultural research*, 29(3), 240-275.
- Wigglesworth, G., Yates, L., Flowerdew, J., & Levis, J. (2007). Mitigating difficult requests in the workplace: What learners and teachers need to know. *TESOL Quarterly*, 41(4), 791-803.
- Wijst, P. (1995). The perception of politeness in Dutch and French indirect requests. *Text & Talk*, 15(4), pp. 477-501. <https://doi.org/10.1515/text.1.1995.15.4.477>

Appendices

Appendix A. Survey for Part I of the study

Information Letter

Welkom

Fijn dat u interesse heeft in meedoen aan dit onderzoek. Hieronder kunt u alle informatie lezen die u nodig heeft voordat u gaat starten met het onderzoek. Lees het daarom goed door.

Dit onderzoek is onderdeel van mijn scriptie voor de master Communication & Cognition aan Tilburg University waarvoor ik onderzoek doe naar de beleefdheid van Nederlanders in werk gerelateerde e-mails. Daarom zou ik u een aantal korte vragen willen stellen en u enkele korte e-mails willen laten schrijven. Iedereen die Nederlands als moedertaal heeft en Engels spreekt (minimaal B1 niveau, onafhankelijk gebruiker) kan meedoen. Dit zal maximaal een halfuurtje van uw tijd in beslag nemen. Er zijn geen risico's aan deelname aan dit onderzoek verbonden.

Doel

Met de juiste toon communiceren via tekst gaat niet altijd even makkelijk. Het doel van de studie is om te onderzoeken in hoeverre auteurs en lezers dezelfde toon uit een tekstbericht halen op basis van de manier waarop het tekstbericht geschreven is. De e-mails die u in deze studie gaat schrijven zullen daarom gebruikt worden als stimuli in een vervolgstudie.

Anonimiteit

De enquête zal eindigen met enkele demografische vragen, zoals uw leeftijd en uw geslacht. Alle gegevens worden zorgvuldig behandeld, alleen de onderzoeker en begeleider hebben toegang tot de onbewerkte gegevens. U heeft het recht om toegang tot, rectificatie, uitwissing, beperking van of bezwaar tegen de verwerking van persoonsgegevens te verzoeken. Deze toestemming blijft geldig tot het eind van deze studie (Januari 2022). Toestemming om de verstrekte gegevens te gebruiken geldt ook tot het einde van deze studie. Alle geanonimiseerde gegevens worden voor een periode van tenminste 1 jaar bewaard. De e-mails die u schrijft zullen niet herleidbaar zijn naar u als auteur. De geschreven e-mails zullen anoniem gebruikt worden in een vervolgonderzoek.

Vrijwillige deelname

Uw deelname aan dit onderzoek wordt zeer op prijs gesteld en zal zeer waardevol zijn voor het onderzoek. Met uw deelname draagt u bij aan belangrijk wetenschappelijk onderzoek. Het onderzoek zal geen negatieve gevolgen voor u als persoon hebben. De deelname aan dit onderzoek is geheel vrijwillig. Bovendien is er de mogelijkheid om op ieder gewenst moment te stoppen met de enquête door deze weg te klikken en de onderzoeker te informeren. Voor het voltooien van deze enquête ontvangt u 0.5 credit in Sona.

Contact: Als u vragen of opmerkingen heeft voor de onderzoeker, neem dan contact op met: Laura Teller (l.e.m.teller@tilburguniversity.edu).

Als u vragen of opmerkingen heeft voor de begeleider, neem dan contact op met: Nadine Braun (n.braun@tilburguniversity.edu).

Alvast bedankt voor uw deelname!

Informed Consent

Toestemming

Ik heb de informatie hierboven gelezen en begrijp het doel van de studie. Ik heb voldoende tijd gehad om over deelname na te denken. Ik begrijp dat ik te allen tijde kan stoppen met mijn deelname aan de studie als ik dit wil.

Ik geef toestemming om mijn gegevens te gebruiken voor de doelen die hierboven staan beschreven.

Ik geef toestemming om mijn onbewerkte gegevens 1 jaar lang te bewaren nadat de studie is afgelopen.

Ik geef toestemming om mijn geanonimiseerde gegevens te gebruiken in toekomstig onderzoek.

Ik geef toestemming om mijn geschreven e-mails te gebruiken in een vervolgstudie.

Wilt u deelnemen aan de enquête?

- ☐ Ja, ik geef toestemming en wil verder naar de enquête.
- ☐ Nee, ik geef geen toestemming en wil niet deelnemen aan de enquête.

Skip To: End of Survey If Welkom Fijn dat u interesse heeft in meedoen aan dit onderzoek. Hieronder kunt u alle informatie... = Nee, ik geef geen toestemming en wil niet deelnemen aan de enquête.

Page Break

Level of English

Wat is uw niveau van Engels?

- ☐ A1: Enige basisvaardigheid
- ☐ A2: Basisvaardigheid
- ☐ B1: Onafhankelijk gebruiker
- ☐ B2: Volledig onafhankelijk gebruiker
- ☐ C1: Effectieve vaardigheid
- ☐ C2: Volledige beheersing

In hoeverre bent u het eens met de volgende stellingen.

	Helemaal oneens	Oneens	Enigszins oneens	Neutraal	Enigszins eens	Eens	Helemaal eens
Je moet je leven onafhankelijk van anderen leven.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ik ben bij voorkeur direct en openhartig als ik met mensen praat.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Het is belangrijk dat ik mijn werk beter doe dan anderen.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ik werk graag in situaties waarin er concurrentie is met anderen.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Het welzijn van mijn collega's is belangrijk voor mij.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ik voel me goed als ik samenwerk met anderen.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ik offer meestal mijn eigenbelang op ten behoeve van mijn team.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Ik haat het
om het
oneens te zijn
met anderen
in mijn team.



Mood

Geef hieronder aan hoe u zich op dit moment voelt.



0



100



Page Break

Brief Explanation

Hierna volgen 4 verschillende scenario's waarin u wordt gevraagd een werk gerelateerde e-mail van ongeveer 3 langere zinnen te schrijven. Lees ieder scenario goed door voordat u begint met schrijven.

Na deze 4 scenario's volgen nog enkele vragen over de berichten die u geschreven heeft en uw achtergrond.

Page Break

End of Block: Consent, language, culture, and mood

Start of Block: Writing cues 1



Stel u voor dat u werkt voor een multinational bedrijf in Nederland. Sommige van uw collega's en leidinggevenden spreken Nederlands, anderen spreken alleen Engels. Schrijf in het tekst vak hieronder een **Nederlandse** e-mail van ongeveer 150 karakters of ongeveer 3 langere zinnen **naar uw leidinggevende** Robin Smid waarin **u vraagt of u een dag vrij kunt krijgen vanwege persoonlijke omstandigheden tijdens een drukke periode voor het bedrijf.**

U kunt alle tijd nemen die u nodig heeft.

Page Break



Stel u voor dat u werkt voor een multinationalaal bedrijf in Nederland. Sommige van uw collega's en leidinggevenden spreken Nederlands, anderen spreken alleen Engels. Schrijf in het tekst vak hieronder een **Engelse** e-mail van ongeveer 150 karakters of ongeveer 3 langere zinnen **naar uw leidinggevende** Sam Johnson waarin u deze leidinggevende vraagt **om een dag met u mee op klantbezoek te gaan omdat u denkt dat gezelschap deze belangrijke klant zal overhalen meer producten van het bedrijf aan te schaffen.**

U kunt alle tijd nemen die u nodig heeft.

Page Break



Stel u voor dat u werkt voor een multinationalaal bedrijf in Nederland. Sommige van uw collega's en leidinggevenden spreken Nederlands, anderen spreken alleen Engels. Schrijf in het tekst vak hieronder een **Nederlandse** e-mail van ongeveer 150 karakters of ongeveer 3 langere zinnen **naar uw collega** Alex van de Ven waarin u deze collega vraagt **om een dag met u mee op klantbezoek te gaan omdat u denkt dat gezelschap deze belangrijke klant zal overhalen meer producten van het bedrijf aan te schaffen.**

U kunt alle tijd nemen die u nodig heeft.

Page Break



Stel u voor dat u werkt voor een multinationalaal bedrijf in Nederland. Sommige van uw collega's en leidinggevenden spreken Nederlands, anderen spreken alleen Engels. Schrijf in het tekst vak hieronder een **Engelse** e-mail van ongeveer 150 karakters of ongeveer 3 langere zinnen **naar uw collega** Taylor Smith waarin u deze collega vraagt **om een late avonddienst van je over te nemen omdat je die avond wegens persoonlijke omstandigheden niet kan werken.**

U kunt alle tijd nemen die u nodig heeft.

End of Block: Writing cues 1

Start of Block: writing cues 2



Stel u voor dat u werkt voor een multinationalaal bedrijf in Nederland. Sommige van uw collega's en leidinggevenden spreken Nederlands, anderen spreken alleen Engels. Schrijf in het tekst vak hieronder een **Nederlandse** e-mail van ongeveer 150 karakters of ongeveer 3 langere zinnen **naar uw leidinggevende** Robin Smid waarin u deze leidinggevende vraagt **om een dag met u mee op klantbezoek te gaan omdat u denkt dat gezelschap deze belangrijke klant zal overhalen meer producten van het bedrijf aan te schaffen.**

U kunt alle tijd nemen die u nodig heeft.

Page Break



Stel u voor dat u werkt voor een multinationalaal bedrijf in Nederland. Sommige van uw collega's en leidinggevendenden spreken Nederlands, anderen spreken alleen Engels. Schrijf in het tekst vak hieronder een **Engelse** e-mail van ongeveer 150 karakters of ongeveer 3 langere zinnen **naar uw leidinggevende** Sam Johnson waarin **u vraagt of u een dag vrij kunt krijgen vanwege persoonlijke omstandigheden tijdens een drukke periode voor het bedrijf.**

U kunt u alle tijd nemen die u nodig heeft.

Page Break



Stel u voor dat u werkt voor een multinationalaal bedrijf in Nederland. Sommige van uw collega's en leidinggevendenden spreken Nederlands, anderen spreken alleen Engels. Schrijf in het tekst vak hieronder een **Nederlandse** e-mail van ongeveer 150 karakters of ongeveer 3 langere zinnen **naar uw collega** Alex van de Ven waarin u deze collega vraagt **om een late avonddienst van je over te nemen omdat je die avond wegens persoonlijke omstandigheden niet kan werken.**

U kunt u alle tijd nemen die u nodig heeft.

Page Break



Stel u voor dat u werkt voor een multinationalaal bedrijf in Nederland. Sommige van uw collega's en leidinggevendenden spreken Nederlands, anderen spreken alleen Engels. Schrijf in het tekst vak hieronder een **Engelse** e-mail van ongeveer 150 karakters of ongeveer 3 langere zinnen **naar uw collega** Taylor Smith waarin u deze collega vraagt **om een dag met u mee op klantbezoek te gaan omdat u denkt dat gezelschap deze belangrijke klant zal overhalen meer producten van het bedrijf aan te schaffen.**

U kunt alle tijd nemen die u nodig heeft.

End of Block: writing cues 2

Start of Block: Experience, empathy, demographics, and debriefing

Experience

Heeft u ooit eerder e-mails zoals deze geschreven in het Nederlands of in het Engels?

- ☐ Ja vaak en recent
- ☐ Ja vaak, maar langer geleden
- ☐ Ja een enkele keer recent
- ☐ Ja een enkele keer langer geleden
- ☐ Nee nog nooit

Werkt u in het echte leven voor een multinationaal bedrijf of heeft u ooit voor een multinationaal bedrijf gewerkt?

- ☐ Ja en ik heb of had veel contact met niet-Nederlandse medewerkers
 - ☐ Ja, maar ik heb of had weinig contact met niet-Nederlandse medewerkers
 - ☐ Ja, maar ik heb of had geen contact met niet-Nederlandse medewerkers
 - ☐ Nee
-

Heeft u ooit eerder Engelse werk gerelateerde e-mails zoals deze geschreven?

- ☐ Ja vaak en recent
 - ☐ Ja vaak, maar langer geleden
 - ☐ Ja een enkele keer recent
 - ☐ Ja een enkele keer langer geleden
 - ☐ Nee nog nooit
-

Empathy

In hoeverre ervaarde u de volgende empathische gevoelens tijdens het schrijven van de berichten.

	Helemaal niet	Een klein beetje	Een beetje	Enigszins	Redelijk	Erg	Extreem
Sympathiek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Zachtmoedig	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Meelevend	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ontroerd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bezorgd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
overstuur	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
verontrust	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bedroefd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Page Break

Demographic questions

Als welk geslacht identificeert u zich?

- ☐ Man
 - ☐ Vrouw
 - ☐ Non-binair
 - ☐ Anders
 - ☐ Zeg ik liever niet
-

Wat is uw leeftijd in jaren?

Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding?

- ☐ Basisschool
 - ☐ Middelbare school
 - ☐ MBO
 - ☐ HBO Bachelor/Master
 - ☐ WO Bachelor/Master
 - ☐ PHD
 - ☐ Anders
 - ☐ Zeg ik liever niet
-

Hoeveel jaar werkervaring heeft u?



In welk land heeft u het langste gewoond ?

▼ Afghanistan ... Zimbabwe

Page Break

Debriefing Form

Bedankt voor uw deelname aan dit onderzoek.

Het doel van dit onderzoek is om te vergelijken in hoeverre moedertaalsprekers en niet-moedertaalsprekers van het Nederlands de beleefdheid in een e-mail van een moedertaalspreker van het Nederlands hetzelfde ervaren. In de studie waarin u zojuist heeft meegedaan, moest u werk gerelateerde e-mails schrijven met een verzoek aan uw collega of leidinggevende in het Nederlands en in het Engels. In een vervolgstudie zullen uw teksten worden gelezen en geïnterpreteerd door anderen. Dit zal worden gedaan door zowel moedertaalsprekers als niet-moedertaalsprekers van het Nederlands.

Nederlanders worden vaak gezien als verbaal rechttoe rechtaan, confronterend, zelfs agressief en in vergelijking zeer argumentatief. Hoewel het stereotype van de directe en confronterende Nederlander vaak wordt genoemd in zowel het wetenschappelijke als het publieke debat, ontbreekt wetenschappelijk bewijs dat de veronderstelling ondersteunt dat Nederlanders fundamenteel directer zijn dan anderen (Labrie et al., 2020).

In werk gerelateerde afstandscommunicatie worden wereldwijd, en ook door Nederlanders, vaak tekstberichten gebruikt. Dit kan internationaal, meertalig en cross-cultureel zijn. Het detecteren van de bedoelde toon in tekstuele communicatie kan moeilijk zijn vanwege het ontbreken van non-verbale signalen in tekstberichten. Wanneer de meeste communicatie via tekstberichten zoals e-mails of instant messaging verloopt, kunnen misverstanden tussen moedertaalsprekende auteurs en niet-moedertaalsprekende ontvangers een negatieve invloed hebben op interpersoonlijke en werkrelaties (Hautasaari, Yamashita, & Gao, 2014). Daarom is beleefdheid belangrijk in deze sociale interacties en wordt deze uitgedrukt door middel van taal (Lau, 2019). Beleefdheid kan worden gedefinieerd als rekening houden met de gevoelens van anderen (Brown, 2014). Directheid hangt samen met beleefdheid (Wijst, 1995). Het stereotype van de directe en confronterende Nederlander kan verklaard worden door een aantal aspecten van de Nederlandse cultuur, die naar voren zouden moeten komen in elke taal die een Nederlander gebruikt.

Bij deze de vraag om tot en met 31 december niet met anderen te spreken over dit onderzoek om te voorkomen dat zij voorkennis hebben en zo beïnvloed het onderzoek ingaan.

Nogmaals bedankt voor uw deelname. Mocht u vragen hebben kunt u een mail sturen naar l.e.m.teller@tilburguniversity.edu

End of Block: Experience, empathy, demographics, and debriefing

Appendix B. Surveys for Part II of the study

Dutch

Information letter

Welkom

Fijn dat u interesse heeft in meedoen aan dit onderzoek. Hieronder kunt u alle informatie lezen die u nodig heeft voordat u gaat starten met het onderzoek. Lees het daarom goed door.

Mijn naam is Laura en ik ben op dit moment bezig met het schrijven van mijn scriptie voor de master Communication & Cognition aan Tilburg University. Voor mijn scriptie doe ik onderzoek naar de beleefdheid van Nederlanders in werk gerelateerde e-mails. Daarom zou ik u een aantal korte vragen willen stellen over 10 korte e-mails. Iedereen die Nederlands en Engels spreekt (minimaal B1 niveau, onafhankelijk gebruiker) kan meedoen. Je gaat namelijk teksten lezen en interpreteren in zowel Nederlands als Engels. Dit zal maximaal een halfuurtje van uw tijd in beslag nemen. Er zijn geen risico's aan deelname aan dit onderzoek verbonden.

Doel

Met de juiste toon communiceren via tekst gaat niet altijd even makkelijk. Het doel van de studie is om te onderzoeken in hoeverre auteurs en lezers dezelfde toon uit een tekstbericht halen op basis van de manier waarop het tekstbericht geschreven is.

Anonimiteit

De enquête zal eindigen met enkele demografische vragen, zoals uw leeftijd en uw geslacht. Alle gegevens worden zorgvuldig behandeld, alleen de onderzoeker en begeleiders hebben toegang tot de onbewerkte gegevens. U heeft het recht om toegang tot, rectificatie, uitwissing, beperking van of bezwaar tegen de verwerking van persoonsgegevens te verzoeken. Deze toestemming blijft geldig tot het eind van deze studie (Januari 2022). Toestemming om de verstrekte gegevens te gebruiken geldt ook tot het einde van deze studie. Alle geanonimiseerde gegevens worden voor een periode van tenminste 1 jaar bewaard. De evaluaties die u maakt zullen niet herleidbaar zijn naar u.

Vrijwillige deelname

Uw deelname aan dit onderzoek wordt zeer op prijs gesteld en zal zeer waardevol zijn voor het onderzoek. Met uw deelname draagt u bij aan belangrijk wetenschappelijk onderzoek. Het onderzoek zal geen negatieve gevolgen voor u als persoon hebben. De deelname aan dit onderzoek is geheel vrijwillig. Bovendien is er de mogelijkheid om op ieder gewenst moment te stoppen met de enquête door deze weg te klikken.

Contact: Als u vragen of opmerkingen heeft voor de onderzoeker, neem dan contact op met: Laura Teller (l.e.m.teller@tilburguniversity.edu).

Als u vragen of opmerkingen heeft voor de begeleider, neem dan contact op met: Nadine Braun (n.braun@tilburguniversity.edu).

Alvast bedankt voor uw deelname!

Informed Consent

Toestemming

Ik heb de informatie hierboven gelezen en begrijp het doel van de studie. Ik heb voldoende tijd gehad om over deelname na te denken. Ik begrijp dat ik te allen tijde kan stoppen met mijn deelname aan de studie als ik dit wil.

Ik geef toestemming om mijn gegevens te gebruiken voor de doelen die hierboven staan beschreven.

Ik geef toestemming om mijn onbewerkte gegevens 1 jaar lang te bewaren nadat de studie is afgelopen.

Ik geef toestemming om mijn geanonimiseerde gegevens te gebruiken in toekomstig onderzoek.

Wilt u deelnemen aan de enquête?

☐ Ja, ik geef toestemming en wil verder naar de enquête.

Page Break

Level of Dutch and English

Wat is uw niveau van Nederlands?

- ☐ A1: Enige basisvaardigheid
 - ☐ A2: Basisvaardigheid
 - ☐ B1: Onafhankelijk gebruiker
 - ☐ B2: Volledig onafhankelijk gebruiker
 - ☐ C1: Effectieve vaardigheid
 - ☐ C2: Volledige beheersing
 - ☐ Moedertaal
-

Wat is uw niveau van Engels?

- ☐ A1: Enige basisvaardigheid
- ☐ A2: Basisvaardigheid
- ☐ B1: Onafhankelijk gebruiker
- ☐ B2: Volledig onafhankelijk gebruiker
- ☐ C1: Effectieve vaardigheid
- ☐ C2: Volledige beheersing
- ☐ Moedertaal

In hoeverre bent u het eens met de volgende stellingen.

	Helemaal oneens	Oneens	Enigszins oneens	Neutraal	Enigszins eens	Eens	Helemaal eens
Je moet je leven onafhankelijk van anderen leven.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ik ben bij voorkeur direct en openhartig als ik met mensen praat.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Het is belangrijk dat ik mijn werk beter doe dan anderen.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ik werk graag in situaties waarin er concurrentie is met anderen.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Het welzijn van mijn collega's is belangrijk voor mij.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ik voel me goed als ik samenwerk met anderen.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ik offer meestal mijn eigenbelang op ten behoeve van mijn team.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Ik haat het
om het
oneens te zijn
met anderen
in mijn team.



Mood

Geef hieronder aan hoe u zich op dit moment voelt.



0



100



Page Break

Stel u voor dat u werkt voor een multinationalaal bedrijf in Nederland en de volgende e-mails ontvangt van een andere medewerker.

End of Block: Consent, language, culture, and mood

Text Bin 1 (As an example) (This exemplifies the amount of emails and corresponding questions each participant in this part of the study got in each of the 22 text bins)

Start of Block: E-mail 1

Lees onderstaande mail aandachtig. Indien nodig kunt u gebruik maken van een online woordenboek. De volgende vragen gaan over deze mail.

Beste Robin Smid,
Wegens persoonlijke omstandigheden zou ik graag een dag vrij nemen. Door de drukte binnen het bedrijf hoor ik graag van u wat hierin mogelijk is en om welke dagen het dan zou kunnen gaan.
Ik hoor graag van u.
Alvast bedankt!

Hoe beleefd vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel beleefd
 - ☐ Beleefd
 - ☐ Enigszins beleefd
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onbeleefd
 - ☐ Onbeleefd
 - ☐ Heel onbeleefd
-

Hoe direct vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Enigszins direct
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Heel indirect
-

Hoe vriendelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel vriendelijk
 - ☐ Vriendelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins vriendelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Heel onvriendelijk
-

Hoe gebruikelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Heel ongebruikelijk
-

Hoe agressief vindt u het taalgebruik in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel agressief
 - ☐ Agressief
 - ☐ Enigszins agressief
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo agressief
 - ☐ Niet agressief
 - ☐ Helemaal niet agressief
-

Hoe zwaar is volgens u de last van het verzoek in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel zwaar
 - ☐ Zwaar
 - ☐ Enigszins zwaar
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo zwaar
 - ☐ Niet zwaar
 - ☐ Helemaal niet zwaar
-

In hoeverre ervaart u de volgende gevoelens richting de auteur van de e-mail na het lezen van deze e-mail?

	Helemaal niet	Een klein beetje	Een beetje	Enigszins	Redelijk	Erg	Extreem
Sympathiek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Zachtmoedig	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Meelevend	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ontroerd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bezorgd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
overstuur	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
verontrust	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bedroefd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Geef hieronder aan hoe u zich op dit moment voelt.




0
100

Zaten er veel spellingsfouten in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Geen spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Nauwelijks spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Weinig spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Wat spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Redelijk aantal spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Veel spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Heel veel spellingsfouten
-

Hoe grammaticaal correct is deze e-mail?

- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Neutraal
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal correct

End of Block: E-mail 1

Start of Block: E-mail 2

Lees onderstaande mail aandachtig. Indien nodig kunt u gebruik maken van een online woordenboek. De volgende vragen gaan over deze mail.

Dear mr. Johnson,

I would like to ask you whether I could get a day off because of some personal circumstances. I know it is quite a busy time for the company, but I will promise you that I will work twice as hard after I took a break. The circumstances need to be solved, so I can lay all my focus on work again.

Thank you in advance,

Kind regards

Hoe beleefd vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel beleefd
 - ☐ Beleefd
 - ☐ Enigszins beleefd
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onbeleefd
 - ☐ Onbeleefd
 - ☐ Heel onbeleefd
-

Hoe direct vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Enigszins direct
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Heel indirect
-

Hoe vriendelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel vriendelijk
 - ☐ Vriendelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins vriendelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Heel onvriendelijk
-

Hoe gebruikelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Heel ongebruikelijk
-

Hoe agressief vindt u het taalgebruik in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel agressief
 - ☐ Agressief
 - ☐ Enigszins agressief
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo agressief
 - ☐ Niet agressief
 - ☐ Helemaal niet agressief
-

Hoe zwaar is volgens u de last van het verzoek in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel zwaar
 - ☐ Zwaar
 - ☐ Enigszins zwaar
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo zwaar
 - ☐ Niet zwaar
 - ☐ Helemaal niet zwaar
-

In hoeverre ervaart u de volgende gevoelens richting de auteur van de e-mail na het lezen van deze e-mail?

	Helemaal niet	Een klein beetje	Een beetje	Enigszins	Redelijk	Erg	Extreem
Sympathiek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Zachtmoedig	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Meelevend	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ontroerd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bezorgd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
overstuur	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
verontrust	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bedroefd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Geef hieronder aan hoe u zich op dit moment voelt.




0
100

Zaten er veel spellingsfouten in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Geen spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Nauwelijks spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Weinig spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Wat spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Redelijk aantal spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Veel spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Heel veel spellingsfouten
-

Hoe grammaticaal correct is deze e-mail?

- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Neutraal
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal correct

End of Block: E-mail 2

Start of Block: E-mail 3

Lees onderstaande mail aandachtig. Indien nodig kunt u gebruik maken van een online woordenboek. De volgende vragen gaan over deze mail.

Beste Alex,

Aanstaande woensdag ga ik op klantbezoek in Tilburg. Het is de bedoeling dat we deze klant overhalen om meer producten van het bedrijf aan te schaffen. Ik vroeg me af of je tijd en gelegenheid hebt om mij hierbij te vergezellen, gezien jouw aanwezigheid nog weleens van toegevoegde waarde zou kunnen zijn.

Ik hoor het graag.

Met vriendelijke groet,

Hoe beleefd vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel beleefd
 - ☐ Beleefd
 - ☐ Enigszins beleefd
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onbeleefd
 - ☐ Onbeleefd
 - ☐ Heel onbeleefd
-

Hoe direct vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Enigszins direct
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Heel indirect
-

Hoe vriendelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel vriendelijk
 - ☐ Vriendelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins vriendelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Heel onvriendelijk
-

Hoe gebruikelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Heel ongebruikelijk
-

Hoe agressief vindt u het taalgebruik in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel agressief
 - ☐ Agressief
 - ☐ Enigszins agressief
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo agressief
 - ☐ Niet agressief
 - ☐ Helemaal niet agressief
-

Hoe zwaar is volgens u de last van het verzoek in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel zwaar
 - ☐ Zwaar
 - ☐ Enigszins zwaar
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo zwaar
 - ☐ Niet zwaar
 - ☐ Helemaal niet zwaar
-

In hoeverre ervaart u de volgende gevoelens richting de auteur van de e-mail na het lezen van deze e-mail?

	Helemaal niet	Een klein beetje	Een beetje	Enigszins	Redelijk	Erg	Extreem
Sympathiek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Zachtmoedig	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Meelevend	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ontroerd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bezorgd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
overstuur	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
verontrust	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bedroefd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Geef hieronder aan hoe u zich op dit moment voelt.




0
100

Zaten er veel spellingsfouten in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Geen spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Nauwelijks spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Weinig spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Wat spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Redelijk aantal spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Veel spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Heel veel spellingsfouten
-

Hoe grammaticaal correct is deze e-mail?

- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Neutraal
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal correct

End of Block: E-mail 3

Start of Block: E-mail 4

Lees onderstaande mail aandachtig. Indien nodig kunt u gebruik maken van een online woordenboek. De volgende vragen gaan over deze mail.

Dear Taylor Smith,

I would like to ask if you have the opportunity to work my evening shift? Because of personal matters I'm not capable to work this shift.
Looking forward to hear from you.
Kind regards,

Hoe beleefd vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel beleefd
 - ☐ Beleefd
 - ☐ Enigszins beleefd
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onbeleefd
 - ☐ Onbeleefd
 - ☐ Heel onbeleefd
-

Hoe direct vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Enigszins direct
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Heel indirect
-

Hoe vriendelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel vriendelijk
 - ☐ Vriendelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins vriendelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Heel onvriendelijk
-

Hoe gebruikelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Heel ongebruikelijk
-

Hoe agressief vindt u het taalgebruik in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel agressief
 - ☐ Agressief
 - ☐ Enigszins agressief
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo agressief
 - ☐ Niet agressief
 - ☐ Helemaal niet agressief
-

Hoe zwaar is volgens u de last van het verzoek in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel zwaar
 - ☐ Zwaar
 - ☐ Enigszins zwaar
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo zwaar
 - ☐ Niet zwaar
 - ☐ Helemaal niet zwaar
-

In hoeverre ervaart u de volgende gevoelens richting de auteur van de e-mail na het lezen van deze e-mail?

	Helemaal niet	Een klein beetje	Een beetje	Enigszins	Redelijk	Erg	Extreem
Sympathiek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Zachtmoedig	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Meelevend	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ontroerd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bezorgd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
overstuur	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
verontrust	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bedroefd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Geef hieronder aan hoe u zich op dit moment voelt.




0
100

Zaten er veel spellingsfouten in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Geen spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Nauwelijks spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Weinig spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Wat spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Redelijk aantal spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Veel spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Heel veel spellingsfouten
-

Hoe grammaticaal correct is deze e-mail?

- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Neutraal
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal correct

End of Block: E-mail 4

Start of Block: E-mail 5

Lees onderstaande mail aandachtig. Indien nodig kunt u gebruik maken van een online woordenboek. De volgende vragen gaan over deze mail.

Dear Sam Johnson,

Via this e-mail, I want to let you know that I would like to join you on your meeting with our clients. I think it increases the buying behaviour of the clients, so they will buy more products of our company. I would like to hear from you.
Thanks in advance!

Hoe beleefd vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel beleefd
 - ☐ Beleefd
 - ☐ Enigszins beleefd
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onbeleefd
 - ☐ Onbeleefd
 - ☐ Heel onbeleefd
-

Hoe direct vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Enigszins direct
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Heel indirect
-

Hoe vriendelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel vriendelijk
 - ☐ Vriendelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins vriendelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Heel onvriendelijk
-

Hoe gebruikelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Heel ongebruikelijk
-

Hoe agressief vindt u het taalgebruik in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel agressief
 - ☐ Agressief
 - ☐ Enigszins agressief
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo agressief
 - ☐ Niet agressief
 - ☐ Helemaal niet agressief
-

Hoe zwaar is volgens u de last van het verzoek in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel zwaar
 - ☐ Zwaar
 - ☐ Enigszins zwaar
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo zwaar
 - ☐ Niet zwaar
 - ☐ Helemaal niet zwaar
-

In hoeverre ervaart u de volgende gevoelens richting de auteur van de e-mail na het lezen van deze e-mail?

	Helemaal niet	Een klein beetje	Een beetje	Enigszins	Redelijk	Erg	Extreem
Sympathiek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Zachtmoedig	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Meelevend	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ontroerd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bezorgd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
overstuur	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
verontrust	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bedroefd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Geef hieronder aan hoe u zich op dit moment voelt.




0
100

Zaten er veel spellingsfouten in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Geen spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Nauwelijks spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Weinig spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Wat spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Redelijk aantal spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Veel spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Heel veel spellingsfouten
-

Hoe grammaticaal correct is deze e-mail?

- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Neutraal
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal correct

End of Block: E-mail 5

Start of Block: E-mail 6

Lees onderstaande mail aandachtig. Indien nodig kunt u gebruik maken van een online woordenboek. De volgende vragen gaan over deze mail.

Beste Alex,

Komende woensdag heb ik een late avonddienst van 20:00-1:00. Ik vroeg me af of je deze van mij zou kunnen overnemen?

Ik kan namelijk niet werken wegens persoonlijke omstandigheden. alvast bedankt

Hoe beleefd vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel beleefd
- ☐ Beleefd
- ☐ Enigszins beleefd
- ☐ Neutraal
- ☐ Enigszins onbeleefd
- ☐ Onbeleefd
- ☐ Heel onbeleefd

Hoe direct vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel direct
- ☐ Direct
- ☐ Enigszins direct
- ☐ Neutraal
- ☐ Enigszins indirect
- ☐ Indirect
- ☐ Heel indirect

Hoe vriendelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel vriendelijk
 - ☐ Vriendelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins vriendelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Heel onvriendelijk
-

Hoe gebruikelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Heel ongebruikelijk
-

Hoe agressief vindt u het taalgebruik in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel agressief
 - ☐ Agressief
 - ☐ Enigszins agressief
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo agressief
 - ☐ Niet agressief
 - ☐ Helemaal niet agressief
-

Hoe zwaar is volgens u de last van het verzoek in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel zwaar
 - ☐ Zwaar
 - ☐ Enigszins zwaar
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo zwaar
 - ☐ Niet zwaar
 - ☐ Helemaal niet zwaar
-

In hoeverre ervaart u de volgende gevoelens richting de auteur van de e-mail na het lezen van deze e-mail?

	Helemaal niet	Een klein beetje	Een beetje	Enigszins	Redelijk	Erg	Extreem
Sympathiek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Zachtmoedig	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Meelevend	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ontroerd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bezorgd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
overstuur	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
verontrust	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bedroefd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Geef hieronder aan hoe u zich op dit moment voelt.




0
100

Zaten er veel spellingsfouten in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Geen spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Nauwelijks spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Weinig spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Wat spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Redelijk aantal spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Veel spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Heel veel spellingsfouten
-

Hoe grammaticaal correct is deze e-mail?

- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Neutraal
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal correct

End of Block: E-mail 6

Start of Block: E-mail 7

Lees onderstaande mail aandachtig. Indien nodig kunt u gebruik maken van een online woordenboek. De volgende vragen gaan over deze mail.

Dear Taylor,

Due to some personal circumstances I cannot make it to tomorrow's night shift. My question to you is if you could cover the shift for me. I can imagine this is very inconvenient for you but of course I'm willing to cover one of your night shifts. Thank you in advance.
Kind regards,

Hoe beleefd vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel beleefd
 - ☐ Beleefd
 - ☐ Enigszins beleefd
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onbeleefd
 - ☐ Onbeleefd
 - ☐ Heel onbeleefd
-

Hoe direct vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Enigszins direct
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Heel indirect
-

Hoe vriendelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel vriendelijk
 - ☐ Vriendelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins vriendelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Heel onvriendelijk
-

Hoe gebruikelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Heel ongebruikelijk
-

Hoe agressief vindt u het taalgebruik in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel agressief
 - ☐ Agressief
 - ☐ Enigszins agressief
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo agressief
 - ☐ Niet agressief
 - ☐ Helemaal niet agressief
-

Hoe zwaar is volgens u de last van het verzoek in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel zwaar
 - ☐ Zwaar
 - ☐ Enigszins zwaar
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo zwaar
 - ☐ Niet zwaar
 - ☐ Helemaal niet zwaar
-

In hoeverre ervaart u de volgende gevoelens richting de auteur van de e-mail na het lezen van deze e-mail?

	Helemaal niet	Een klein beetje	Een beetje	Enigszins	Redelijk	Erg	Extreem
Sympathiek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Zachtmoedig	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Meelevend	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ontroerd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bezorgd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
overstuur	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
verontrust	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bedroefd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Geef hieronder aan hoe u zich op dit moment voelt.




0
100

Zaten er veel spellingsfouten in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Geen spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Nauwelijks spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Weinig spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Wat spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Redelijk aantal spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Veel spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Heel veel spellingsfouten
-

Hoe grammaticaal correct is deze e-mail?

- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Neutraal
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal correct

End of Block: E-mail 7

Start of Block: E-mail 8

Lees onderstaande mail aandachtig. Indien nodig kunt u gebruik maken van een online woordenboek. De volgende vragen gaan over deze mail.

Beste Robin Smid,

Ondanks de drukke periode zou ik u graag willen vragen of ik de mogelijkheid heb om een dag verlof te vragen. Wegens persoonlijke omstandigheden zou dit voor mij schikken. Ik hoor graag van u.
Met vriendelijke groet,

Hoe beleefd vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel beleefd
 - ☐ Beleefd
 - ☐ Enigszins beleefd
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onbeleefd
 - ☐ Onbeleefd
 - ☐ Heel onbeleefd
-

Hoe direct vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Enigszins direct
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Heel indirect
-

Hoe vriendelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel vriendelijk
 - ☐ Vriendelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins vriendelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Heel onvriendelijk
-

Hoe gebruikelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Heel ongebruikelijk
-

Hoe agressief vindt u het taalgebruik in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel agressief
 - ☐ Agressief
 - ☐ Enigszins agressief
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo agressief
 - ☐ Niet agressief
 - ☐ Helemaal niet agressief
-

Hoe zwaar is volgens u de last van het verzoek in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel zwaar
 - ☐ Zwaar
 - ☐ Enigszins zwaar
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo zwaar
 - ☐ Niet zwaar
 - ☐ Helemaal niet zwaar
-

In hoeverre ervaart u de volgende gevoelens richting de auteur van de e-mail na het lezen van deze e-mail?

	Helemaal niet	Een klein beetje	Een beetje	Enigszins	Redelijk	Erg	Extreem
Sympathiek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Zachtmoedig	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Meelevend	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ontroerd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bezorgd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
overstuur	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
verontrust	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bedroefd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Geef hieronder aan hoe u zich op dit moment voelt.




0100



Zaten er veel spellingsfouten in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Geen spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Nauwelijks spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Weinig spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Wat spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Redelijk aantal spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Veel spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Heel veel spellingsfouten
-

Hoe grammaticaal correct is deze e-mail?

- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Neutraal
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal correct

End of Block: E-mail 8

Start of Block: E-mail 9

Lees onderstaande mail aandachtig. Indien nodig kunt u gebruik maken van een online woordenboek. De volgende vragen gaan over deze mail.

Beste Alex van de Ven,

Bij deze wil ik u graag laten weten, dat het mij een goed idee lijkt met u mee te gaan op klankbezoek. Ik denk namelijk dat gezelschap zorgt voor het vergroten van de aanschaf van onze producten door de klant. Ik hoor graag van u wat u hiervan vindt. Alvast bedankt.

Hoe beleefd vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel beleefd
 - ☐ Beleefd
 - ☐ Enigszins beleefd
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onbeleefd
 - ☐ Onbeleefd
 - ☐ Heel onbeleefd
-

Hoe direct vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel direct
- ☐ Direct
- ☐ Enigszins direct
- ☐ Neutraal
- ☐ Enigszins indirect
- ☐ Indirect
- ☐ Heel indirect

Hoe vriendelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel vriendelijk
 - ☐ Vriendelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins vriendelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Heel onvriendelijk
-

Hoe gebruikelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Heel ongebruikelijk
-

Hoe agressief vindt u het taalgebruik in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel agressief
 - ☐ Agressief
 - ☐ Enigszins agressief
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo agressief
 - ☐ Niet agressief
 - ☐ Helemaal niet agressief
-

Hoe zwaar is volgens u de last van het verzoek in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel zwaar
 - ☐ Zwaar
 - ☐ Enigszins zwaar
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo zwaar
 - ☐ Niet zwaar
 - ☐ Helemaal niet zwaar
-

In hoeverre ervaart u de volgende gevoelens richting de auteur van de e-mail na het lezen van deze e-mail?

	Helemaal niet	Een klein beetje	Een beetje	Enigszins	Redelijk	Erg	Extreem
Sympathiek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Zachtmoedig	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Meelevend	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ontroerd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bezorgd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
overstuur	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
verontrust	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bedroefd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Geef hieronder aan hoe u zich op dit moment voelt.




0
100

Zaten er veel spellingsfouten in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Geen spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Nauwelijks spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Weinig spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Wat spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Redelijk aantal spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Veel spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Heel veel spellingsfouten
-

Hoe grammaticaal correct is deze e-mail?

- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Neutraal
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal correct

End of Block: E-mail 9

Start of Block: E-mail 10

Lees onderstaande mail aandachtig. Indien nodig kunt u gebruik maken van een online woordenboek. De volgende vragen gaan over deze mail.

Dear Taylor,

In a few days I have a very important meeting with a client. I would like to ask you if you want to join me.

Considering your expertise I think the client will be more likely to buy more products of our company. You would do me a big favour.

Kind regards

Hoe beleefd vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel beleefd
 - ☐ Beleefd
 - ☐ Enigszins beleefd
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onbeleefd
 - ☐ Onbeleefd
 - ☐ Heel onbeleefd
-

Hoe direct vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Enigszins direct
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Heel indirect
-

Hoe vriendelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel vriendelijk
 - ☐ Vriendelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins vriendelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Onvriendelijk
 - ☐ Heel onvriendelijk
-

Hoe gebruikelijk vindt u deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Enigszins gebruikelijk
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Enigszins ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Ongebruikelijk
 - ☐ Heel ongebruikelijk
-

Hoe agressief vindt u het taalgebruik in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel agressief
 - ☐ Agressief
 - ☐ Enigszins agressief
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo agressief
 - ☐ Niet agressief
 - ☐ Helemaal niet agressief
-

Hoe zwaar is volgens u de last van het verzoek in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Heel zwaar
 - ☐ Zwaar
 - ☐ Enigszins zwaar
 - ☐ Neutraal
 - ☐ Niet zo zwaar
 - ☐ Niet zwaar
 - ☐ Helemaal niet zwaar
-

In hoeverre ervaart u de volgende gevoelens richting de auteur van de e-mail na het lezen van deze e-mail?

	Helemaal niet	Een klein beetje	Een beetje	Enigszins	Redelijk	Erg	Extreem
Sympathiek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Zachtmoedig	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Meelevend	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ontroerd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bezorgd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
overstuur	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
verontrust	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bedroefd	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Geef hieronder aan hoe u zich op dit moment voelt.




0
100

Zaten er veel spellingsfouten in deze e-mail?

- ☐ Geen spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Nauwelijks spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Weinig spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Wat spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Redelijk aantal spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Veel spellingsfouten
 - ☐ Heel veel spellingsfouten
-

Hoe grammaticaal correct is deze e-mail?

- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal incorrect
- ☐ Neutraal
- ☐ Enigszins grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Redelijk grammaticaal correct
- ☐ Volledig grammaticaal correct

End of Block: E-mail 10

Start of Block: Experience, demographics, and debriefing

Dit was de laatste e-mail. Hier volgen nog enkele vragen over uw achtergrond.

Experience

Heeft u ooit eerder e-mails zoals deze gelezen in het Nederlands of in het Engels?

- ☐ Ja vaak en recent
 - ☐ Ja vaak, maar langer geleden
 - ☐ Ja een enkele keer recent
 - ☐ Ja een enkele keer langer geleden
 - ☐ Nee nog nooit
-

Werkt u in het echte leven voor een multinational bedrijf of heeft u ooit voor een multinational bedrijf gewerkt?

- ☐ Ja en ik heb of had veel contact met niet-Nederlandse medewerkers
 - ☐ Ja, maar ik heb of had weinig contact met niet-Nederlandse medewerkers
 - ☐ Ja, maar ik heb of had geen contact met niet-Nederlandse medewerkers
 - ☐ Nee
-

Heeft u ooit eerder Engelse werk gerelateerde e-mails zoals deze gelezen?

- ☐ Ja vaak en recent
 - ☐ Ja vaak, maar langer geleden
 - ☐ Ja een enkele keer recent
 - ☐ Ja een enkele keer langer geleden
 - ☐ Nee nog nooit
-

Demographic questions

Als welk geslacht identificeert u zich?

- ☐ Man
 - ☐ Vrouw
 - ☐ Non-binair
 - ☐ Anders
 - ☐ Zeg ik liever niet
-

Wat is uw leeftijd in jaren?

Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding?

- ☐ Basisschool
 - ☐ Middelbare school
 - ☐ MBO
 - ☐ HBO Bachelor/Master
 - ☐ WO Bachelor/Master
 - ☐ PHD
 - ☐ Anders
 - ☐ Zeg ik liever niet
-

Hoeveel jaar werkervaring heeft u?



In welk land heeft u het langste gewoond ?

▼ Afghanistan ... Zimbabwe

Page Break

Debriefing Form

Bedankt voor uw deelname aan dit onderzoek.

Het doel van dit onderzoek is om te vergelijken in hoeverre moedertaalsprekers en niet-moedertaalsprekers van het Nederlands de beleefdheid in een e-mail van een moedertaalspreker van het Nederlands hetzelfde ervaren. In de studie waarin u zojuist heeft meegedaan, moest u een werk gerelateerd tekstbericht lezen en interpreteren met een verzoek van uw collega of leidinggevende in het Nederlands of in het Engels. In een voorgaande studie zijn deze teksten geschreven door anderen. Alle auteurs zijn moedertaalsprekers van het Nederlands. Zowel moedertaalsprekers als niet-moedertaalsprekers van het Nederlands lezen en interpreteren alle teksten in deze studie.

Nederlanders worden vaak gezien als verbaal rechttoe rechtaan, confronterend, zelfs agressief en in vergelijking zeer argumentatief. Hoewel het stereotype van de directe en confronterende Nederlander vaak wordt genoemd in zowel het wetenschappelijke als het publieke debat, ontbreekt wetenschappelijk bewijs dat de veronderstelling ondersteunt dat Nederlanders fundamenteel directer zijn dan anderen (Labrie et al., 2020).

In werk gerelateerde afstandscommunicatie worden wereldwijd, en ook door Nederlanders, vaak tekstberichten gebruikt. Dit kan internationaal, meertalig en cross-cultureel zijn. Het detecteren van de bedoelde toon in tekstuele communicatie kan moeilijk zijn vanwege het ontbreken van non-verbale signalen in tekstberichten. Wanneer de meeste communicatie via tekstberichten zoals e-mails of instant messaging verloopt, kunnen misverstanden tussen moedertaalsprekende auteurs en niet-moedertaalsprekende ontvangers een negatieve invloed hebben op interpersoonlijke en werkrelaties (Hautasaari, Yamashita, & Gao, 2014). Daarom is beleefdheid belangrijk in deze sociale interacties en wordt deze uitgedrukt door middel van taal (Lau, 2019). Beleefdheid kan worden gedefinieerd als rekening houden met de gevoelens van anderen (Brown, 2014). Directheid hangt samen met beleefdheid (Wijst, 1995). Het stereotype van de directe en confronterende Nederlander kan verklaard worden door een aantal aspecten van de Nederlandse cultuur, die naar voren zouden moeten komen in elke taal die een Nederlander gebruikt.

Bij deze de vraag om tot en met 31 december niet met anderen te spreken over dit onderzoek om te voorkomen dat zij voorkennis hebben en zo beïnvloed het onderzoek ingaan.

Nogmaals bedankt voor uw deelname. Mocht u vragen hebben kunt u een mail sturen naar l.e.m.teller@tilburguniversity.edu

End of Block: Experience, demographics, and debriefing

Non-Dutch

Information letter

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research. Below you can read all the information you need before you start the survey. Therefore, please read it carefully.

My name is Laura and I am currently writing my thesis for the master Communication & Cognition at Tilburg University. For my thesis I am researching the politeness of Dutch people in work-related e-mails. Therefore, I would like to ask you some short questions about 10 short e-mails. Anyone who speaks Dutch and English (minimum B1 level, independent user) can participate. You will read and interpret texts in both Dutch and English. This will take up to half an hour of your time. There are no risks associated with participating in this study.

Goal

Communicating in the right tone via text is not always easy. The aim of the study is to investigate to what extent authors and readers extract the same tone from a text message based on the way the text message is written.

Anonymity

The survey will end with some demographic questions, such as your age and your gender. All data is treated with care, only the researcher and supervisor have access to the raw data. You have the right to request access, rectification, erasure, restriction or objection to the processing of personal data. This consent remains valid until the end of this study (January 2022). Permission to use the provided data also applies until the end of this study. All anonymized data is kept for a period of at least 1 year. The evaluations you make will not be traceable to you.

Voluntary participation

Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated and will be of great value to the study. With your participation you contribute to important scientific research. The research will have no negative consequences for you as a person. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. In addition, there is the option to stop the survey at any time by closing it.

Contact: If you have any questions or comments for the researcher, please contact: Laura Teller (l.e.m.teller@tilburguniversity.edu).

If you have any questions or comments for the supervisor, please contact: Nadine Braun (n.braun@tilburguniversity.edu).

Thank you in advance for your participation!

Informed Consent

Permission

I have read the information above and understand the purpose of the study. I have had enough time to think about participating. I understand that I can stop participating in the study at any time if I want to.

I give permission to use my data for the purposes described above.

I give permission to keep my raw data for 1 year after the study has ended.

I give permission to use my anonymized data in future research.

Would you like to participate in the survey?

☐ Yes, I consent and want to continue to the survey.

Page Break

Level of Dutch and English

What is your level of Dutch?

- ☐ A1: Some basic knowledge
 - ☐ A2: Basic knowledge
 - ☐ B1: Independent user
 - ☐ B2: Completely independent user
 - ☐ C1: Effective skill
 - ☐ C2: Native language level skill
-

What is your level of English?

- ☐ A1: Some basic knowledge
 - ☐ A2: Basic knowledge
 - ☐ B1: Independent user
 - ☐ B2: Completely independent user
 - ☐ C1: Effective skill
 - ☐ C2: Native language level skill
 - ☐ Native language
-

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Completel y disagree	Disagre e	Somewh at disagree	Neutra l	Somewh at agree	Agre e	Completel y agree
One should live one's life independently of others.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I prefer to be direct and forthright when discussing with people.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It is important that I do my job better than others.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I enjoy working in situations involving competition with others.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The well-being of my coworkers is important to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel good when I cooperate with others.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I usually sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of my team.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I hate to disagree with others in my team.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Mood

Please indicate below how you are feeling right now.

		
	0	100
		

Page Break

Imagine that you work for a multinational company in the Netherlands and receive the following emails from another employee.

End of Block: Consent, language, culture, and mood

Text Bin 1 (As an example) (This exemplifies the amount of emails and corresponding questions each participant in this part of the study got in each of the 22 text bins)

Start of Block: E-mail 1

Please read the e-mail below carefully. If necessary, you can use an online dictionary. The following questions are about this email.

Beste Robin Smid,
Wegens persoonlijke omstandigheden zou ik graag een dag vrij nemen. Door de drukte binnen het bedrijf hoor ik graag van u wat hierin mogelijk is en om welke dagen het dan zou kunnen gaan.
Ik hoor graag van u.
Alvast bedankt!

How polite do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very polite
 - ☐ Polite
 - ☐ Somewhat polite
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat impolite
 - ☐ Impolite
 - ☐ Very impolite
-

How direct do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Somewhat direct
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Very indirect
-

How friendly do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very friendly
 - ☐ Friendly
 - ☐ Somewhat friendly
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unfriendly
 - ☐ Unfriendly
 - ☐ Very unfriendly
-

How common do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very common
 - ☐ Common
 - ☐ Somewhat common
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unusual
 - ☐ Unusual
 - ☐ Very unusual
-

How aggressive do you think the language in this email is?

- ☐ Very aggressive
 - ☐ Aggressive
 - ☐ Somewhat aggressive
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat nonaggressive
 - ☐ Nonaggressive
 - ☐ Completely nonaggressive
-

How much imposition do you think the request in this e-mail poses ?

- ☐ Great imposition
 - ☐ Significant imposition
 - ☐ Some imposition
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ little imposition
 - ☐ Hardly any imposition
 - ☐ No imposition
-

To what extent do you experience the following feelings towards the author of the e-mail after reading this e-mail?

	Not at all	A little bit	A little	Somewhat	Significantly	Very much	Extremely
Sympathetic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Softhearted	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Compassionate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Moved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Distressed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Troubled	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grieved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate below how you are feeling right now.




0
100

Were there spelling errors in this e-mail?

- ☐ No spelling errors
 - ☐ Hardly any spelling errors
 - ☐ Few spelling errors
 - ☐ Some spelling errors
 - ☐ A significant number of spelling errors
 - ☐ Many spelling errors
 - ☐ Very many spelling errors
-

How grammatically correct is this e-mail?

- ☐ Completely grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically correct
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically correct
- ☐ Completely grammatically correct

End of Block: E-mail 1

Start of Block: E-mail 2

Please read the e-mail below carefully. If necessary, you can use an online dictionary. The following questions are about this email.

Dear mr. Johnson,
I would like to ask you whether I could get a day off because of some personal circumstances.
I know it is quite a busy time for the company, but I will promise you that I will work twice as hard after I took a break. The circumstances need to be solved, so I can lay all my focus on work again.
Thank you in advance,
Kind regards

How polite do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very polite
 - ☐ Polite
 - ☐ Somewhat polite
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat impolite
 - ☐ Impolite
 - ☐ Very impolite
-

How direct do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Somewhat direct
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Very indirect
-

How friendly do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very friendly
 - ☐ Friendly
 - ☐ Somewhat friendly
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unfriendly
 - ☐ Unfriendly
 - ☐ Very unfriendly
-

How common do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very common
 - ☐ Common
 - ☐ Somewhat common
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unusual
 - ☐ Unusual
 - ☐ Very unusual
-

How aggressive do you think the language in this email is?

- ☐ Very aggressive
 - ☐ Aggressive
 - ☐ Somewhat aggressive
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat nonaggressive
 - ☐ Nonaggressive
 - ☐ Completely nonaggressive
-

How much imposition do you think the request in this e-mail poses ?

- ☐ Great imposition
 - ☐ Significant imposition
 - ☐ Some imposition
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ little imposition
 - ☐ Hardly any imposition
 - ☐ No imposition
-

To what extent do you experience the following feelings towards the author of the email after reading this e-mail?

	Not at all	A little bit	A little	Somewhat	Significantly	Very much	Extremely
Sympathetic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Softhearted	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Compassionate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Moved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Distressed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Troubled	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grieved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate below how you are feeling right now.




0
100

Were there spelling errors in this e-mail?

- ☐ No spelling errors
 - ☐ Hardly any spelling errors
 - ☐ Few spelling errors
 - ☐ Some spelling errors
 - ☐ A significant number of spelling errors
 - ☐ Many spelling errors
 - ☐ Very many spelling errors
-

How grammatically correct is this e-mail?

- ☐ Completely grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically correct
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically correct
- ☐ Completely grammatically correct

End of Block: E-mail 2

Start of Block: E-mail 3

Please read the e-mail below carefully. If necessary, you can use an online dictionary. The following questions are about this email.

Beste Alex,

Aanstaande woensdag ga ik op klantbezoek in Tilburg. Het is de bedoeling dat we deze klant overhalen om meer producten van het bedrijf aan te schaffen. Ik vroeg me af of je tijd en gelegenheid hebt om mij hierbij te vergezellen, gezien jouw aanwezigheid nog weleens van toegevoegde waarde zou kunnen zijn.

Ik hoor het graag.

Met vriendelijke groet,

How polite do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very polite
 - ☐ Polite
 - ☐ Somewhat polite
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat impolite
 - ☐ Impolite
 - ☐ Very impolite
-

How direct do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Somewhat direct
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Very indirect
-

How friendly do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very friendly
 - ☐ Friendly
 - ☐ Somewhat friendly
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unfriendly
 - ☐ Unfriendly
 - ☐ Very unfriendly
-

How common do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very common
 - ☐ Common
 - ☐ Somewhat common
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unusual
 - ☐ Unusual
 - ☐ Very unusual
-

How aggressive do you think the language in this email is?

- ☐ Very aggressive
 - ☐ Aggressive
 - ☐ Somewhat aggressive
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat nonaggressive
 - ☐ Nonaggressive
 - ☐ Completely nonaggressive
-

How much imposition do you think the request in this e-mail poses ?

- ☐ Great imposition
 - ☐ Significant imposition
 - ☐ Some imposition
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ little imposition
 - ☐ Hardly any imposition
 - ☐ No imposition
-

To what extent do you experience the following feelings towards the author of the email after reading this e-mail?

	Not at all	A little bit	A little	Somewhat	Significantly	Very much	Extremely
Sympathetic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Softhearted	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Compassionate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Moved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Distressed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Troubled	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grieved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate below how you are feeling right now.




0
100

Were there spelling errors in this e-mail?

- ☐ No spelling errors
 - ☐ Hardly any spelling errors
 - ☐ Few spelling errors
 - ☐ Some spelling errors
 - ☐ A significant number of spelling errors
 - ☐ Many spelling errors
 - ☐ Very many spelling errors
-

How grammatically correct is this e-mail?

- ☐ Completely grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically correct
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically correct
- ☐ Completely grammatically correct

End of Block: E-mail 3

Start of Block: E-mail 4

Please read the e-mail below carefully. If necessary, you can use an online dictionary. The following questions are about this email.

Dear Taylor Smith,
I would like to ask if you have the opportunity to work my evening shift? Because of personal matters I'm not capable to work this shift.
Looking forward to hear from you.
Kind regards,

How polite do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very polite
 - ☐ Polite
 - ☐ Somewhat polite
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat impolite
 - ☐ Impolite
 - ☐ Very impolite
-

How direct do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Somewhat direct
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Very indirect
-

How friendly do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very friendly
 - ☐ Friendly
 - ☐ Somewhat friendly
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unfriendly
 - ☐ Unfriendly
 - ☐ Very unfriendly
-

How common do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very common
 - ☐ Common
 - ☐ Somewhat common
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unusual
 - ☐ Unusual
 - ☐ Very unusual
-

How aggressive do you think the language in this email is?

- ☐ Very aggressive
 - ☐ Aggressive
 - ☐ Somewhat aggressive
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat nonaggressive
 - ☐ Nonaggressive
 - ☐ Completely nonaggressive
-

How much imposition do you think the request in this e-mail poses ?

- ☐ Great imposition
 - ☐ Significant imposition
 - ☐ Some imposition
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ little imposition
 - ☐ Hardly any imposition
 - ☐ No imposition
-

To what extent do you experience the following feelings towards the author of the email after reading this e-mail?

	Not at all	A little bit	A little	Somewhat	Significantly	Very much	Extremely
Sympathetic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Softhearted	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Compassionate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Moved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Distressed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Troubled	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grieved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate below how you are feeling right now.




0
100

Were there spelling errors in this e-mail?

- ☐ No spelling errors
 - ☐ Hardly any spelling errors
 - ☐ Few spelling errors
 - ☐ Some spelling errors
 - ☐ A significant number of spelling errors
 - ☐ Many spelling errors
 - ☐ Very many spelling errors
-

How grammatically correct is this e-mail?

- ☐ Completely grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically correct
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically correct
- ☐ Completely grammatically correct

End of Block: E-mail 4

Start of Block: E-mail 5

Please read the e-mail below carefully. If necessary, you can use an online dictionary. The following questions are about this email.

Dear Sam Johnson,

Via this e-mail, I want to let you know that I would like to join you on your meeting with our clients. I think it increases the buying behaviour of the clients, so they will buy more products of our company.

I would like to hear from you.

Thanks in advance!

How polite do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very polite
 - ☐ Polite
 - ☐ Somewhat polite
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat impolite
 - ☐ Impolite
 - ☐ Very impolite
-

How direct do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Somewhat direct
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Very indirect
-

How friendly do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very friendly
 - ☐ Friendly
 - ☐ Somewhat friendly
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unfriendly
 - ☐ Unfriendly
 - ☐ Very unfriendly
-

How common do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very common
 - ☐ Common
 - ☐ Somewhat common
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unusual
 - ☐ Unusual
 - ☐ Very unusual
-

How aggressive do you think the language in this email is?

- ☐ Very aggressive
 - ☐ Aggressive
 - ☐ Somewhat aggressive
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat nonaggressive
 - ☐ Nonaggressive
 - ☐ Completely nonaggressive
-

How much imposition do you think the request in this e-mail poses ?

- ☐ Great imposition
 - ☐ Significant imposition
 - ☐ Some imposition
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ little imposition
 - ☐ Hardly any imposition
 - ☐ No imposition
-

To what extent do you experience the following feelings towards the author of the email after reading this e-mail?

	Not at all	A little bit	A little	Somewhat	Significantly	Very much	Extremely
Sympathetic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Softhearted	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Compassionate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Moved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Distressed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Troubled	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grieved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate below how you are feeling right now.




0
100

Were there spelling errors in this e-mail?

- ☐ No spelling errors
 - ☐ Hardly any spelling errors
 - ☐ Few spelling errors
 - ☐ Some spelling errors
 - ☐ A significant number of spelling errors
 - ☐ Many spelling errors
 - ☐ Very many spelling errors
-

How grammatically correct is this e-mail?

- ☐ Completely grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically correct
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically correct
- ☐ Completely grammatically correct

End of Block: E-mail 5

Start of Block: E-mail 6

Please read the e-mail below carefully. If necessary, you can use an online dictionary. The following questions are about this email.

Beste Alex,

Komende woensdag heb ik een late avonddienst van 20:00-1:00. Ik vroeg me af of je deze van mij zou kunnen overnemen?

Ik kan namelijk niet werken wegens persoonlijke omstandigheden. alvast bedankt

How polite do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very polite
 - ☐ Polite
 - ☐ Somewhat polite
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat impolite
 - ☐ Impolite
 - ☐ Very impolite
-

How direct do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Somewhat direct
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Very indirect
-

How friendly do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very friendly
 - ☐ Friendly
 - ☐ Somewhat friendly
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unfriendly
 - ☐ Unfriendly
 - ☐ Very unfriendly
-

How common do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very common
 - ☐ Common
 - ☐ Somewhat common
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unusual
 - ☐ Unusual
 - ☐ Very unusual
-

How aggressive do you think the language in this email is?

- ☐ Very aggressive
 - ☐ Aggressive
 - ☐ Somewhat aggressive
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat nonaggressive
 - ☐ Nonaggressive
 - ☐ Completely nonaggressive
-

How much imposition do you think the request in this e-mail poses ?

- ☐ Great imposition
 - ☐ Significant imposition
 - ☐ Some imposition
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ little imposition
 - ☐ Hardly any imposition
 - ☐ No imposition
-

To what extent do you experience the following feelings towards the author of the email after reading this e-mail?

	Not at all	A little bit	A little	Somewhat	Significantly	Very much	Extremely
Sympathetic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Softhearted	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Compassionate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Moved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Distressed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Troubled	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grieved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate below how you are feeling right now.




0
100

Were there spelling errors in this e-mail?

- ☐ No spelling errors
 - ☐ Hardly any spelling errors
 - ☐ Few spelling errors
 - ☐ Some spelling errors
 - ☐ A significant number of spelling errors
 - ☐ Many spelling errors
 - ☐ Very many spelling errors
-

How grammatically correct is this e-mail?

- ☐ Completely grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically correct
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically correct
- ☐ Completely grammatically correct

End of Block: E-mail 6

Start of Block: E-mail 7

Please read the e-mail below carefully. If necessary, you can use an online dictionary. The following questions are about this email.

Dear Taylor,

Due to some personal circumstances I cannot make it to tomorrow's night shift. My question to you is if you could cover the shift for me. I can imagine this is very inconvenient for you but of course I'm willing to cover one of your night shifts. Thank you in advance.

Kind regards,

How polite do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very polite
 - ☐ Polite
 - ☐ Somewhat polite
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat impolite
 - ☐ Impolite
 - ☐ Very impolite
-

How direct do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Somewhat direct
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Very indirect
-

How friendly do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very friendly
 - ☐ Friendly
 - ☐ Somewhat friendly
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unfriendly
 - ☐ Unfriendly
 - ☐ Very unfriendly
-

How common do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very common
 - ☐ Common
 - ☐ Somewhat common
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unusual
 - ☐ Unusual
 - ☐ Very unusual
-

How aggressive do you think the language in this email is?

- ☐ Very aggressive
 - ☐ Aggressive
 - ☐ Somewhat aggressive
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat nonaggressive
 - ☐ Nonaggressive
 - ☐ Completely nonaggressive
-

How much imposition do you think the request in this e-mail poses ?

- ☐ Great imposition
 - ☐ Significant imposition
 - ☐ Some imposition
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ little imposition
 - ☐ Hardly any imposition
 - ☐ No imposition
-

To what extent do you experience the following feelings towards the author of the email after reading this e-mail?

	Not at all	A little bit	A little	Somewhat	Significantly	Very much	Extremely
Sympathetic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Softhearted	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Compassionate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Moved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Distressed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Troubled	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grieved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate below how you are feeling right now.




0
100

Were there spelling errors in this e-mail?

- ☐ No spelling errors
 - ☐ Hardly any spelling errors
 - ☐ Few spelling errors
 - ☐ Some spelling errors
 - ☐ A significant number of spelling errors
 - ☐ Many spelling errors
 - ☐ Very many spelling errors
-

How grammatically correct is this e-mail?

- ☐ Completely grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically correct
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically correct
- ☐ Completely grammatically correct

End of Block: E-mail 7

Start of Block: E-mail 8

Please read the e-mail below carefully. If necessary, you can use an online dictionary. The following questions are about this email.

Beste Robin Smid,
Ondanks de drukke periode zou ik u graag willen vragen of ik de mogelijkheid heb om een dag verlof te vragen. Wegens persoonlijke omstandigheden zou dit voor mij schikken.
Ik hoor graag van u.
Met vriendelijke groet,

How polite do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very polite
 - ☐ Polite
 - ☐ Somewhat polite
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat impolite
 - ☐ Impolite
 - ☐ Very impolite
-

How direct do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Somewhat direct
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Very indirect
-

How friendly do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very friendly
 - ☐ Friendly
 - ☐ Somewhat friendly
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unfriendly
 - ☐ Unfriendly
 - ☐ Very unfriendly
-

How common do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very common
 - ☐ Common
 - ☐ Somewhat common
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unusual
 - ☐ Unusual
 - ☐ Very unusual
-

How aggressive do you think the language in this email is?

- ☐ Very aggressive
 - ☐ Aggressive
 - ☐ Somewhat aggressive
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat nonaggressive
 - ☐ Nonaggressive
 - ☐ Completely nonaggressive
-

How much imposition do you think the request in this e-mail poses ?

- ☐ Great imposition
 - ☐ Significant imposition
 - ☐ Some imposition
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ little imposition
 - ☐ Hardly any imposition
 - ☐ No imposition
-

To what extent do you experience the following feelings towards the author of the email after reading this e-mail?

	Not at all	A little bit	A little	Somewhat	Significantly	Very much	Extremely
Sympathetic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Softhearted	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Compassionate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Moved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Distressed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Troubled	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grieved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate below how you are feeling right now.




0
100

Were there spelling errors in this e-mail?

- ☐ No spelling errors
 - ☐ Hardly any spelling errors
 - ☐ Few spelling errors
 - ☐ Some spelling errors
 - ☐ A significant number of spelling errors
 - ☐ Many spelling errors
 - ☐ Very many spelling errors
-

How grammatically correct is this e-mail?

- ☐ Completely grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically correct
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically correct
- ☐ Completely grammatically correct

End of Block: E-mail 8

Start of Block: E-mail 9

Please read the e-mail below carefully. If necessary, you can use an online dictionary. The following questions are about this email.

Beste Alex van de Ven,
Bij deze wil ik u graag laten weten, dat het mij een goed idee lijkt met u mee te gaan op klankbezoek. Ik denk namelijk dat gezelschap zorgt voor het vergroten van de aanschaf van onze producten door de klant. Ik hoor graag van u wat u hiervan vindt. Alvast bedankt.

How polite do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very polite
 - ☐ Polite
 - ☐ Somewhat polite
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat impolite
 - ☐ Impolite
 - ☐ Very impolite
-

How direct do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Somewhat direct
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Very indirect
-

How friendly do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very friendly
 - ☐ Friendly
 - ☐ Somewhat friendly
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unfriendly
 - ☐ Unfriendly
 - ☐ Very unfriendly
-

How common do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very common
 - ☐ Common
 - ☐ Somewhat common
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unusual
 - ☐ Unusual
 - ☐ Very unusual
-

How aggressive do you think the language in this email is?

- ☐ Very aggressive
 - ☐ Aggressive
 - ☐ Somewhat aggressive
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat nonaggressive
 - ☐ Nonaggressive
 - ☐ Completely nonaggressive
-

How much imposition do you think the request in this e-mail poses ?

- ☐ Great imposition
 - ☐ Significant imposition
 - ☐ Some imposition
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ little imposition
 - ☐ Hardly any imposition
 - ☐ No imposition
-

To what extent do you experience the following feelings towards the author of the email after reading this e-mail?

	Not at all	A little bit	A little	Somewhat	Significantly	Very much	Extremely
Sympathetic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Softhearted	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Compassionate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Moved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Distressed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Troubled	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grieved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate below how you are feeling right now.




0
100

Were there spelling errors in this e-mail?

- ☐ No spelling errors
 - ☐ Hardly any spelling errors
 - ☐ Few spelling errors
 - ☐ Some spelling errors
 - ☐ A significant number of spelling errors
 - ☐ Many spelling errors
 - ☐ Very many spelling errors
-

How grammatically correct is this e-mail?

- ☐ Completely grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically correct
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically correct
- ☐ Completely grammatically correct

End of Block: E-mail 9

Start of Block: E-mail 10

Please read the e-mail below carefully. If necessary, you can use an online dictionary. The following questions are about this email.

Dear Taylor,

In a few days I have a very important meeting with a client. I would like to ask you if you want to join me.

Considering your expertise I think the client will be more likely to buy more products of our company. You would do me a big favour.

Kind regards

How polite do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very polite
 - ☐ Polite
 - ☐ Somewhat polite
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat impolite
 - ☐ Impolite
 - ☐ Very impolite
-

How direct do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very direct
 - ☐ Direct
 - ☐ Somewhat direct
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat indirect
 - ☐ Indirect
 - ☐ Very indirect
-

How friendly do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very friendly
 - ☐ Friendly
 - ☐ Somewhat friendly
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unfriendly
 - ☐ Unfriendly
 - ☐ Very unfriendly
-

How common do you think this e-mail is?

- ☐ Very common
 - ☐ Common
 - ☐ Somewhat common
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat unusual
 - ☐ Unusual
 - ☐ Very unusual
-

How aggressive do you think the language in this email is?

- ☐ Very aggressive
 - ☐ Aggressive
 - ☐ Somewhat aggressive
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Somewhat nonaggressive
 - ☐ Nonaggressive
 - ☐ Completely nonaggressive
-

How much imposition do you think the request in this e-mail poses ?

- ☐ Great imposition
 - ☐ Significant imposition
 - ☐ Some imposition
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ little imposition
 - ☐ Hardly any imposition
 - ☐ No imposition
-

To what extent do you experience the following feelings towards the author of the email after reading this e-mail?

	Not at all	A little bit	A little	Somewhat	Significantly	Very much	Extremely
Sympathetic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Softhearted	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Warm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Compassionate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Moved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Distressed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Troubled	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grieved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate below how you are feeling right now.




0
100

Were there spelling errors in this e-mail?

- ☐ No spelling errors
 - ☐ Hardly any spelling errors
 - ☐ Few spelling errors
 - ☐ Some spelling errors
 - ☐ A significant number of spelling errors
 - ☐ Many spelling errors
 - ☐ Very many spelling errors
-

How grammatically correct is this e-mail?

- ☐ Completely grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically incorrect
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat grammatically correct
- ☐ Reasonably grammatically correct
- ☐ Completely grammatically correct

End of Block: E-mail 10

Start of Block: Experience, demographics, and debriefing

This was the last email. There are some more questions about your background.

Page Break

Have you ever read emails like this in Dutch or English before?

- ☐ Yes often and recently
 - ☐ Yes often, but longer ago
 - ☐ Yes a few times recently
 - ☐ Yes a few times longer ago
 - ☐ No never
-

Do you work for a multinational company in real life or have you ever worked for a multinational company?

- ☐ Yes and I have or had a lot of contact with non-Dutch employees
 - ☐ Yes, but I have or had little contact with non-Dutch employees
 - ☐ Yes, but I have or had no contact with non-Dutch employees
 - ☐ No
-

Have you ever read Dutch work-related e-mails like this before?

- ☐ Yes often and recently
 - ☐ Yes often, but longer ago
 - ☐ Yes a few times recently
 - ☐ Yes a few times longer ago
 - ☐ No never
-

Demographic questions

As which gender do you identify?

- ☐ Male
 - ☐ Female
 - ☐ Non-binary
 - ☐ Different
 - ☐ Prefer not to say
-

What is your age in years?

What is your highest level of education?

If you are currently still enrolled in an study program you can fill out the level of this study.

- ☐ Elementary school
 - ☐ High school
 - ☐ Secondary vocational education
 - ☐ University of Applied Sciences Bachelor/Master
 - ☐ University Bachelor/Master
 - ☐ PHD
 - ☐ Different
 - ☐ Prefer not to say
-

How many years of working experience do you have?



In which country have you lived the longest?

▼ Afghanistan ... Zimbabwe

Page Break

Debriefing Form

Thank you for participating in this survey.

The aim of this study is to compare the extent to which native speakers and non-native speakers of Dutch experience the same level of politeness in an e-mail from a native speaker of Dutch. In the study you just participated in, you had to read and interpret a work-related text message with a request from your colleague or supervisor in Dutch or English. In a previous study, these texts were written by others. All authors are native speakers of Dutch. Both native and non-native speakers of Dutch read and interpret all texts in this study.

The Dutch are often seen as verbally straightforward, confrontational, even aggressive and very argumentative in comparison. Although the stereotype of the direct and confrontational Dutch person is often mentioned in both scientific and public debate, scientific evidence to support the assumption that the Dutch are fundamentally more direct than others is lacking (Labrie et al., 2020).

In work-related distance communication, text messages are often used worldwide, and also by the Dutch. This can be internationally, multilingually and cross-culturally. Detecting the intended tone in textual communication can be difficult due to the lack of nonverbal cues in text messages. When most communication is through text messages such as e-mails or instant messaging, misunderstandings between native-speaking authors and non-native-speaking recipients can negatively impact interpersonal and work relationships (Hautasaari, Yamashita, & Gao, 2014). Therefore, politeness is important in these social interactions and is expressed through language (Lau, 2019). Politeness can be defined as taking the feelings of others into account (Brown, 2014). Directness is related to politeness (Wijst, 1995). The stereotype of the direct and confrontational Dutch person can be explained by a number of aspects of the Dutch culture, which should be reflected in every language a Dutch person uses.

Hereby the request not to talk to others about this research until December 31, in order to prevent that they have inside information and thus enter the survey in an influenced way.

Thanks again for your participation. If you have any questions, please send an email to l.e.m.teller@tilburguniversity.edu

End of Block: Experience, demographics, and debriefing

List of Tables and Figures

Tables

Table 1. Means, Standard deviations, and bootstrapped CIs around the means.....	24
Table 2. Means, Standard deviations, and z-scores for additional data exploration.....	28

Figures

Figure 1. Conceptual model of the current study.....	14
Figure 2. Mean scores on perceived politeness by reader language and email language.....	23