

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

Faculty of Humanities
Institute of Estonian and General Linguistics, University of Tartu
MA HV 218101: Estonian and Finno-Ugric Languages

NATIVE SPEAKERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS

FOREIGN-ACCENTED ESTONIAN SPEECH

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TARTU 2024

Affirmation of authorship

I, Avneet Sharma, confirm that I have written this thesis myself and have correctly cited the contributions of other authors. The work was written based on the thesis requirements of the Institute of Estonian and General Linguistics of the University of Tartu and is in line with good academic practices.

Acknowledgment

There are many people throughout the journey who helped me and this thesis would not be possible without them. First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Eva Liina Asu-Garcia for her consistent support and guidance throughout the journey. To Virve Vihamn and Gerson Klumpp for their insights during the masters seminar. To Carolin Joonasson who interviewed people in Estonian and Marri-Mariska Tammepõld for transcription and translations. To Pärtel Lippus, Anton Malmi, and Katrin Leppik from the phonetics lab who helped shape the final questionnaire with their valuable inputs. To Kaidi Lõo for assisting throughout with the quantitative analysis and statistics. I would also like to thank Enel Põld, Liis Ermus, Mari-Liis Kurk, Rodolfo Basile, Ele Arder, Seth Wilson, Michele Tita and Lanxiang Zhang for brainstorming, finding creative solutions and sharing wisdom. To Ms. Robbie Panesar and Isaque Reis who saw potential in me and supported me on my journey to study in Europe. Finally, I want to thank all the department and university staff. Pardon me if I have missed out on some names, I have you all in my heart. A big thank you for helping me reach this milestone.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Earlier studies on language attitudes in Estonia have mostly focused on Estonian speakers' attitudes towards their mother tongue (see Ehala & Niglas, 2006) or language ideologies and beliefs (see Lindström et al., 2023). While no research on attitudes has focused specifically on the aspect of 'foreign accent'. According to the Estonian Statistics Institute, there are 243 mother tongues (Statistikaamet, n.d.) spoken in Estonia, which suggests a decent number of second language (L2) learners/speakers of the Estonian language. Hence, many varieties of Estonian with variations in pronunciation exist while some might be more accepted, intelligible, and mainstream than others.

To fill the investigation gap of Estonians' attitudes towards foreign accents, the present thesis focuses on two perspectives that are investigated with two separate studies. Study I investigates Estonian native speakers' attitudes towards foreign-accented Estonian speech and L2 Estonian speakers, and which factors influence these attitudes. Study II explores the attitudes of L2 speakers towards their own accent, and which attitudes they have encountered when communicating with native speakers of Estonian.

The thesis is structured as follows. Chapter one gives background information about the important concepts and prior research connected to this thesis. Chapter two describes the study conducted to study the attitudes of native speakers towards L2 foreign-accented speech. Chapter three gives an overview of the study conducted to find out about the experience of L2 Estonian speakers. The two studies follow up with a general discussion in chapter four

answering the proposed research question of the thesis. Finally, the thesis is summarized and potential future research topics are proposed in chapter five.

1.1 Background

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2023), an accent is defined as ‘A way of pronouncing a language that is distinctive to a country, area, social class, or individual’. Research traditionally differentiates between standard (accents that are widely accepted as the norm) and non-standard (accents that are considered foreign or spoken by minorities) accents (Cargile & Bradac, 2001; Giles & Powesland, 1975; Ryan & Giles, 1982 as cited in Fuertes et al., 2011, p 120). Accents can also be divided into native and non-native accents. An accent is classified as an L1 accent if it is a native variety of a language whereas varieties of second language learners are classified as L2 (Lippi-Green 2012, p 46). Our human mind likely contains a system for categorizing people based on their accents (Pietraszewski & Schwartz, 2014). Listeners use accent as a linguistic cue for evaluating social categorization (e.g. status and solidarity) and stereotypical traits of a speaker to label them as an ingroup or outgroup member (Dragojević & Giles, 2016, p 396; Dragojević & Goatley-Soan 2020, p 168).

1.2 Language attitudes

The study of attitudes has been an integral part of social psychology as well as other related disciplines, like sociolinguistics and communication studies, since the 1920s. There are different perspectives to the study of attitudes consisting of theoretical and methodological approaches meaning that the term attitude has been defined in different ways (McKenzie & McNeill, 2022: 14). A recent consensus on the definition is ‘An attitude represents an evaluative integration of cognitions and affects experienced in relation to an object. Attitudes

are the evaluative judgments that integrate and summarize these cognitive/affective reactions. These evaluative abstractions vary in strength, which in turn has implications for persistence, resistance, and attitude-behavior consistency' (Holland et al. 2002, Petty et al., 2004, as cited in Crano & Prištin, 2006). In other words, an attitude represents our thoughts and feelings towards a particular object that leads to a judgment. It can bring out strong or weak reactions. The strength of an attitude influences how long it lasts, how resistant it is to change, and to what extent it influences our behavior.

Language attitudes can be defined as evaluations of speakers by utilizing one's assumptions and biases in connection with different language varieties. These speaker evaluations are put together according to two important dimensions: *status* - cue to judge speakers' competence and *solidarity* - cue to judge whether one is part of an ingroup or outgroup member, making them a function of social categorization (Ryan 1983, Dragojević et al., 2017, Dragojević & Goatley-Soan, 2020).

Most earlier studies on language attitudes have been done in the Anglosphere. Lambert et al. (1960) tested the language attitudes of English and French speakers in Montreal. The test subjects evaluated the personality characteristics of bilingual speakers of English and French. The results showed that both English and French subjects favored English more than French which indicated higher prestige of English. Similarly, Labov's (1966) renowned study on the speech communities' social stratification and Abercrombie's (1965) where a distinction between the Standard official language (in this context UK Standard English) and what is not standard was made. Abercrombie mentioned that people are biased towards differences as they form an opinion of others by the way they speak.

1.3 Methods for studying attitudes

Mixed methods, in the traditional sense, include quantitative and qualitative components. Within the same parameters, there is also a possibility of having one component playing a dominant role and the other having a supplementary role (Kircher and Hawkey 2022, p 286). However, when we refer to methods used to study language attitude, they are split into three subgroups: namely, 1) societal treatment methods – where respondents are not involved nor asked for their views or reactions, 2) direct elicitation methods – having direct involvement with the respondents about their language attitudes, and 3) indirect elicitation methods – using various experimental designs to unfold private reactions (Kircher and Zipp 2022, p 14).

While mixed methods are criticized in social sciences for putting too much emphasis on convergence in results, language attitudes research expects to yield different or even contradictory data. Such divergence of results obtained by multiple methods is seen as a strength. It is important to note that mixed methods can bend depending on the research context, research questions, and the aim and focus as there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach (Kircher and Hawkey 2022, p 288). Ryan et al. (1988 as cited in Kircher and Hawkey 2022, p 290) state that, ‘This is so because of the often-forgotten fact that language attitudes are not like minerals there to be mined and unearthed, they are *social constructions* constantly changing to meet the demand of the situation in which they are *expressed* [...]. The direct and indirect methods lay claim to quite different layers of experience and as such manifest sometimes quite contradictory, yet highly rational, attitude constellations’.

1.4 Perception of accent

1.4.1 Native speakers' attitudes towards non-native speech

Our manner of speech production and accent are acquired quite early in our childhood until puberty through the local social environment (Pietraszewski & Schwartz, 2014). When people learn a second language, their pronunciation is influenced by the sounds, intonation patterns, and articulation settings of their native language. As a result, non-native speakers (L2) often exhibit an accent that reflects their native language (L1). L2 speakers often encounter negative experiences that in turn may impact their psychological well-being (Tan, Jospa, Mohd-Said, et al., 2021).

When comparing standard accents versus non-standard accents across 20 empirical studies, it has been shown that a speaker's accent has strong effects on how others perceive them (Fuertes et al., 2011). Native speakers pay more attention to L2 speaker's pronunciation and speech production over socio-variables such as gender, experience, and language proficiency (Schairer, 1992; Rossiter 2009). There is a direct correlation between the degree of accent and the listener's evaluation of the speaker. Native speakers can actively classify 'non-native' accents that lead to categorization in intergroup dynamics as either stigmatized or non-stigmatized (Lindemann, 2003). We can say that an accent is a stigma in itself (Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010).

Language attitudes depend on the listener's personality, their language learning history, current linguistic practices, and other background information (Dewaele & McCloskey, 2014). Dragojević & Goatley-Soan (2020) define native Standard American English (SAE) speakers as national ingroups who are seen in a positive light on solidarity traits as compared to

non-native foreign-accented speakers of American English who are often considered outgroups and viewed more negatively. In any group setting, an ingroup structure mirrors the external status and prestige and does not necessarily change, hierarchies are established straight away within the group, e.g. native vs non-native speakers (Berger et al., 1980). Similarly, if a listener has preconceived notions about how a second or foreign language speaker should sound, this could lead to unfair evaluations, including judgments of the speaker's social status and attractiveness (Kang & Yaw, 2021). Within foreign accents, some are less stigmatized than others, and not equally evaluated on status and solidarity traits (Dragojević & Goatley-Soan 2020). Studies by Fiske et al. (2007) suggest that warmth and competence are reliable dimensions of social judgment that are universal across any form of stimuli, culture, and time. Solidarity predicts warmth and status predicts competence.

Listeners of all ages initially struggle to process accented speech although with time, exposure, and experience they adapt and get better at processing it. There is a connection between understanding accented speech, other language skills, and cognitive abilities (Cristià et al., 2012). Research by Fraser & Kelly (2012) demonstrates that listening skills are not the same across native speakers and this affects their attitudes towards an accent by hindering comprehensibility. Although a heavy L2 accent leads to more stereotypical social categorization and affects the listener's processing fluency, this does not necessarily mean that a speaker is not comprehensible (Dragojević et al., 2017; Munro & Derwing, 2020).

1.4.2 Non-native speakers' attitude towards non-native speech

There is not much research available on non-native speakers' self-evaluation of their accents. However, a recent study by Guba et al. (2023) proposes that not just native speakers but non-native speakers too express negative biases toward foreign-accentedness. Their research,

which was conducted with three groups, one English and two Jordanian English groups (difference in language proficiency), demonstrated that an L2 speaker's higher competence is correlated with more positive evaluation. The authors suggest that acquiring a native-like speech is almost an unattainable task for most L2 speakers but rather, an acceptable and comprehensible foreign accent should be the goal.

Chapter 2 Study I

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 presents a detailed overview of Study I's research design and results. First, research objectives are outlined. The chapter continues by providing information about the methodology applied, audio stimuli, questionnaire and procedure and the participants. Finally, the results are presented using box plots.

2.2 Research questions

The broader aim of this study is to investigate native Estonian speakers' attitudes towards foreign-accented Estonian. The specific research questions are the following:

What factors contribute to the expression of Estonian native speakers' attitudes towards foreign-accented speech?

How do exposure and familiarity with different languages affect Estonian native speakers' ability to differentiate between accents?

2.3 Methodology

Study I implemented the *verbal-guise technique (VGT)*, one of the indirect methods of attitude elicitation. Under the speech evaluation paradigm, VGT is one of the two techniques (the other being the matched-guise technique) used for producing audio-recorded voices or *guises* that represent different language varieties like accents, dialects, and languages. Traditionally, it consists of the same neutral passage of text that is held constant across different guises (Dragojevic & Goatley-Soan 2020: 161); however, in this research, different samples of text were used to make the task more varied for the participants. This was done keeping in mind

the feedback received during the initial pilot study. Keeping the passage constant meant participants knew what was coming next irrespective of the L2 Estonian variety and it hindered the evaluation process.

2.4 Voice stimuli

Audio recordings from the Estonian Foreign Accent Corpus (EFAC) were used. The corpus was developed at the Laboratory of Phonetics and Speech Technology, Institute of Cybernetics at TalTech University and collected between 2006 and 2012 intending to provide well-organized and high-quality non-native speech data for research in experimental phonetic studies and language technology developments. It consists of recordings from 162 L2 Estonian speakers from 18 different language backgrounds. The corpus includes 130 neutral sentences that include the main phonological opposition of the Estonian language, questions, two passages, and prompts to elicit spontaneous speech. (Meister & Meister, 2012) Although the author mentions sentences as neutral, they were made keeping in mind Estonian prosody, segmental, and suprasegmental features.

As this research aims to evaluate the attitudes of native speakers towards non-native Estonian speech, choosing different L1 backgrounds of the speakers makes it possible to analyze attitudes towards both familiar as well as less familiar accents. Speakers with ten different language backgrounds were chosen: French, Danish, Finnish, German, Japanese, Latvian, Lithuanian, Russian, Spanish, and Swedish. The speakers were chosen so that both sexes would be represented for each L2 variety. This was the case for only 10 languages in the corpus. One of the limitations of EFAC is that it is imbalanced. For some languages, there are more female speakers with none or few male speakers, and vice versa. It has to be noted that

the only male Swedish speaker available in the corpus speaks Estonian as a heritage language and that the only male speaker of Spanish is bilingual, having both Catalan and Spanish as his mother tongue. These language variety pairs represent more familiar accents of languages of the neighboring countries (Finnish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Russian), less familiar ones (Swedish, Danish), large international languages (French, German, Spanish), and a distant language (Japanese). The details of the informants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Background information about informants chosen from EFAC.

Gender	Age	Native Language	Other Known Languages	Estonian Level
F	32	French	EN, FI, DE	proficient
M	42		EN, FI, DE	proficient
F	31	Danish	EN	elementary
M	35		EN, DE, EU	advanced
F	21	Finnish	EN, SV	elementary
M	26		EN, SV	intermediate
F	27	German	EN, FR, RU	elementary
M	30		EN	intermediate
F	45	Japanese	EN	intermediate
M	38		EN	advanced
M	21	Latvian	EN, FI, RU	intermediate
F	20		EN, FI, RU	intermediate
F	51	Lithuanian	RU, EN	intermediate
M	22		EN	intermediate
F	20	Russian	EN	intermediate
M	21		EN	proficient
M	28	Spanish	EN, RU, FR	intermediate
F	19		EN	elementary
M	31	Swedish	EN, FR, DE	advanced
F	69		SV	advanced

2.5 Questionnaire

For this research, the questionnaire with the sound samples was compiled and distributed using an open-access platform called LimeSurvey, specifically on UT LimeSurvey. LimeSurvey, as a platform, provides anti-leeching or resource protection techniques that aim to safeguard resources from unauthorized access by users or other websites (Caballero, 2014). The questionnaire was anonymous. The questionnaire consisted of 22 sections in total out of which 20 contained accent samples. The first section contained questions about the participant's age, sex, education, occupation, knowledge of languages, language background, daily language usage, current place of residence, and time spent abroad. These are all factors that can influence the formation of language attitudes (Moyer, 2013, p. 52).

Sections with accent samples contained different statements that the participants had to evaluate using forced Likert scales of even numbers to make participants take a stand (Kircher 2022, p.122). Hence, the participants responded to 7 affirmative statements using six-point scales that were contextualized to elicit attitudes towards each accent sample (with respect to the following factors: Understanding, Proficiency, Accent Strength, Accent Acceptance, Intelligence (status), Friendliness (solidarity), and Comfort of Communication). The scales were anchored with “1 = Extremely Positive” and “6 = Extremely Negative”. The final question asked the participants to guess the speaker’s native language if possible.

As careful research design is quintessential in language attitudes, before the questionnaire was launched, two pilot tests were conducted in a closed-access format with limited participants. Their feedback helped 1) to improve the quality of the sound samples (turning all audio files to

mono, removing pauses, breathing sounds, and any kind of distortion), 2) to modify the scales (change to the six-point Likert scale instead of the four-point one), and 3) to add more variety to the text (use of varied stimuli with different short texts instead of the same text). The last point is related to a suggestion that Dragojević & Goatley-Soan (2020) mention in their study stating that future research should examine whether similar results are attained with a wider range of messages as compared to the same text.

Table 2. Likert Scale statements and points.

Kõnelejast on lihtne aru saada (The speaker is easy to understand)							
Väga lihtne (Very easy)	1	2	3	4	5	6	Väga raske (Very difficult)
Kõneleja räägib eesti keelt hästi (The speaker speaks Estonian well)							
Väga hästi (Very well)	1	2	3	4	5	6	Väga halvasti (Very badly)
Kõnelejal on aktsent (The speaker has an accent)							
Ilma aktsendita (No accent)	1	2	3	4	5	6	Väga tugev aktsent (Very strong accent)
Kõneleja aktsent on häiriv (The speaker's accent is bothersome)							
Ei nõustu üldse (Strongly disagree)	1	2	3	4	5	6	Nõustun täielikult (Strongly agree)
Kõneleja tundub intelligentne (The speaker seems intelligent)							
Väga intelligentne (Very Intelligent)	1	2	3	4	5	6	Väga ebaintelligentne (Not intelligent at all)
Kõneleja tundub sõbralik (The speaker seems friendly)							
Väga sõbralik (Very friendly)	1	2	3	4	5	6	Väga ebasõbralik (Not friendly at all)
Ma tunneksin end kõnelejaga vesteldes mugavalt (I would feel comfortable talking to a speaker)							
Väga mugavalt (Very comfortable)	1	2	3	4	5	6	Väga ebamugavalt (Not comfortable at all)

2.6 Procedure

The questionnaire was launched online as an open-access survey and distributed among known friends, colleagues, and acquaintances via email, instant messaging, and social media (University of Tartu Student Group). Indeed, this created a snowballing effect that is out of bounds for a researcher. It remained online for a little more than two weeks between 15th March and 1st April 2024 attracting 54 participants altogether that exceeded the target of 30 participants. Although online questionnaires are quite popular in research, they come with their limitations such as self-selection and heterogeneity (Dörnyei 2007 as cited in Dewaele & McCloskey 2014). It still can in many ways be a powerful means for gathering rich and useful data from the target audience allowing researchers to include audio/visual stimuli for evaluation (Kircher 2022: p 128). Furthermore, evaluating language attitudes would be rather easier to do in a safe space to elicit the private attitudes of a listener than in a controlled space. All the data was extracted from LimeSurvey in .CSV format and imported on Google Sheets where it was coded and checked for any errors. Descriptive statistics and analysis were run using the statistical software R version 4.3.2 (R Core Team 2023). Data visualizations were created using the R-package ggplot2 (Wickham 2016).

2.7 Participants

Among 54 participants who filled out the questionnaire, the age distribution was as follows: 18-24 years old (13), 25-34 years old (12), 35-44 years old (11), 45-54 years old (13), 55-64 years old (4), and 65+ (1). 43 reported to be females (80%), 10 as males (18%), and 1 as Non-binary (2%). The distribution of sex among participants was not balanced. In terms of education, 21 participants reported their highest qualification as MA, 16 as High School, 15 as

BA, and 2 as PhD. Participants were asked to specify their current profession: 33 reported to be employed (61%), 3 were unemployed (6%), 11 university students (20%), 2 high school students (3%), and 2 pensioners (3%) and 3 mentioned other professions (6%). The three other professions mentioned were Housewife, Microentrepreneur, and Entrepreneur.

Fifty-two respondents reported being monolingual and only two as bilingual. 24 participants know two other languages, 14 three other languages, another 14 know one other language and two participants know four more languages besides Estonian. English was the most commonly known language besides Estonian, followed by Russian, German, and Finnish. Other known languages reported in the 'Other' section were Spanish, Hungarian, Swedish, Italian, French, Norwegian, Latvian, Portuguese, Turkish, Hebrew, Japanese and Czech. Of all participants, 38 reported using two more languages, 8 three more and another 8 participants reported using one more language spoken daily besides Estonian. English was the most commonly spoken language daily besides Estonian, followed by Russian, German, and Finnish. Other languages reported to be spoken daily in the 'Other' section were French, Portuguese, and Japanese.

All respondents who participated were born in Estonia. 29 reported to have never lived abroad, 12 had lived abroad for up to a year, 7 between 1-5 years, and 5 reported to have lived abroad for more than 5 years.

2.8 Results

2.8.1 Attitudes

The main results of the analysis based on the responses to the questionnaire are presented in the following subsections in the form of figures including boxplots. The figures show the responses to the seven statements that the participants had to rate on the six-point Likert Scale after listening to the L2 Estonian speech stimuli. Each boxplot chart depicts the ratings given to the L2 Estonian speech stimuli by L1 speakers and concerns the factors – Understanding, Proficiency, Accent Strength, Accent Acceptance, Intelligence (Status), Friendliness (Solidarity), and Comfort of Communication. Responses to each of these factors will be summarized in the following sections. We can see that there is a lot of variation in the ratings but our focus is on the mean (represented with the triangles) and median (with bold lines in the box plot).

2.8.1.2 Understanding

With regards to the statement ‘The speaker is easy to understand’ Figure 1 shows that for listeners, L2 Estonian speakers whose mother tongue was Finnish, Swedish and French were rated as easiest to understand while the L2 speakers whose L1 was Latvian were rated as most difficult to understand.

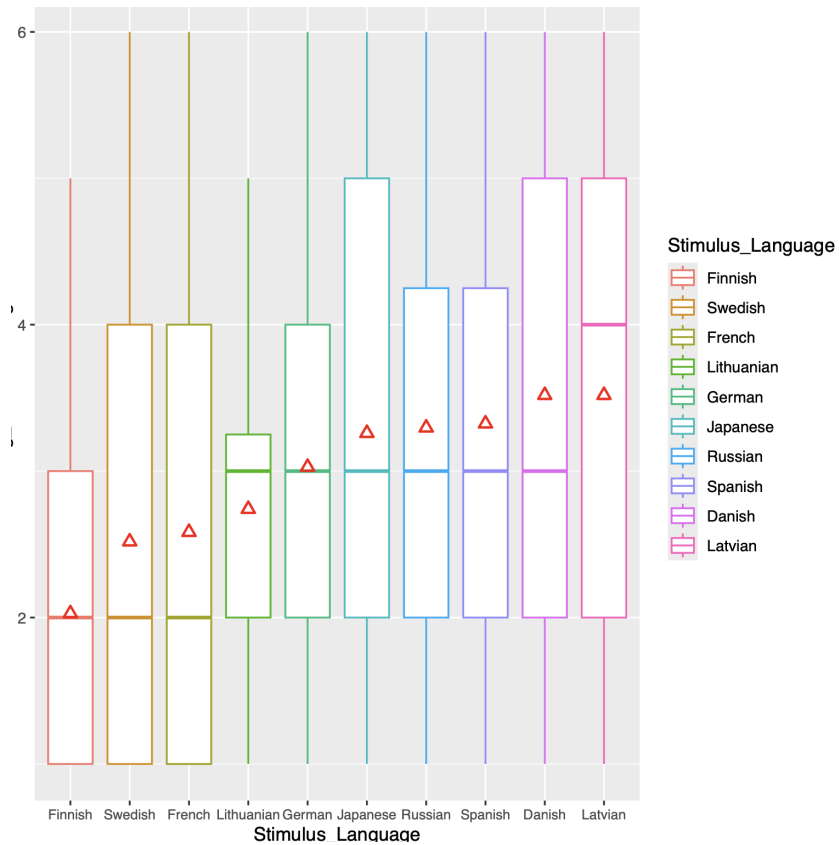


Figure 1: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Understanding (as a response to the statement: *The speaker is easy to understand*) on a scale of 1 (very easy) to 6 (very difficult).

2.8.1.3 Proficiency

With regards to the statement ‘The speaker speaks Estonian well’ about proficiency of the speakers, Figure 2 shows that speakers whose L1 is Finnish are rated as most proficient followed closely by those whose L1 is Swedish and French. All other stimuli were rated with more or less the same level of proficiency. One listener commented that it was hard to estimate the level of proficiency on the basis of one sentence.

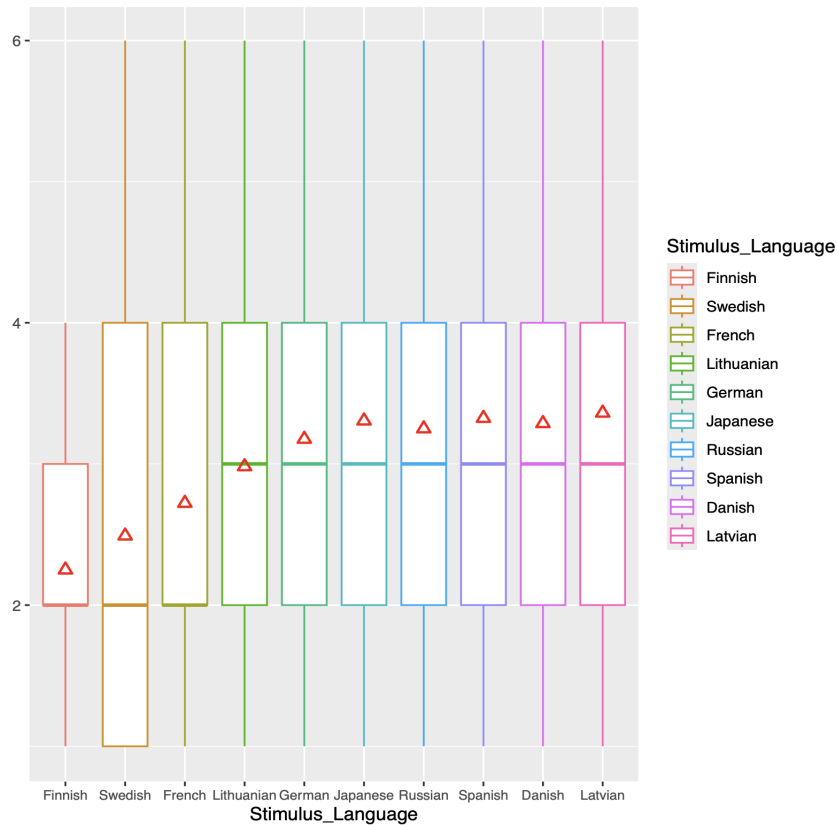


Figure 2: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Proficiency (as a response to the statement: *The speaker speaks Estonian well*) on a scale of 1 (very well) to 6 (very badly).

2.8.1.4 Accent Strength

With regards to the statement ‘The speaker has an accent’, Figure 3 shows that those speakers whose L1 was Finnish and Swedish were rated to have least accent (median 3, mean 3.29, sd 3.08). All other stimuli were rated to have a stronger foreign accent, in particular German, Spanish and Latvian. One listener commented that it was hard to evaluate the strength of an accent on the basis of one sentence and the other mentioned that they evaluated a person’s ability to pronounce the words correctly rather than the accent.

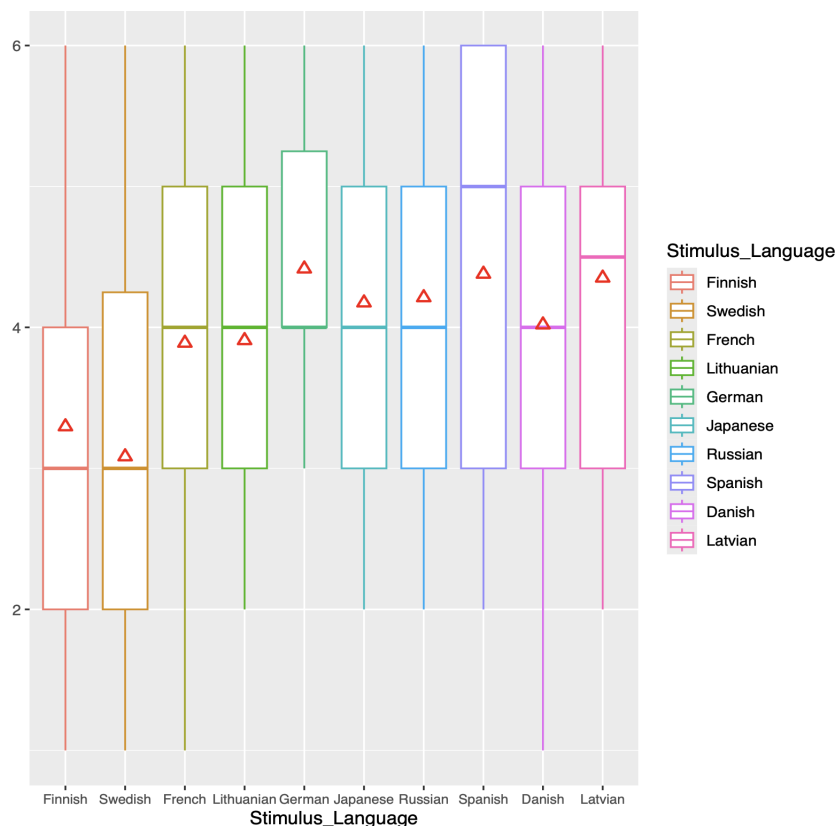


Figure 3: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Accent Strength (as a response to the statement: *The speaker has an accent*) on a scale of 1 (no accent) to 6 (very strong accent).

2.8.1.5 Accent Acceptance

With regards to the statement ‘The speaker's accent is bothersome’, Figure 4 shows that the accent of those L2 Estonian speakers whose L1 was Finnish was rated as least disturbing (mean 1.99 and median 2) followed by those whose L1 was Swedish, French and Lithuanian. The accent of all other L2 stimuli was rated more bothersome. However, the fact that most (75 %) of the responses were below 4 shows that the listeners usually did not agree with the statement about accent bothering them to a great extent. One participant left a comment that when they rated the accent as being bothersome, it was generally a word that created confusion and made them relisten the stimuli.

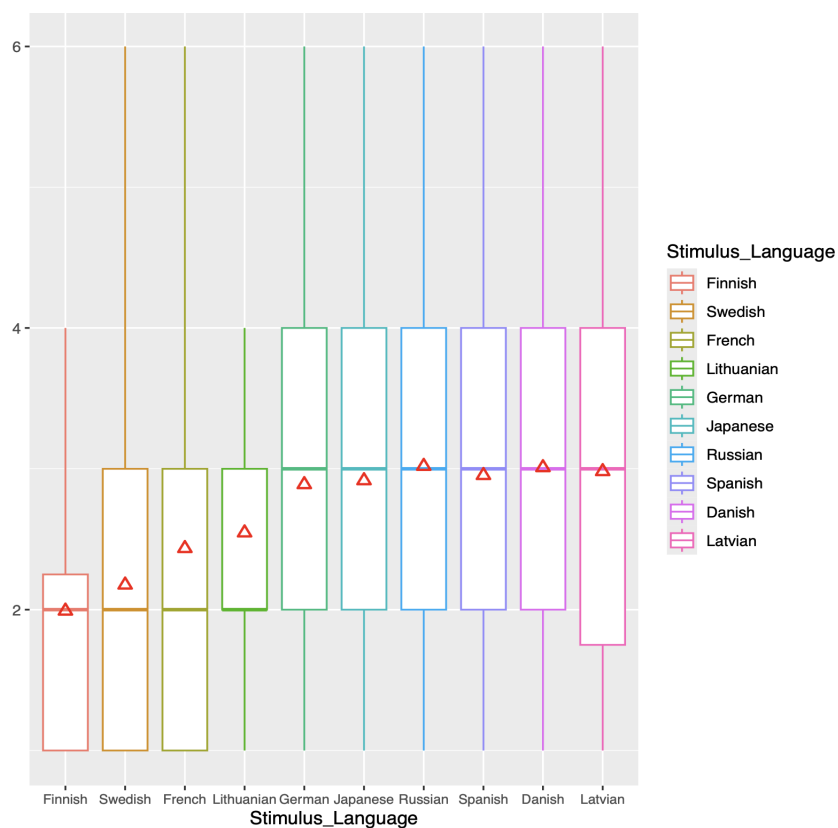


Figure 4: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Accent Acceptance (as a response to the statement: *The speaker's accent is bothersome*) on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

2.8.1.6 Intelligence

With regard to the statement ‘The speaker seems intelligent’, Figure 5 shows that the means of the ratings ranged around 2 (median 2) indicating that all the accents are perceived similarly in terms of intelligence. Ten participants left comments stating that the intelligence of a speaker cannot be guessed based on accent nor on the basis of one short sentence, finding the task confusing.

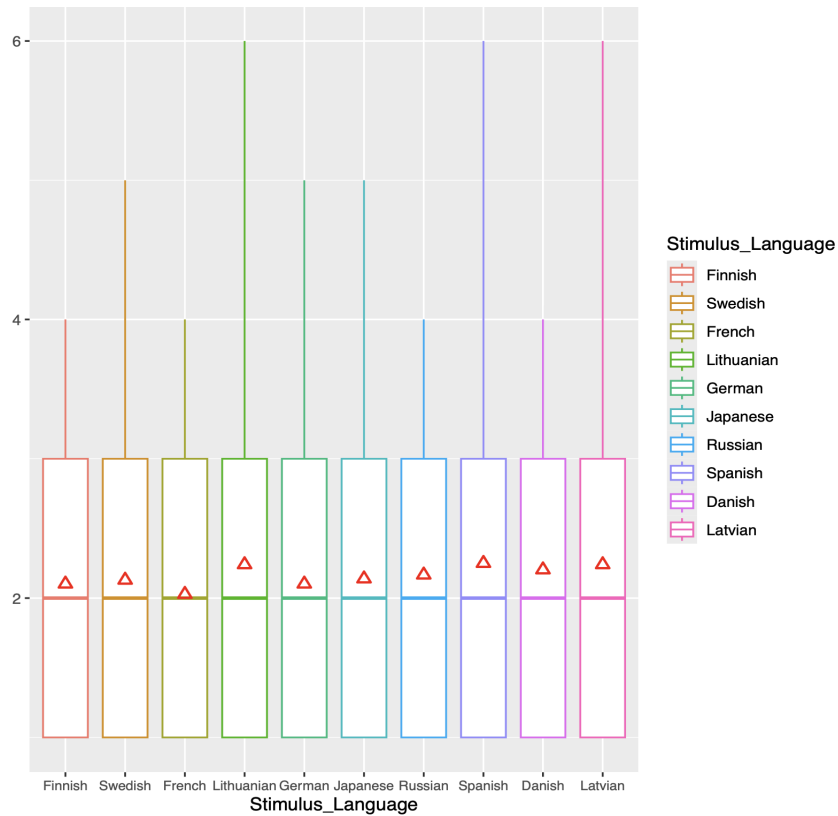


Figure 5: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Intelligence (as a response to the statement: *The speaker seems intelligent*) on a scale of 1 (very intelligent) to 6 (not intelligent at all).

2.8.1.7 Friendliness

With regard to the statement ‘The speaker seems friendly’ Figure 6 shows, similarly to the ratings for Intelligence, that the means of the ratings for all the stimuli were around 2 (median 2) indicating that all the accents are perceived similarly in terms of friendliness. Similar comments were stated for Friendliness as were for Intelligence by the participants. One participant mentioned that men seemed more unfriendly than women describing female voices to be more subtle and not creating a sense of danger.

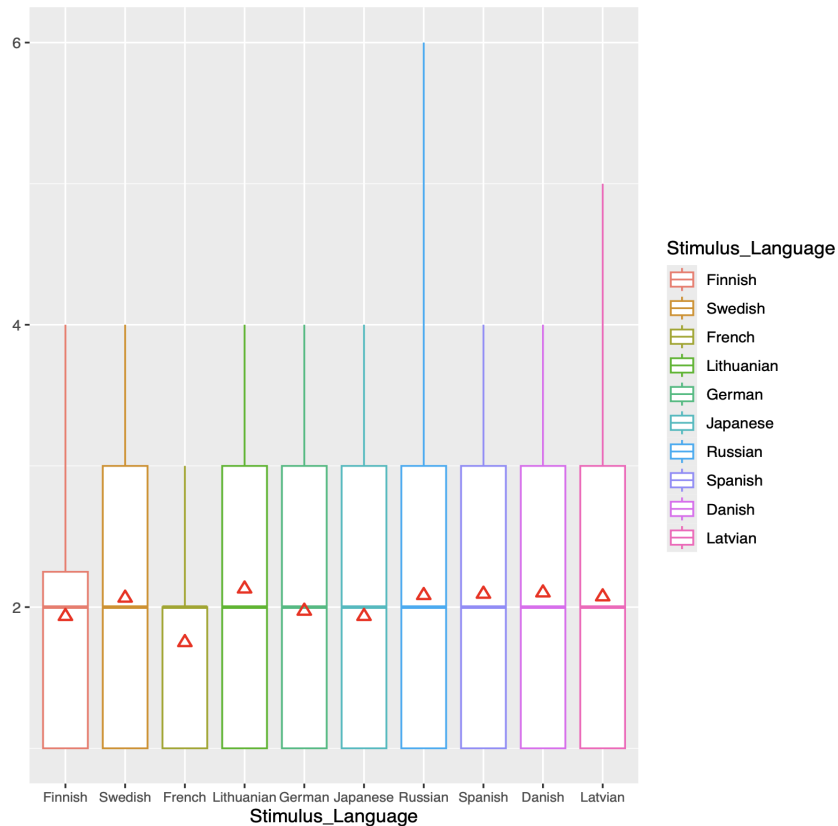


Figure 6: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Friendliness (as a response to the statement: *The speaker seems friendly*) on a scale of 1 (very friendly) to 6 (not friendly at all).

2.8.1.8 Comfort of Communication

With regard to the statement ‘I would feel comfortable talking to the speaker’ Figure 7 shows that on the whole the stimuli were rated in a rather similar way, with those with L1 Finnish, Swedish, French, Lithuanian and German being rated slightly more comfortable to speak with than the other accents. The stimulus with L1 Latvian stands out as the one with largest variation, and together with L1 Spanish and Japanese stimuli with the highest median indicating that the listeners are least comfortable with these accents. One listener commented that comfort of speaking depends on the listener's personality, not on the speaker's accent and the other found listening to some male stimuli uncomfortable.

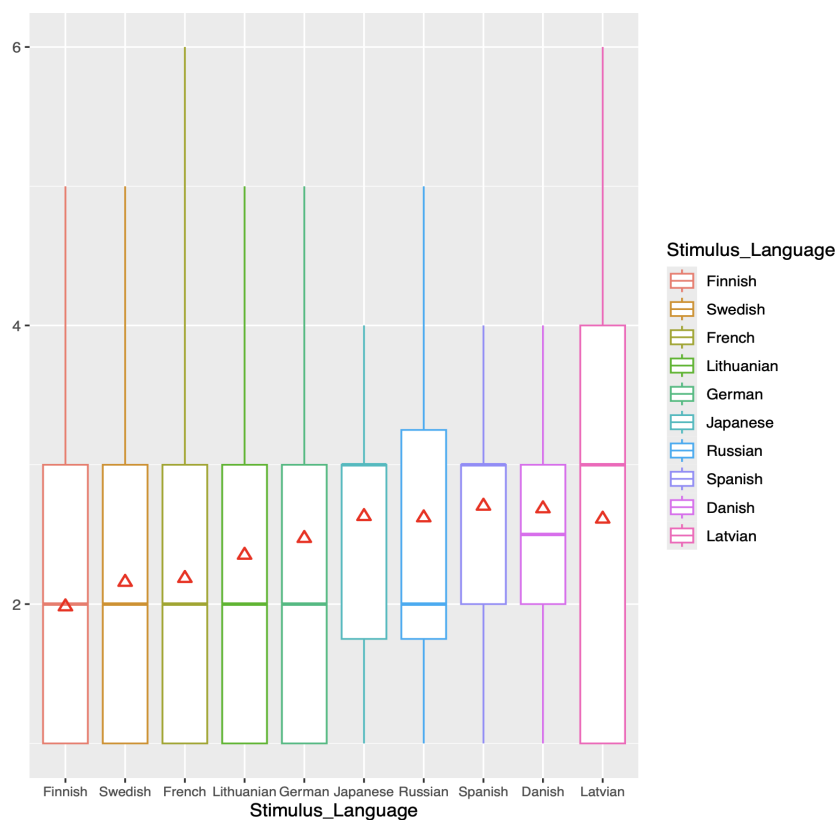


Figure 7: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Comfort of Communication (as a response to the statement: I would feel comfortable talking to the speaker) on the scale of 1 (very comfortable) to 6 (not comfortable at all).

2.8.2 Factors contributing to native speakers' attitudes towards foreign-accented Estonian speech

Factors that influence language attitudes of Estonian native speakers can broadly be categorized into two depending firstly on the listener's background and secondly on the speaker's background. The ratings of seven factors – Understanding, Proficiency, Accent Strength, Accent Acceptance, Intelligence, Friendliness and Comfort of Communication – were examined in relation to the listener's age, gender, education, number of languages known, number of languages spoken on a day to day basis, the speaker's proficiency level and gender (see 3.8 Participants for more details).

2.8.2.1 Listener's age

The listener's age had some influence on the ratings of Proficiency, Accent Strength and Accent Acceptance. Figure 8 shows that the oldest age group gave lower ratings to the proficiency of L2 speakers. The rise in the median and mean of the ratings shows a tendency that the older the listener, the lower were the ratings regarding the proficiency.

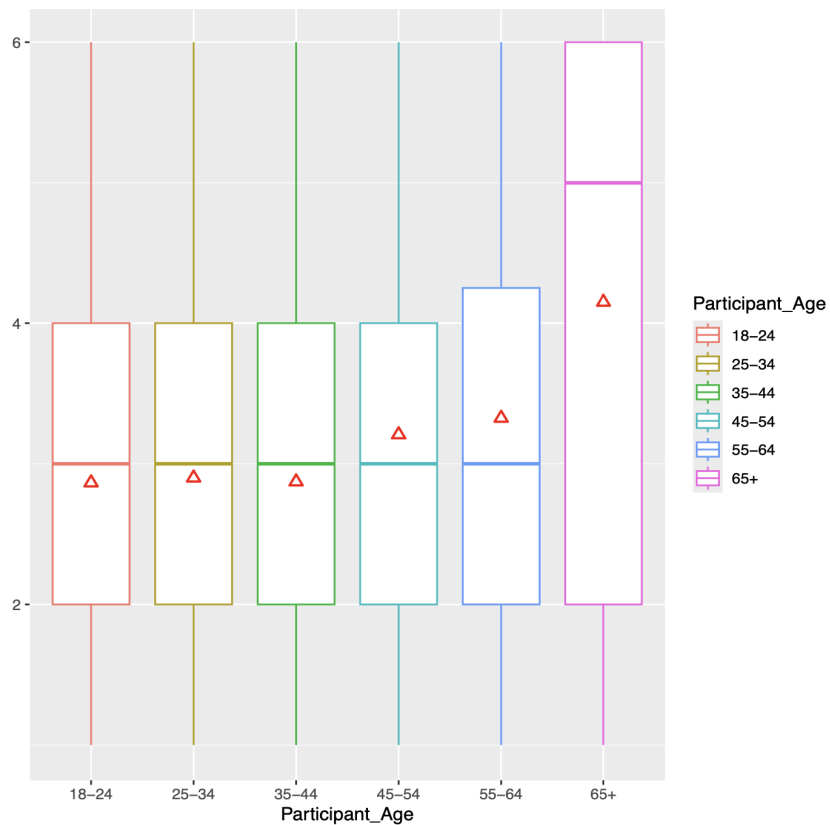


Figure 8: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Proficiency depending on the listener's age.

Similarly, the older listeners rated Accent Strength accents to be stronger than younger listeners. With regard to accents being bothersome (see Figure 9), the younger age groups rate accents as less bothersome (mean from 2.45 to 2.78). In comparison, the oldest age group has the highest mean ratings, indicating that this group finds L2 accents more bothersome.

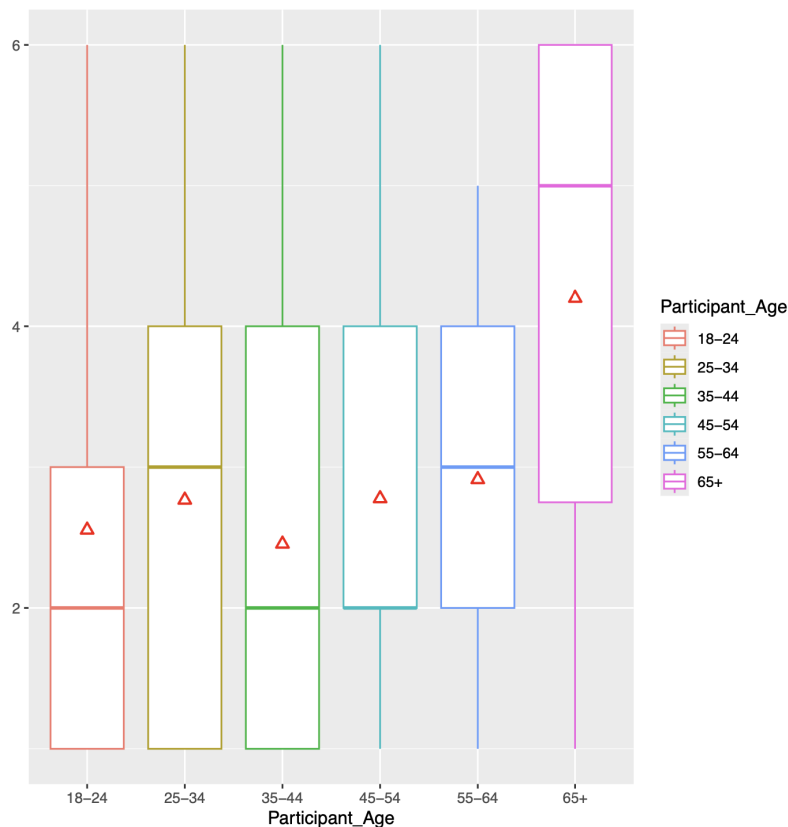


Figure 9: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Accent Acceptance depending on the listener's age.

2.8.2.4 Listener's gender

The listener's gender did not influence the ratings of Understanding, Proficiency, Accent Strength, and Accent Acceptance. There was a very slight tendency that female listeners evaluated the speakers as a bit more intelligent, comfortable to talk to and friendlier in comparison to men. The ratings of Friendliness stood out the most.

The analysis across Friendliness ratings shows (see Figure 10) that female listeners rated L2 speakers more positively (mean 1.84, median 2). In contrast, male listeners rated the speakers more negatively (mean 2.68, median 3). This shows that there are significant differences

between male and female listeners, although we have to keep in mind that the majority of the listeners were females. There was only one non-binary participant and for this reason they were excluded from the analysis.

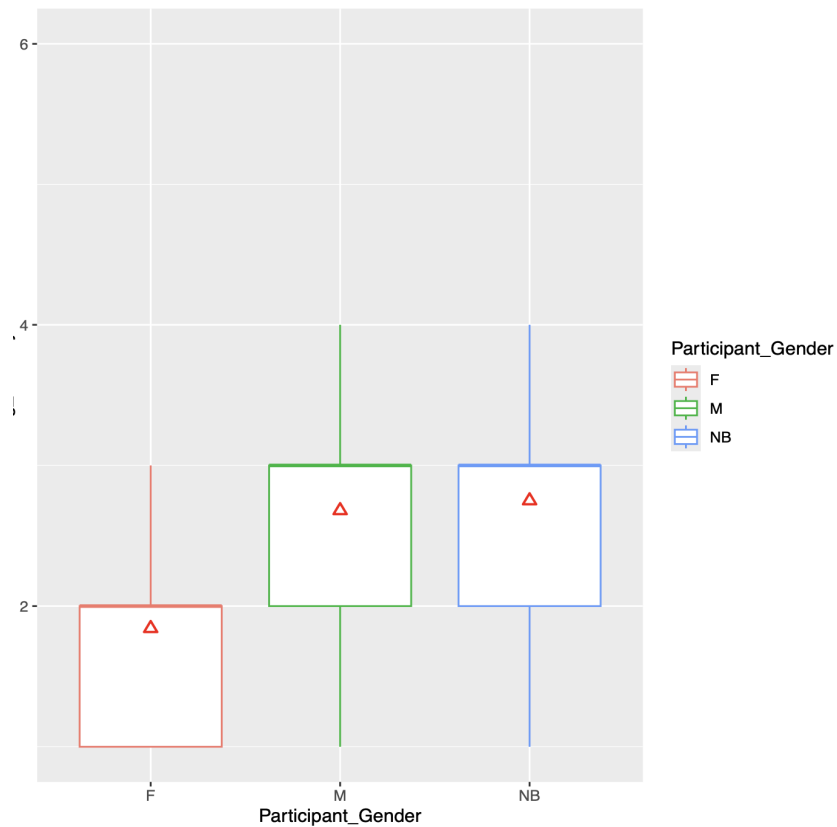


Figure 10: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Friendliness depending on the listener's gender.

2.8.2.2 Listener's education

The listener's education did not influence the ratings of Understanding, Proficiency, Accent Strength, Intelligence or Comfort of Communication. The only aspect that stood out was Accent Acceptance. Figure 11 shows that the more educated the listeners were, the less bothered they were with the L2 speakers' accent. The mean ratings of the listeners with PhD were 2.37 and of the listeners with MA 2.48. Listeners with High-school education (2.79) and BA (2.93) found accents more bothersome.

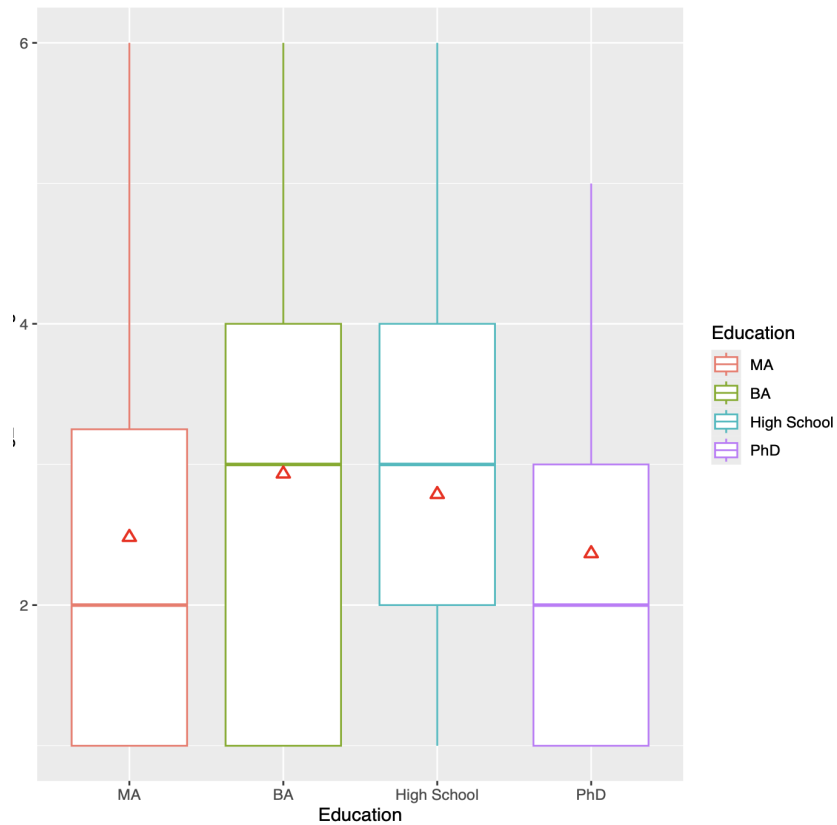


Figure 11: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Accent Acceptance depending on the listener's education.

2.8.2.3 Number of languages known by the listener

The number of languages known by the listeners had an influence on the ratings that they gave. While there were no correlations between languages known and the results of the statements about Understanding and Accent Strength, for other statements, there was a slight tendency that the more languages a listener knew, the more positively they rated the L2 speakers, specially, for Proficiency, Accent Acceptance and Comfort of Communication.

The analysis shows across Proficiency ratings (see Figure 12) that listeners who know more languages tend to rate L2 speakers' proficiency more positively. Those who know 5 languages had the lowest mean (2.40), followed by those who know 4 languages (2.70).

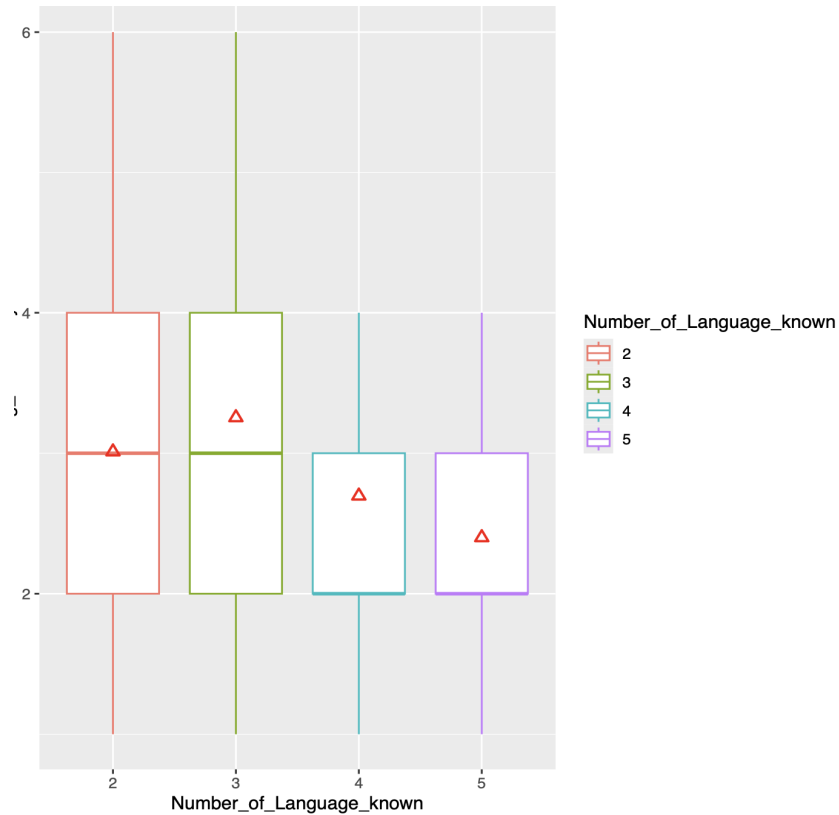


Figure 12: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Proficiency depending on the number of languages known.

With regard to Accent Acceptance, the results show (see Figure 13) that listeners who know more languages find L2 speakers' accents to be less bothersome. Specifically, listeners who speak 4 or 5 languages have a lower mean (2.25 and 2.20) and median (2) in comparison to listeners who speak 2 or 3 languages (mean 2.85, and 2.90) and median (3).

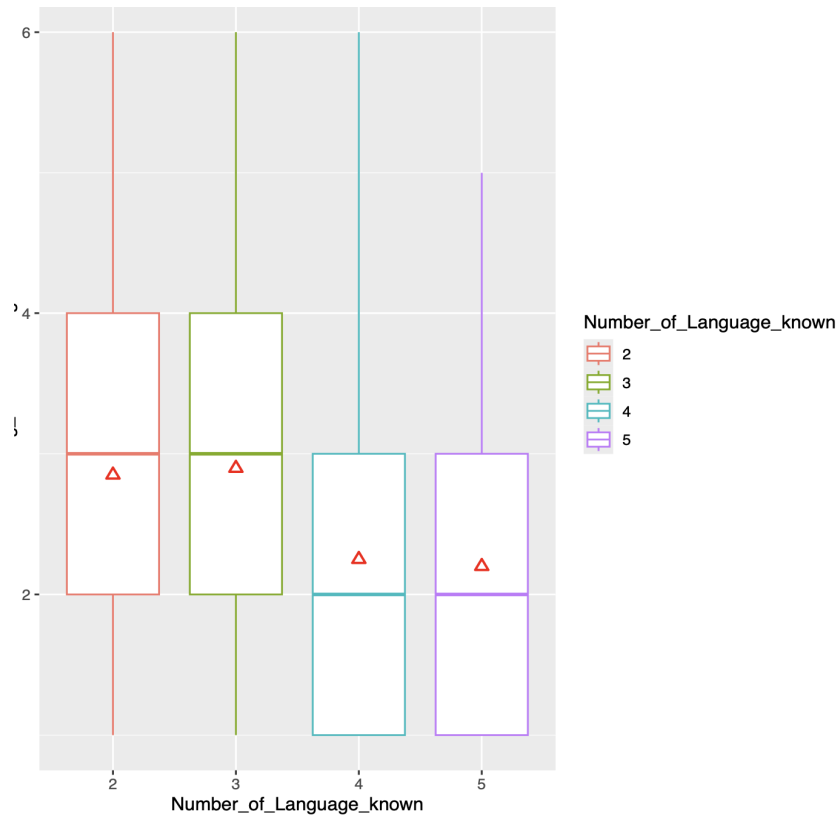


Figure 13: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Accent Acceptance depending on the number of languages known.

The results (see Figure 14) show that listeners who know more languages would feel more comfortable speaking to an L2 speaker. The ratings of the listeners who know 5 languages had the lowest mean (1.60 with median 1), followed by those who know 4 languages (mean 2.28 and median 2). Those who know 2 or 3 languages had a higher mean (2.54, 2.55) and median (3,2). This shows a positive link between the number of languages known by the listener and the comfort of speaking with an L2 speaker.

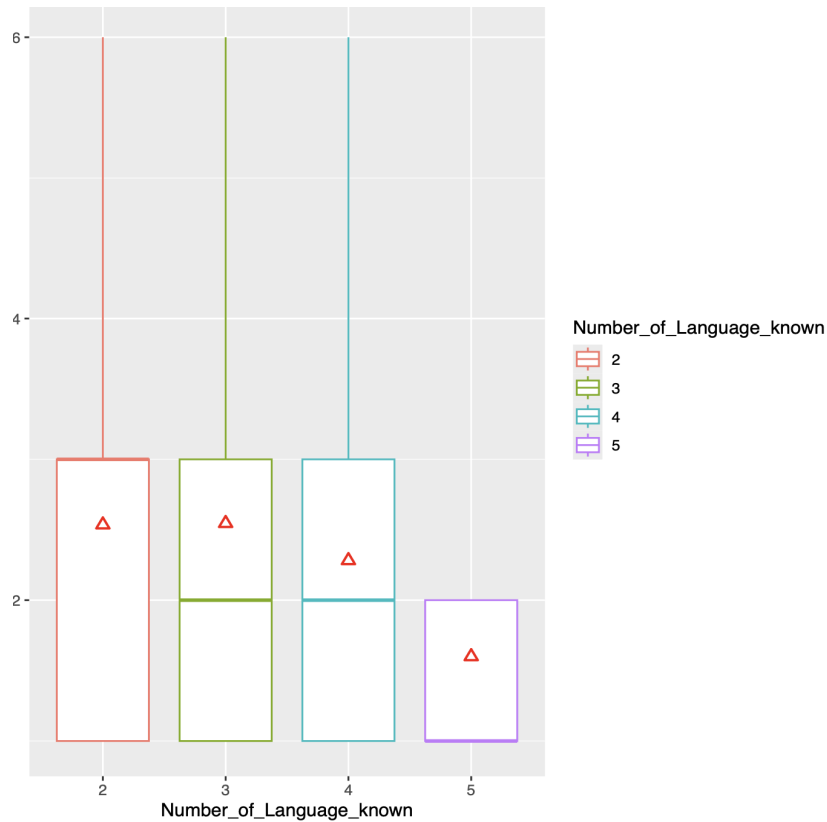


Figure 14: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Comfort of Communication in depending on the number of languages known.

2.8.2.5 Number of languages spoken daily by the listener

The number of languages a listener speaks daily did not influence the ratings of Understandability and Intelligence. However, there was a slight distinction between people who speak one language and those who speak more than one language daily. This was quite apparent in the ratings of Proficiency, Accent Acceptance, and Comfort of Communication.

The analysis shows (see Figure 15) that the listeners who speak more than one language on a daily basis rated the L2 speakers more positively than those who speak one language. The

ratings of those who speak two or three languages had a mean 2.88 or 2.99 (median 3) in comparison to listeners who speak one language (mean 3.68 and median 3).

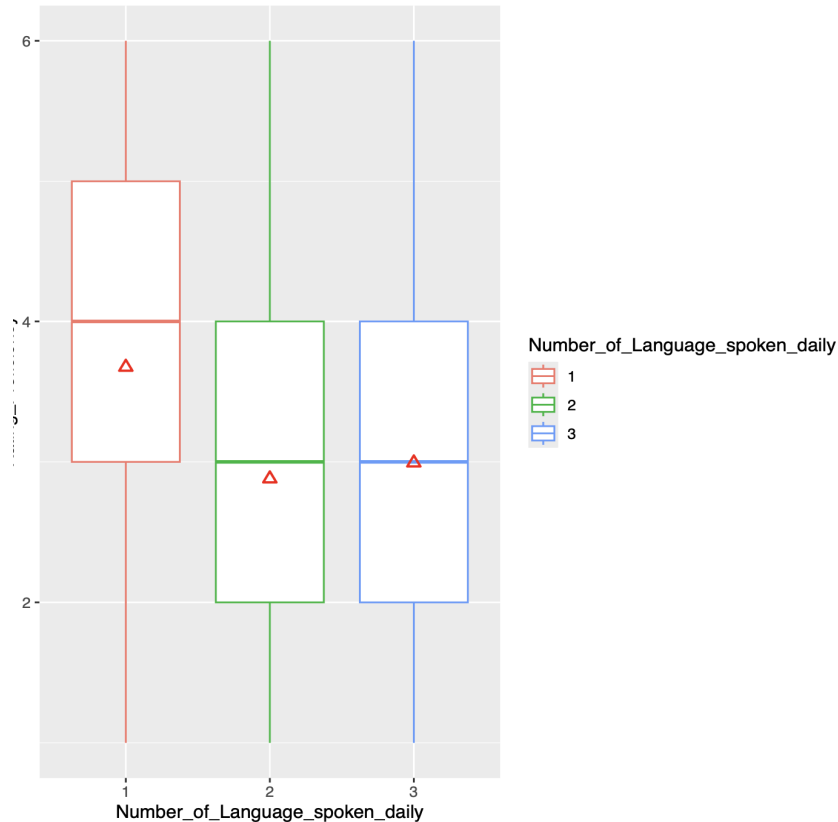


Figure 15: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Proficiency depending on the number of languages spoken daily by the listener.

The analysis shows (see Figure 16) that listeners who speak more languages rated the L2 speakers to be less bothersome in comparison to those who speak only one language on a daily basis. Those who speak two languages had the lowest mean (2.52) and median (2), followed by those who speak three languages daily with mean (2.73) and median (2.5). In contrast, listeners who speak one language had a higher mean (3.46) and median (3.0), indicating that they are more bothered by L2 speakers' accents than others.

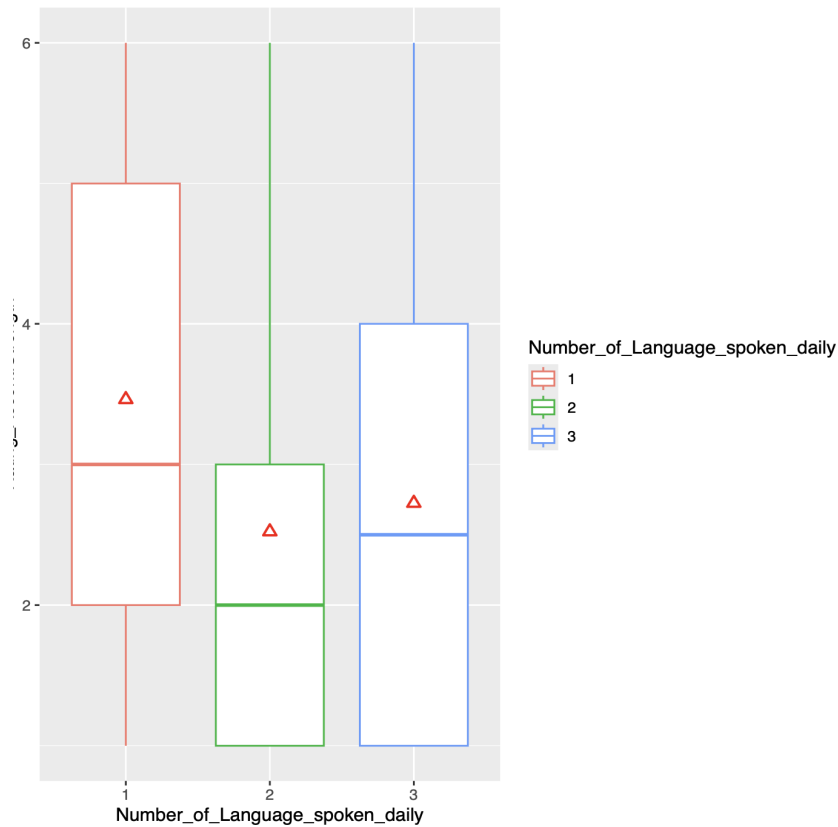


Figure 16: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Accent Acceptance depending on the number of languages spoken daily by the listener.

The analysis shows (see Figure 17) that those who speak more than one language daily tend to feel more comfortable speaking to L2 speakers. Those who speak three languages daily have the lowest mean (2.23) and median (2), followed by those who speak two languages daily with mean (2.35) and median (2). In contrast, those who speak one language have the highest mean (3.07) and median (3) indicating a lower comfort level.

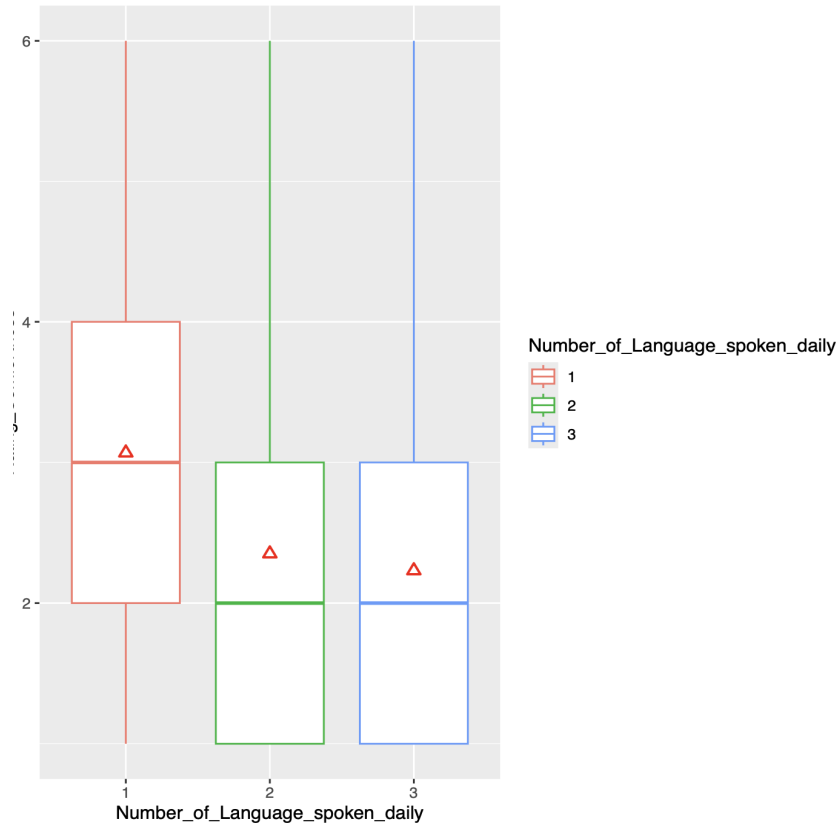


Figure 17: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Comfort of Communication depending on the number of languages spoken daily by the listener.

2.8.2.6 Proficiency of L2 Estonian speakers

The proficiency of L2 speakers affected various ratings. Figure 18 shows that higher level of Estonian proficiency was associated with better understanding according to the listeners. The mean of the ratings given to the L2 speakers who had Advanced level of proficiency (2.74) was the lowest, which means that they were rated as easiest to understand. The ratings to the L2 speakers with ‘Intermediate’ and ‘Proficient’ levels had very similar means (2.84, 2.91). While L2 speakers with Elementary level had the highest mean (3.59), indicating that they were rated most difficult to understand by listeners.

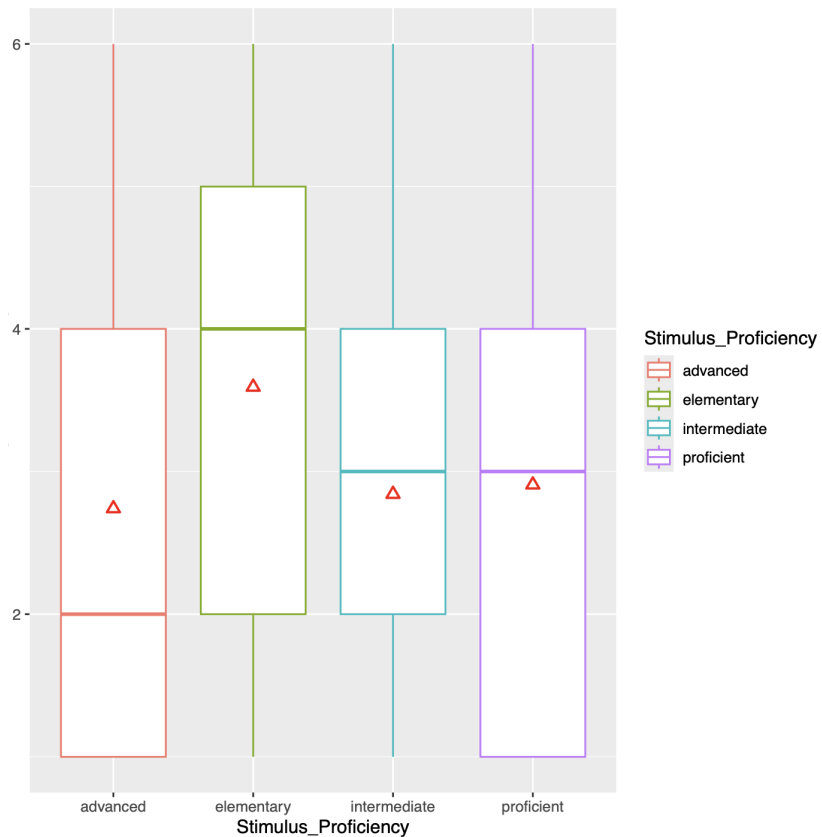


Figure 18: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Understanding depending on the proficiency of L2 Estonian speakers.

The analysis of Proficiency ratings (see Figure 19) with L2 speakers' proficiency level in Estonian shows that L2 speakers with the 'Advanced' level of proficiency received the lowest ratings (mean 2.69), indicating that their proficiency was perceived higher by listeners than for those with the 'Elementary' level (mean 3.48). But on the whole there was not much difference between the groups as the median was the same across all levels (3).

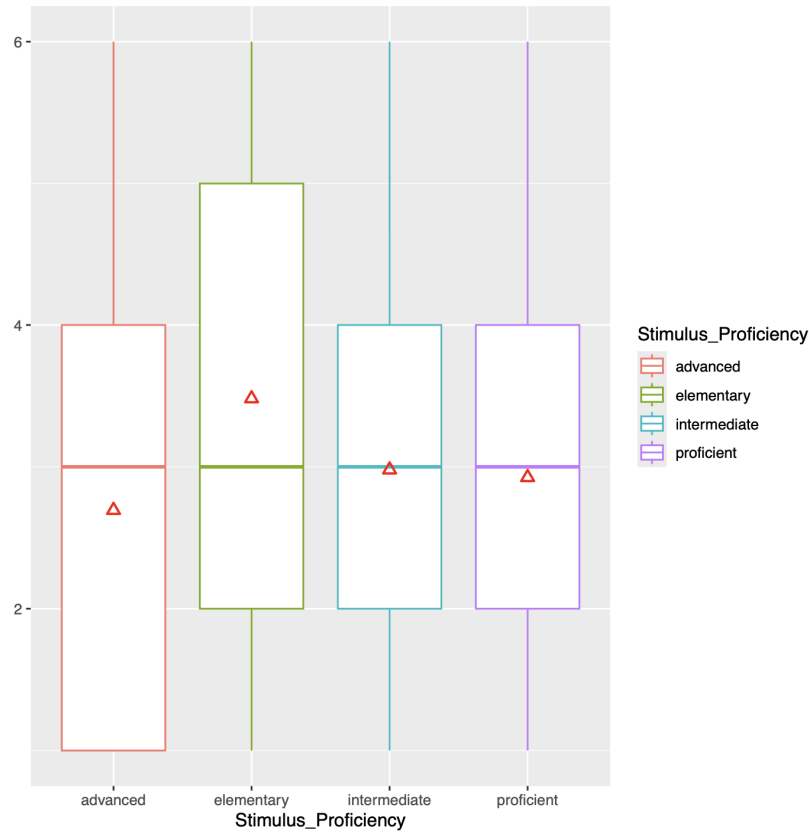


Figure 19: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Proficiency depending on the proficiency of L2 Estonian speakers.

With regard to the Accent Strength, the analysis shows (see Figure 20) that listeners perceived L2 speakers with lower proficiency levels as having a strong accent in comparison to those L2 speakers who had higher proficiency levels. There is a clear distinction between ‘Advanced’ and ‘Elementary’ levels with mean (3.43, 4.53) and median (3, 5).

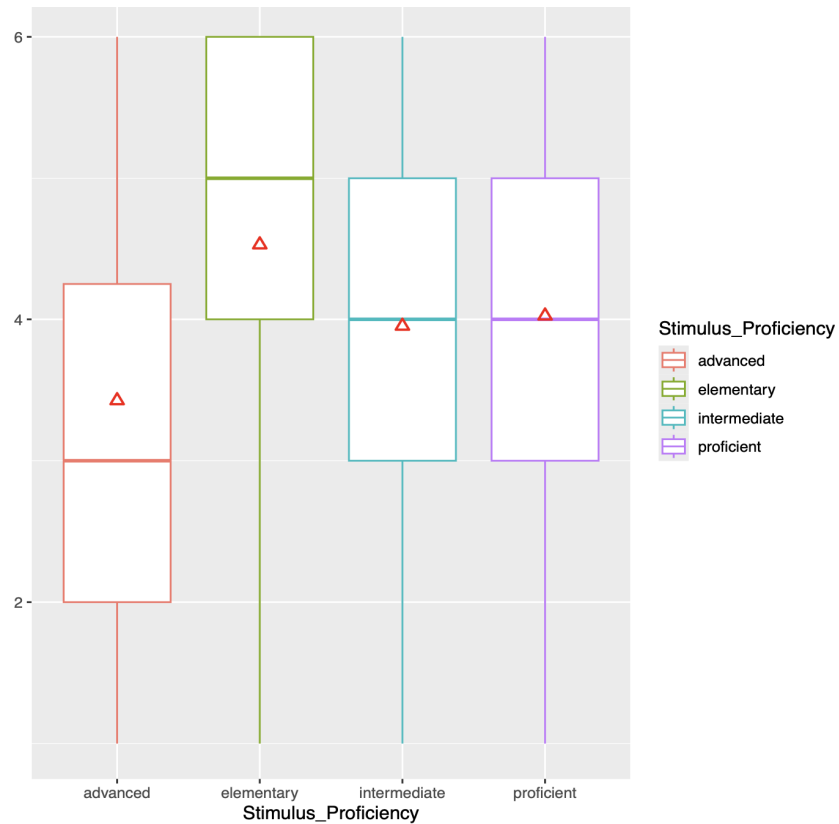


Figure 20: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Accent Strength depending on the proficiency of L2 Estonian speakers.

In terms of the accent being bothersome, the analysis (see Figure 21) shows that L2 speakers with higher proficiency were seen as less bothersome in comparison to the ones with lower proficiency levels. We again see a distinction between ‘Advanced’ and ‘Elementary’ levels with mean (2.46, 3.07) and median (2, 3).

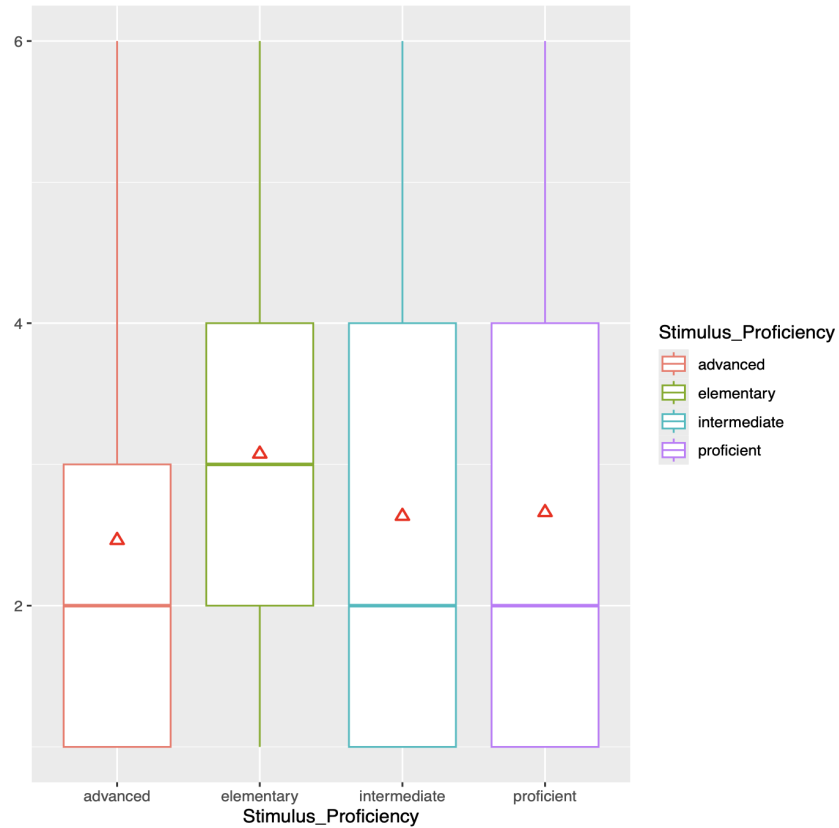


Figure 21: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Accent Acceptance depending on the proficiency of L2 Estonian speakers.

Moving on to the ratings indicating Comfort of Communication, the analysis (see Figure 22) shows that L2 speakers with an ‘Elementary’ level stand out from the rest (mean 2.74 and median 3 in comparison to the means for ‘Advanced’ (2.30), ‘Intermediate’ (2.41) and ‘Proficient’ (2.33) and median of 3), indicating that a lower proficiency of an L2 speaker can make listeners feel less comfortable to communicate with them.

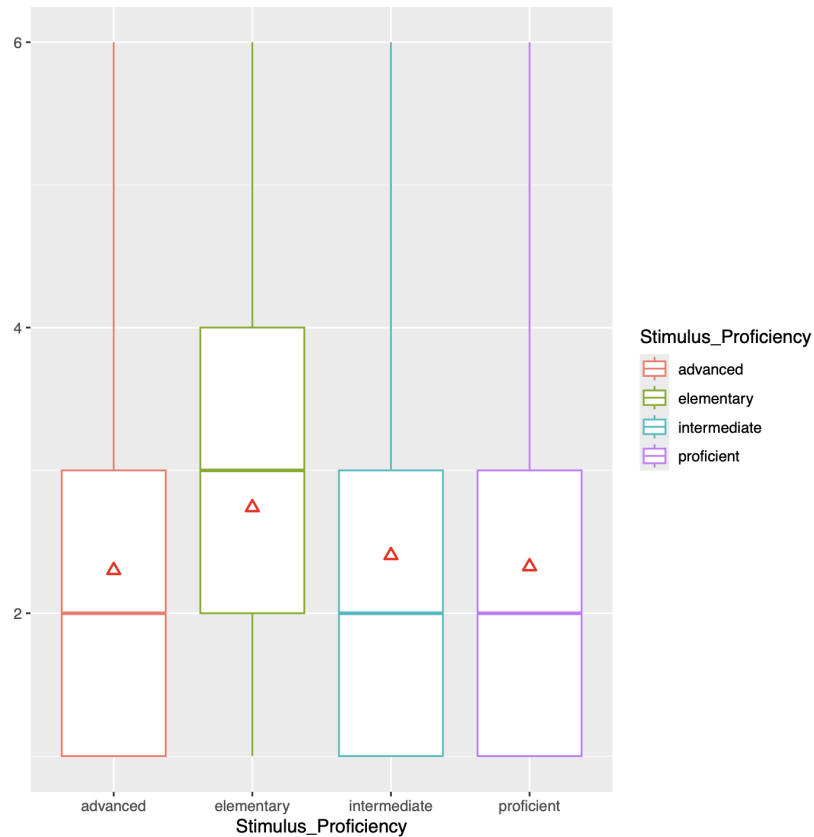


Figure 22: Rating of the different L2 Estonian stimuli regarding Comfort of Communication depending on the proficiency of L2 Estonian speakers.

2.8.2.7 Gender of L2 Estonian speakers

While the listeners deemed all L2 speakers to be intelligent and friendly no matter their gender, there was a clear distinction between the ratings given to female and male voices regarding the rest of the statements.

The results for the factor Understanding show that the listeners rated male L2 Estonian speakers as easier to understand (mean 2.44 and median 2) in comparison to female L2 speakers (mean 3.52 median 3). In terms of Proficiency, male L2 Estonian speakers are rated

to be more proficient in Estonian (mean 2.59 and median 2) in comparison to female L2 Estonian speakers (mean 3.44 and median 3).

As to Accent Strength, the analysis shows that female L2 speakers were perceived to have a stronger accent (mean 4.26 and median 4.5) in comparison to male L2 speakers (mean 3.58 and median 3). It is important to note that the majority of the listeners were also females. Similarly, female L2 speakers' accents were perceived to be more bothersome (mean 3.04 and median 3) in comparison to male L2 speakers (mean 2.34 and median 2).

As to Comfort of Communication, the trends are similar to Accent Strength and Accent Acceptance: the listeners rate that they feel less comfortable speaking with female L2 speakers (mean 3.04 and median 3) in comparison to male L2 speakers (mean 2.17 and median 2).

2.8.3 Accent recognition

At the end of each section of the questionnaire, listeners were asked to guess the mother tongue of the L2 Estonian speakers (see Figure 23). Instances of correctly identifying the mother tongue of the L2 speakers were seen the most for Finnish, Russian, German, and Spanish. The figure shows the correct guesses for each audio sample, i.e. for male and female speakers separately. It can be seen that for Finnish, Russian, and Spanish and also French and Japanese it was the female speaker who received more correct guesses whereas for German and Latvian it was the male speaker. The male speaker with L1 Swedish spoke Estonian as a heritage language as mentioned before, and thus, he was identified as a native Estonian speaker in the ratings (which explains zero correct guesses as L1 Swedish speaker). Only one listener correctly guessed the mother tongue of the male L2 speaker with L1 Lithuanian. No

participant guessed correctly the L2 Estonian speakers with L1 Danish. Three participants left comments demonstrating their curiosity to know what the mother tongues of the L2 speakers were.

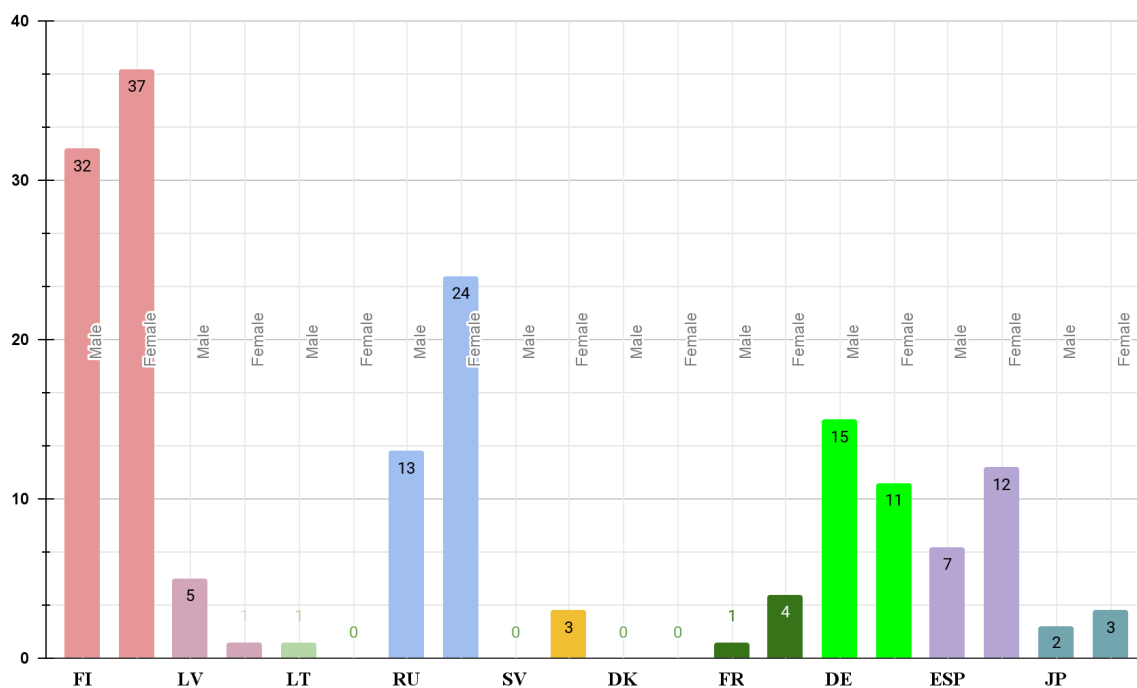


Figure 23: Number of instances where the L1 of the speakers was correctly guessed for each of the L2 Estonian speakers.

The instances where the listeners guessed the mother tongue of the L2 speakers incorrectly were also examined:

- Finnish L1 Male speaker was guessed as a native speaker of Latvian (by 1 participant) and Finnish L1 female speaker as Ukrainian (by 1 participant).
- Russian L1 male speaker was guessed as a native speaker of Ukrainian (3), Latvian (2), Lithuanian (2), and Spanish (1); Russian L1 female speaker as Ukrainian (2).

- German L1 male speaker was guessed as a native speaker of French (6), English (5), Portuguese (2), and Hebrew (1); German L1 female speaker as English (4), Russian (3), Spanish (2), Norwegian (1), Polish (1), and Portuguese (1)
- Spanish L1 male speaker was guessed as a native speaker of Italian (3), Swedish (2), Finnish (2), Russian (2), English (1), and Greek(1); Spanish L1 female speaker as Chinese (2), Japanese (1), Portuguese (1), Russian (1), and Malay (1).
- Latvian L1 male speaker was guessed as a native speaker of Finnish (5), Russian (3), Italian (1), Swedish (1), English (1); Latvian L1 female speaker as Swedish (3), German (1), Lithuanian (1), French (1), English (1), and Finnish (1)
- French L1 male speaker was guessed as a native speaker of Russian (9), Finnish (5), Chinese (3), Spanish (2), Swedish (2), Czech (1), Latvian (1), Lithuanian (1), Hungarian (1), English (1), and Spanish (1); Spanish L1 female as German (4) and Estonian (1).
- Swedish L1 male speaker was guessed as a native speaker of Estonian (4), Russian (3), Latvian (1), German (1), Spanish (1), and English (1); Swedish L1 female speaker as English (3), French (1), Estonian (1), Finnish (1), and Russian (1).
- Japanese L1 speaker was guessed as a native speaker of English (3), Finnish (3), German (2), Swedish (2), Hungarian (1), Russian (1), Norwegian (1), and Spanish (1); Japanese L1 female speaker as Chinese (3), French (2), Finnish (1), Korean (1), and Russian (1).
- Lithuanian L1 male speaker was guessed as a native speaker of Russian (14), Turkish (2), Spanish (1), and Norwegian (1); Lithuanian L1 female as Russian (14), Ukrainian (5), Finnish (1), and Polish (1).

- Danish L1 male speaker was guessed as a native speaker of Italian (1), Finnish (3), Portuguese (1), Spanish (1), German (1), and Estonian (1); Danish L1 female speaker as Chinese (1), Turkish (1), Finno-Ugric language (1), and Indian language (1).

Chapter 3 Study II

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 begins by outlining the research aims of Study II, and then continues to the methodology employed. The following section provides information about the procedure for conducting semi-structured interviews and the participants involved. The results are presented in the form of three main themes deduced from thematic analysis.

3.2 Research questions

The broader aim of the study is to explore how learners of the Estonian language perceive their accents. The specific research questions are the following:

What is the first-hand experience of speakers of L2 Estonian about their accents?

Which factors motivate the learners to sound more native-like in Estonian?

3.3 Methodology

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with speakers of L2 Estonian. Structured interviews include several Yes/No questions, multiple choice questions, they have less room for open-ended questions. Unstructured interviews on the other hand include many open-ended questions where participants have the freedom to answer questions as they please just like in a casual conversation (Karatsareas 2022, p 94). Semi-structured interviews lie between the two being not completely rigid with a certain set of questions nor flexible with no structure in place. Rather, semi-structured interviews have a fixed protocol and some room open for flexibility with the same aim of guiding the interview towards eliciting answers broadly to the same questions. Hence, the interviews in this research were aimed at gathering

relevant information about L2 speakers learning Estonian, their accents, and their experience with native speakers.

3.3 Procedure

In preparation for the interview, a list of questions was compiled about the L2 speakers' background, language level, learning journey, accent, and other questions related to it. As the aim was to carry out the interviews in Estonian, the interviews were conducted and recorded with the help of an Estonian-speaking research assistant (RA). Participants had the choice to be interviewed in one of two cities, Tartu or Tallinn. In Tartu, interviews were conducted in the students' common room of the Institute of Estonian and General Linguistics. In Tallinn, quiet cafés and the Phonetic Lab of the Estonian Language Institute were used for recording. Recordings were done using a Zoom H2n Handy Recorder.

The RA used questions presented in Appendix 2 as a guide for interviewing the participants. Participants' oral consent was taken and they were briefed at the beginning of the interview about the research aims, interview process, and ethical considerations like voluntary participation, anonymization of their identity, and steps to follow in case of any discomfort, etc (Karatsareas 2022: 84, p. 88). Eight male and eight female participants were recorded over four weeks. Each interview lasted up to 30 minutes. At the end of the interview, participants were requested to read selected texts taken from the Estonian Language Pronunciation course run by Tiina Kattel at the University of Tartu (see Appendix 2)

3.4 Participants

Participants were recruited with the help of Facebook. Posts were made in expat groups – Foreigners in Tartu, Expats in Tallinn/Estonia, and Expats & Foreigners in Estonia. Those who spoke Estonian as a second/foreign language (L2) on a functional level (using it in day-to-day conversations) and ideally whose level lies between A2-C1 were chosen. Participants from as many different L1 backgrounds as possible were recruited. Altogether sixteen participants were interviewed. The details of the participants are given in Table 3.

Table 3: Background information of the participants in Study II.

Gender	Age	Native Language(s)	Nationality	Other known languages	Estonian Level
F	29	Croatian	Croatian	EN, ES, FR, LA	elementary
F	32	French and German	French and German	EN	advance
F	25	British English	English	-	intermediate
F	21	Romanian	Romanian	EN, RU, FR	advanced
F	25	Indonesian and Bali	Indonesian	EN, FR, JA	intermediate
F	29	Spanish	Mexican and Estonian	EN, IT, FR	advanced
F	23	French and Russian	French	EN, DE	advanced
F	40	Malayalam	Indian	EN	intermediate
M	30	Italian and Napolitan	Italian	EN, FI, ES, DE, SV, TL	proficient
M	25	American English	American	FR, JA, HU, LV, KV	intermediate

M	29	Russian	Russian	EN, FR, ES, PT, FI	advanced
M	32	German	German	EN, HU, EL, ES, RU	proficient
M	32	Portuguese	Portuguese	EN, ES	advanced
M	21	Chinese	Chinese	EN, SV	proficient
M	34	Finnish	Finnish	FI, EN, SV, FR	advanced
M	33	Turkish	Turkish	EN	intermediate

Participants came from Europe (Croatia, France, Germany, Romania, Italy, Portugal, Finnish, Russia, and Turkey), Asia (India, China, Japan, and Indonesia), and North America (USA, Mexico). Their age ranged from 21 to 40 years, knowledge of Estonian as per CEFR framework varied from A2 to C1 and the majority of the speakers knew more than 3 languages. The minimum educational background of a participant was high-school and the maximum reported as a doctoral researcher. The majority of them work in Estonia and the rest either study or work or do both. In terms of their stay in Estonia, 9 participants reported to have lived here more than 5 years, 4 mentioned less than 5 years, and 3 reported to have lived for more or less 2 years.

3.5 Results

3.5.1 Self-reporting of accent

Out of all sixteen participants, thirteen perceive themselves to have an accent and only three think that they do not have any accent. Transcripts of the relevant parts of the interviews are presented in Appendix 2. We can see that the participants mentioned the importance of intelligibility, awareness of their accent, challenges of Estonian prosody, and exhaustion from speaking in L2 Estonian. One participant mentioned that their first language will influence their accent in L2 as it is part of their identity.

3.5.2 Motivation to sound native-like and learn Estonian

Table 4 presents the responses of participants related to their motivation, if any, to sound native-like and to learn the Estonian language more generally. Seven participants want to sound native-like, six said no and are happy to speak Estonian stressing the aspect of communicating rather than getting rid of the accent and one participant expressed that they already have achieved a native-like accent. With regard to the motivation behind learning the Estonian language, the majority of the participants share an internal motivation – liking the language, and culture, and wanting to work, study, and start a family in Estonia; others share an external motivation – family relocation to Estonia and having an Estonian partner.

Table 4: Participants reporting their motivations.

Participants	Do you want to sound more like a native speaker?	Their motivation for learning the Estonian language?
P1	Yes	Loving Estonia, its culture, and living in Estonia. Wants to live in Estonia and form a family here. Wants to read in Estonian.
P2	No	Just some interest. A friend did it and she tried it also.
P3	Yes	Studying in Estonia was the initial motivation. Wants to feel more comfortable when speaking Estonian but plan to go back to England.
P4	No	Was forced to study. Plans to end studies and move away.
P5	No	Husband is Estonian, moved to Estonia. It is an interesting and beautiful language, there are not many people who can speak it, chances are you can learn for free. Wants to speak to people who do not speak e.g. English, know about past
P6	Yes	Just wants to speak it well like everyone else because she is also half Estonian - like an identity thing.
P7	-	Want to stay, there is work, less people, more nature, and the tempo is slower.
P8	Yes	Living and working environment / work is Estonian. Interest in languages.
P9	No	Interest towards Estonia (the colors of the flag are interesting), Estonian phonetics and phonology.
P10	No	Partner and partner's family; to not feel as a foreigner in Estonia, to feel confident in everyday situations, e.g. doctor's office. Does not want to depend on other people.

P11	Already Native Like	Like Estonia, people, weather, language. Interest in language and positive feedback, people are joyous that someone is learning Estonian, e.g. compared to Spanish in which case no one cares, in Sweden everyone expects you to speak Swedish because everyone wants to live in Sweden. In the case of Estonian the amount of people who want to study it is little and the amount of people who reach a level in which they can speak it is little. It is special and you get positive feedback.
P12	-	Tried to learn Estonian to work only Estonia (truck driver)
P13	Yes	Interesting, different. Get a better score on his C1 exam; wants to understand his friends and lecturers better. Better communication. Wants to stay further on to find a place for internship and work in his field of study. It has to be connected to both Estonia and China
P14	No	Living in Estonia is easier. Wanting to live like the people of the country.
P15	Yes	Wants to live here.
P16	Yes	-

3.5.3 Participants reportings native speakers' attitudes toward L2 Estonian

Participants were also asked if native speakers had commented on their accents. Seven participants self-reported about being told that they have an accent but, it is not something bothersome, four reported being told they have a perceivable accent that makes native speakers of Estonian switch to their L2 (Russian or English), three didn't answer the question and two reported a negative attitude where one has never been told directly about having an

accent but, the participant feels being laughed at behind their back. The other one has been bullied in school for having an accent and not being able to speak well.

Participants were also asked about native speakers' attitudes when they see someone learning Estonian as L2 and how confident they feel speaking in Estonian with a native speaker. Eleven participants reported the attitude to be positive, three did not answer, one said it depends and one reported a negative attitude. Furthermore, six participants reported feeling confident speaking in Estonian, three did not feel confident, two reported that it depends, and five didn't answer. For detailed information, please refer to Table 5 below.

Table 5: Participants reportings native speakers' attitudes toward L2 Estonian

Participants	How do Estonians feel when they see you are learning the Estonian language?	Positive or negative attitude?	Lastly, do you feel confident speaking in Estonian?	Comment
P1	In everyday situations when talking with Estonians it goes well.	Positive	Not confident	A little bit not confident because the level is not good and sometimes feels that Estonians are laughing at her because her Estonian is bad, she has an accent.
P2	People say that it is nice that she speaks Estonian, even though it can be better. Her partner emphasizes the better part.	Positive	Confident	Doesn't say it but seems very confident in her manner.

P3	<p>People are surprised that she can speak Estonian because there are e.g. Russian speaking Estonians who cannot speak Estonian. Made her uncomfortable because it is political. It is a little bit motivating (used 'motiveeritav' = being motivating, motivating someone)</p>	Positive	Yes and no	<p>Yes and no, middle ('keskmine', 'nii ja naa'). Feels she has to study more. Sometimes when she goes back home she feels the need to express herself in Estonian but no one understands her. In Estonia she can use both languages, e.g. with friends. Feels comfortable because of this.</p>
P4	<p>Estonians did not treat her well when she started studying. Still do not have Estonian friends. When they understand that she is not from Estonia, some conflict arises. She was bullied during school because she could not speak well and had an accent. Others did not want to practice with her, instead they went quiet.</p>	Negative	-	-
P5	<p>People think she cannot speak Estonian. They are surprised that she can speak Estonian. People are friendly.</p>	Positive	Confident	<p>She tries to be confident. It helps if people are very friendly and have a good reaction. (especially in Tartu)</p>
P6	<p>Estonian see her as a foreigner but she also feels as a foreigner. People usually don't recognise that she is a foreigner or say that she speaks very well, they wouldn't think that she learned it a couple of years ago</p>	Positive	Confident	<p>Because she knows that she can get by everyday and in communication but no because she is always self-aware</p>

P7	Strangers say that she speaks well, does not have an accent.	-	Not confident	Interviewer asked if she wanted to further her knowledge of Estonian. She said that she wants to feel more comfortable talking, and be more calm when talking. Wants less moments when she cannot explain something properly.
P8	-	-	-	-
P9	-	-	Confident	As the interviewee did not know the word 'confident' in Estonian the interviewer rephrased into 'Do you feel good when you speak in Estonian?'. The interviewee answered that if the partners in the conversation understand each other then he feels good.
P10	People are surprised that he speaks so well because there are people who have lived in Estonia for 10-25 years and still don't speak that well. Surprised because he started studying Estonian when he was an adult and speaks so well.	Positive	-	-
P11	People value when someone tries to learn Estonian. You have to learn and be responsible yourself.	Positive	-	-

P12	Estonians like that he is Portuguese and he speaks Estonian. Estonians have a negative attitude when they think that he is Russian because of his accent (they think 'oh okay he only speaks Russian, I will try then') but when they find out he is Portuguese they have a positive attitude.	Depends	Confident	In what he says he is sure but people do not always understand but they ask again and he repeats.
P13	It did not seem important that he had an accent to other people. They understand him - it seems to be most important for people as long as it is possible to communicate. Usually starts conversations in English because he is not sure if the person can speak Estonian. If yes, then he switches to Estonian.	Positive	-	-
P14	After living in Estonian for 2 years people still commented that he spoke so well and fast	Positive	Confident	Interviewer asked if he felt comfortable speaking Estonian. He said that usually yes but he himself wants to speak properly which causes the stress. Writing is hard.
P15	People have said well	Positive	Not confident	Problems understanding the question. So the interviewer asked in English.
P16	-	Positive	Yes and no	If she has spoken of the same subject then it is easy but when she speaks of a new topic then that is difficult. She has to think a bit.

3.5.4 Thematic analysis

To find common themes, patterns, topics and ideas *thematic analysis* as a method was used to identify, analyze, and report recurring themes. Following the method phases (Braun and Clarke 2006: p 87), the data was transcribed to familiarize oneself and only the data sets relevant to this research were taken into consideration (see Appendix 1). These chosen sets or parts of the transcription were translated word for word from Estonian into English. Then, interesting features were coded systematically. These codes were gathered and looked into for potential themes. Afterwards, these themes were refined and polished by naming each theme and subtheme, and are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Theme and subtheme with exemplary quotes.

Theme	Subtheme	Exemplary Quotes
1. Comprehensibility	1a. Being understood valued more 1b. Accent not considered important 1c. Impossible to attain native-like speech	"...I think, that so. I speak, I already speak so, so, that Estonians understand me. Mhm. So I do not think, that so accent would be the most important." "...if I can say something and people understand me, then it is okay and it fits me. I at all did not have that thought, that I have an accent and I fear, I have that, I have a problem with it, that accent... it means nothing to me." "...but is it like possible? I am not sure, because it is not like my mother tongue. " "...so many words, that I

		would not learn ever in my life, in the duration of my life.”
2. Variety of triggers from non-native Estonian	<p>2a. Native speakers can actively distinguish non-native accent</p> <p>2b. L2 activation of native speakers</p> <p>2c. Inability to identify non-native language variety leads to curiosity</p>	<p>“...when I reach some client and then start speaking Estonian and my accent is not so good, then clients thinks many times, that I am a Russian man.”</p> <p>“...for example in the bank, in Swedbank that middle aged worker indeed understood, that I am not an Estonian and then wanted to be polite and immediatly switched to Russian. But I do not know Russian. I do not know Russian at all. And then I told him [/her], that no, that let’s do in Estonian. I speak Estonian, I understand everything, that there is no problem. And then he [/she] went to search documents, came back and automatically switched back to Russian.”</p> <p>“when I, when I spoke, speak with someone new, they say, that aa, but where are you from...you speak Estonian so well and you do not have accents and well how.”</p>
3. Internal motivation	<p>3a. To gain more knowledge</p> <p>3b. To become proficient</p>	<p>“...I did already the C1 exam, but that point is not that high, that is so-called about over sixty like like points, which I almost got. But I would certainly like to attend the C1 level again and my point like to fix. It is, it is the current my well so-called my motivation here to study</p>

		<p>Estonian further.”</p> <p>“...I want to understand more Estonian. Like how that grammar [works].”</p> <p>“...how to use right [means „correctly“], write correctly, speak.”</p>
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As to the first theme ‘Comprehensibility’, it can be seen that it is more important for the participants to be understood than to get rid of their accent. Participants demonstrated their awareness about perceived accent, although it was not given as much attention as being understood. Attaining a native-like speech was on the whole deemed to be an impossible task. Moving to the second theme ‘Variety of triggers from L2 Estonian’, it is evident that native speakers can distinguish non-native accents. An unfamiliar accent can cause curiosity and native speakers of Estonian language seem motivated to find out the mother tongue of L2 Estonian speakers. Some encounters of L2 Estonian speakers with native speakers of Estonian highlight a trend where certain accents have made native speakers switch to L2 (e.g. Russian or English). One reason for this is language accommodation. As to the third theme ‘Internal motivation’, L2 Estonian speakers seem to be highly motivated to gain more knowledge and become proficient in the Estonian language. This inner drive is visible throughout the analysis.

Chapter 4 General Discussion

Based on Study I and Study II in Chapters 2 and 3, this chapter aims to present a general discussion of the main findings of the studies.

4.1 What are the native speakers' attitudes towards foreign-accented Estonian?

Study I examined the attitudes of native speakers of the Estonian language towards foreign-accented Estonian speech (L2). Speech samples of twenty speakers of L2 Estonian with 10 different L1 backgrounds (one female and one male L2 speaker for each language) were used to elicit evaluations and attitudes with an online questionnaire. Each section of the questionnaire consisted of a stimulus and 7 statements associated with seven factors – Understanding, Proficiency, Accent Strength, Accent Acceptance, Intelligence, Friendliness, and Comfort of Communication which were rated on a six-point Likert scale. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first experimental study that attempted to investigate Estonian native speakers' attitudes towards L2 Estonian speech.

The results show that L2 Estonian with Finnish accent (speakers with Finnish as their mother tongue) stood out from the others: it was rated higher with respect to factors Understanding (better understood), Proficiency (considered more proficient). Native speakers of Estonian rated the stimuli of Finnish L1 speakers of Estonian to have the weakest accent and were least bothered by this accent. Also L2 Estonian with Swedish and French accents received high ratings. L2 Estonian stimuli with Lithuanian L1 were also found to be less bothersome in terms of Accent Acceptance. Surprisingly, L2 Estonian stimuli with a Latvian L1 were rated lowest on the scale of Understanding implying that Latvian accented Estonian is most difficult

to understand. Such speakers were also rated as least proficient in Estonian by the listeners. Overall, Estonian native speakers' attitudes varied as to the different aspects of L2 Estonian speech but on the whole foreign accents were not deemed to be bothersome.

Examining the status Intelligence and solidarity Friendliness, the results showed that Estonian native speakers deemed all L2 Estonian speakers of the stimuli language to be intelligent and friendly. These results contradict the previous results of Dragojević & Giles (2016) who found that listeners use accent as a linguistic cue for social categorization (e.g. status and solidarity) and stereotypical traits of a speaker labeling them either an ingroup or outgroup member, and Dragojević & Goatley-Soan (2020) who observed that foreign accents were not equally evaluated as to status and solidarity traits. Similar to Dragojević & Giles, Lindemann (2003) also observed that native speakers can actively classify non-natives as either stigmatized or non-stigmatized. However, our results contradict this research implying that native Estonian speakers consider L2 accented Estonian speakers as non-stigmatized ingroup members. Moreover, listeners found it hard to evaluate the intelligence and friendliness of L2 speakers based on a short sentence.

Similar was found for Comfort of Communication, as the listeners reported being comfortable speaking with L2 Estonian speakers irrespective of their language background. As to L1 recognition of the speakers Finnish, Russian, German, and Spanish were the mother tongues that were correctly recognized the most while Lithuanian was the least correctly identified L1 and Danish was not identified correctly by any listener. These results imply that native speakers of Estonian are most familiar with Finnish, Russian, German and Spanish accents and less familiar with Danish and Lithuanian accented Estonian.

In terms of Proficiency the following emerged: the older the age group of the listeners, the lower ratings they gave regarding the proficiency in Estonian; the more educated the listeners reported to be, the less bothered they were by L2 accents. Listeners who reported knowing 4-5 languages rated L2 speakers more positively in terms of proficiency, and listeners who speak 2-3 languages daily rated L2 speakers' proficiency higher than listeners who speak one language. As to Accent Strength and Accent Acceptance, listeners of all age groups were able to identify a non-native accent but, the older age groups reported being more bothered by L2 accents than the rest. Listeners who know 4-5 languages reported L2 accents to be less bothersome in comparison to listeners who know 2-3 languages, and listeners who speak 2-3 languages daily found L2 accents less bothersome as compared to listeners who speak one language only. Female listeners rated L2 speakers as more friendly than male listeners, but it has to be pointed out here that most listeners were female. As to Comfort of Communication, the more languages known and spoken daily by the listener, the more comfortable L2 speakers were rated to communicate with.

As to the L2 speakers' background, female stimuli were rated to be less understandable than male stimuli. Not surprisingly, such L2 speakers' stimuli who had an 'Elementary' level of Estonian were considered least proficient and those with 'Advanced' most proficient. Speakers with a more advanced level of Estonian were rated as a bit more comfortable to communicate with. Interestingly, the L2 stimuli by male speakers were rated as more proficient in Estonian, less bothersome and more comfortable to speak with but this could be related to the fact that most of the listeners were female.

The results show that the native speaker's ability to differentiate between accents does depend on the exposure and familiarity with languages on the whole. This is in line with the findings of Cristià et al. (2012) who show that there is a connection between understanding accented speech, and other language skills. and This also follows Dewaele & McCloskey (2014) in that listeners' language attitudes depend on their language learning history, and current language practices

4.2 How do L2 speakers of Estonian perceive their own accent?

As to the perception of own accent of the L2 speakers, the three main themes that emerged were: 1) Comprehensibility – being understood is valued more, accent is not considered important and it is considered impossible to attain native-like accent in Estonian, 2) Variety of triggers from L2 Estonian – native speakers of Estonian can recognise non-native accents, and are curious about foreign-accented Estonian, 3) Internal motivation of L2 learners of Estonian – to gain more knowledge, and to become more proficient in Estonian. The results related to the first theme match the suggestion given by Guba et al. (2023) who argue that acceptance and comprehensible foreign accents should be the norm rather than acquiring a native-like speech which is an almost impossible task for the majority of L2 learners.

Chapter 5 Conclusion and further work

5.1 Overall findings

The goal of the thesis was to investigate language attitudes towards foreign-accented Estonian speech. Two studies were carried out.

Study I used an online questionnaire with speech stimuli of twenty speakers of L2 Estonian with 10 different L1 backgrounds (one female and one male L2 speaker for each language) to elicit evaluations and attitudes towards accented L2 Estonian. In total 54 listeners participated in the study (43 females, 10 males and 1 non-binary). L2 Estonian speakers whose mother tongue is Finnish stood out as most positively rated across Understanding, Proficiency, Accent Strength, and Accent Acceptance, followed by L1 Swedish, French, Lithuanian and German speakers (except Accent Strength where they were rated to have a stronger accent). Out of all the rest, L1 Latvian was rated to be least understood and along with L1 Spanish in Accent Strength rated to have the strongest accent. As to the status (Intelligence) and solidarity (Friendliness) traits, all the L2 Estonian accents were rated similarly. This was true also for Comfort of Communication, which shows that most L2 speakers were considered to be comfortable to speak with L2 Estonian speakers of L1 Latvian, Spanish and Japanese rated slightly lower.

Listener's and speaker's background are two broad categories influencing the language attitudes of Estonian native speakers. The ratings of seven factors were examined across the listener's age, gender, education, number of languages known and number of languages spoken

on a day to day basis and the speaker's proficiency level and gender. Results from the listener's perspective show that older listeners rated L2 speakers as being less proficient in Estonian and having a stronger accent. Female listeners rate speakers more positively. More educated listeners were less bothered by the speakers' accent in comparison to listeners with lower educational level. Furthermore, the more languages a listener knew and spoke on a daily basis, the less bothered they were about the accents and the more proficient and more comfortable to communicate with the L2 speakers. From the speaker's perspective, the results showed that L2 speakers with higher proficiency in Estonian language were rated as better understood, more proficient, more comfortable to communicate with and having a weaker accent. Their accent was rated as less bothersome by listeners. In terms of gender, on all aforementioned factors, female L2 speakers were rated slightly more negatively in comparison to the male speakers.

Study II focused on the attitudes of L2 speakers towards their accent and their experience with native speakers. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with sixteen participants. Most of the participants (13) were aware about their perceived accent while others (3) did not perceive it and found intelligibility to be more important. A couple of the participants (6) were happy with how they spoke Estonian stressing the importance of being able to communicate overall, while others (7) were motivated to sound (more) native-like. One participant highlighted their accent as part of their identity.

Most participants have had positive first-hand experiences with native speakers. Over half of the participants (8) reported that native speakers of Estonian have commented on their accent but, overall, the participants reported that the accents were not bothersome. However, some L2 Estonian speakers had had experiences where native speakers switched to another language

(Russian or English) to communicate with them, and one participant reported even being bullied in school because of their accent and language skills. Yet, about a third (6) of the participants feel that they would be comfortable speaking with native speakers of Estonian, while a couple (2) said it depends on who they would be talking to. Three of the speakers would not feel comfortable and the rest did not answer.

As to the thematic analysis of the interviews, it can be said that the L2 speakers of Estonian value being comprehensible and understood over concentrating on their accent (and getting rid of it). Speakers of L2 Estonian have internal motivation to gain more knowledge and be more proficient in the Estonian language but at the same time, some feel that their first language influences their communication and is part of their identity.

The findings from both studies suggest that native Estonian speakers are good at recognising accented speech and on the whole quite tolerant towards foreign accented Estonian. In terms of social categorization, all L2 speakers of Estonian language were deemed to be equal as to status and solidarity traits.

5.2 Limitations of the study

As the current thesis is a first experimental study focusing on the aspect of attitudes towards foreign-accented speech in the context of Estonian certain limitations obviously exist.

In Study I, the speech samples were taken from the Estonian Foreign Accented Corpus. The languages chosen were the only ones available with both male and female speakers which

limited the choice. Also the age, language, proficiency level and educational background of the speakers could not be balanced. The speech samples used as stimuli were various short sentences that did not represent ordinary everyday speech but were constructed for the phonetic study of speech.. The number of participants in the study is also quite small with the majority of the listeners being females.

With regard to Study II, more L2 Estonian speakers could have been interviewed. The majority of the participants were young adults. There is a potential that some interviewer bias exists as the interviewer's own attitudes as L1 Estonian speaker and the whole set up of the interview (semi-structured) may have influenced the responses. Furthermore, there is a possibility that L2 speakers found it challenging expressing themselves in Estonian, which could lead to incomplete or nuanced responses. An interview in their L1 or in English might have given more thorough answers.

5.3 Further work

In the future, other aspects concerning the attitudes to foreign-accented Estonian speech could be studied and the current studies could be expanded. In future research, audio-visual stimuli of both native and non-native speakers with spontaneous speech samples could be used to elicit attitudes. The aspect of big personality traits can be added to show how a listener's personality affects their evaluation of L2 accents. Moreover, as schools in Estonia have begun its transition to Estonian as the language of instruction, language attitudes in schools can be investigated.

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Appendix 1

The transcription of the interview recordings were not done from start to end. The transcriptions presented in this section answer the research questions for Study II.

Participant 1: Croatian (6:57–8:28)

Kas on keegi ka maininud midagi, et sul on aktsent kõneledes?

Jaa, mul on aktsent. Eesti keel ei ole minu emakeel, aga ma arvan, et kõik saab aru.

Mhm, nii et otseselt ei ole keegi halvasti öelnud selle kohta?

Ma ei arva.

Kuidas sa ise tunned, kas sa oled enesekindel eesti keelt kõneledes?

Ma pean öelma natukene ebakindel...

Mhm.

...sest ma õpin eesti keelt ja minu eesti keelt on A2 tas. Ja ma olen, mõnikord ma olen natukene ebakindel, sest ma arvan, et eestlased naeravad mulle, et minu eesti keel on halb, mul on aktsent, jah.

Mhm. Ja kas on siis soov ka edasi arendada eesti keelt ja eesti keele oskust?

Jaa, on minu väga suur soov ja ma soovin, et minu eesti keel on parem tuleviku.

Mhm. Kas on ka soov täiesti emakeelsete kõnelejatega sisse sulanduda?

Jaa! Jaa, täpselt. Jah, on minu soov.

[...]

Participant 2: French and German (5:23–6:56; 10:16–10:53)

[...]

Ja kuidas on sinu tunded aktsendi osas? Et kas sa ise tajud, et sul on kõneledes aktsent?

Noh, osaliselt jah, sest on sellised sõnad, mida ma ei saa hästi öelda. Näiteks kui on kaks “R” järjest. Ma ei oska. Näiteks see sõiduk see “võrr”. Mina ei oska. Et üks “R” on maksimum, mida ma saan. Et no, seal ma saan küll aru, et see ei hakka kunagi tulema. Et kui seitsme aasta jooksul ei ole tulnud, siis see on lost case.

Aga kas sellega seoses, ütleme, kui sa ei räägi sõpradega vaid näiteks mingi võõra inimesega või telefonis, kas siis just, kui nad kuulevad sinu aktsenti, kas seal on mingisuguseid probleeme tekkinud?

Jah, et näiteks pangas, Swedbankas see keskealine töötaja sai küll aru, et ma ei ole eestlane ja siis ta tahtis viisakas olla ja kohe switch’is vene keelde. Aga ma ei oska vene keelt. Ma ei oska üldse vene keelt. Ja siis ma ütlesin talle, et ei, et teeme ikka eesti keeles. Ma räägin eesti keelt, ma saan kõigest aru, et ei ole probleem. Ja siis ta läks dokumente otsima, tuli tagasi ja switch’is automaatselt tagasi vene keeleks. Siis ma ütlesin uuesti, et ei, et ma endiselt ei oska vene keelt, teeme ikka eesti keeles. Ja seda on mitmes kohtas juhtund, et inimesed tahvad siis kas vene või inglise keelt rääkida. Aga ei ole ju tegelikult üldse vaja.

Okei. Eeldatakse siis, et hoopis Venemaalt. Väga põnev.

[...]

Ja siis, kas sa plaanid veel enda eesti keelt edasi arendada või kas on ka mingisugune eesmärk kohalikega täielikult sisse sulanduda?

Ei, hetkel ei ole, sest noh aega ei ole ja ma oskan suhelda, ma saan enam-vähem kõigest aru. Ma oskan lugeda. Kui ma telekat vaatan, ei ole ka arusaamisega probleeme. Et minu jaoks sellest piisab. Suuremaid eesmärke hetkel ei ole.

[...]

Participant 3: English (8:40–10:13)

[...]

Ja kuidas sa ise tunnetad, kui sa kõneled, kas sul on aktsent? Kas teised inimesed on seda märganud? Kas nad on öelnud midagi selle kohta?

Ma tavaliselt kuulen, et mul pole aktsenti, aga ma tean, et see minu nagu sõnade rütm või keele rütm on erinev, on teistmoodi. See võtab kindlasti aega ja rohkem kogemus keelega. Aga ma loodan, et minu nagu hääldus, hääletus üksi sõnadega on noh okei. Nagu eestlane. Jah.

Kas sa tahad ka enda aktsendist kunagi või noh kas sa tahad kunagi kõlada nagu emakeelne kõneleja?

Jaa, sest näiteks minu ema, ta räägib, ta oskab kolm keelt ja mina ainult – enne siia tulemist siis – ma oskasin ainult üks. Ja siis ma alati tahtsin vähemalt nagu kahekeelne olla. Siis oli jaa.

Siin on minu nagu võimalus, siis ma tahaks väga, et ma kõlan nagu, et ma räägin nagu puhas eesti keelt. Jaa. Jah.

[...]

Participant 4: Romanian (4:43–5:40; 8:18–9:00)

[...]

Kas on ka näiteks mingid spetsiifilised eesti keele väljendid, mida sa kasutad kuidagi veidralt või teistmoodi?

Eks mul see aktsent tuleb välja küll mõnede sõnadega või kui ma liiga kaua räägin, siis tulevad vead sisse ja siis nad saavad aru, et ma tegelikult päris eestlane ei ole.

Mhm. Okei. Mhm. Ja kui palju sa seda aktsendi poolt just algusest mäletad? Et kas võib-olla näiteks sulle otsa vaadates eeldati, et sa oled eestlane ja siis, kui nad kuulsid sind kõnelemas aktsendiga, siis et siis kuidagi see suhtumine muutus?

No selles suhtes, et koolis nad kõik teadsid, et ma ei ole eestlane, nii et seal eriti ei saanud. Et noh jah, nad juba teadsid. Ja väljaspool kooli mul väga palju tegevust ei olnud. Nii et ei saa, ma ei oska midagi öelda selle kohta.

[...]

Ja noh praegu ma ise ei kuule, et sul oleks mingi aktsent, kui sa kõneled, aga kas sa ise arvad veel, et sul on veel mingisugune aktsent jäänud?

No mõnede sõnadega ja siis kui ma väga palju räägin nagu pikalt, siis arvatavasti see tuleb mingisugune aktsent sinna sisse. Lihtsalt väsitab ära, sellepärast. Nii.

Ja kas on ka mingisugune soov kunagi täiesti perfektselt siis kõneleda, nii et sa ei väsi ära? Soov, no võib-olla jah, aga kas see on nagu tehtav? Ma ei ole kindel, kuna see ei ole nagu minu emakeel. Ma ei tea, kas, kui, kas seda saab teha üldse.

[...]

Participant 5: Indonesian (11:55–14:51)

[...]

Mis sa ise arvad, kas sul on kõneledes aktsent?

Aktsent. Võib-olla on!

Mhm.

Võib-olla on, aga mina ei noh ei tea nagu kui ma räägin inglise keeles ka mina ei tea, kas mul on nagu väga suur aktsent või ei ole, sest me ise ei kuulan, kuidas tegelikult on aktsent.

Mhm.

Aga mina ei tea. Ei tea tegelikult. Aga kui inimesed saavad aru, siis juba hästi.

Nii et kas teised inimesed on sulle öelnud, et sul on aktsent?

Teised inimesed. Kui ma mäletan hästi, ei ole, ei ole palju inimesed räägivad mind, et mul on väga thick, väga suur aktsent. On, aga ei ole nii suur, et nad saavad aru, mida ma rääkisin.

Kas sul endal on ka mingisugune soov kõneleda keelt nii hästi, et sa kohalikega sisse sulanduksid?

Ma ei saa aru.

Et ma saan aru, et sa tahad eesti keelt edasi õppida veel?

Mhm.

Kas sa tahad jõuda nii kõrge tasemeni, et inimestele tundub nagu sa oleksidki eestlane?

Aa. Oh, nii raske. Ei, ma tegelikult mina tahan õppida veel, sest ma tahan nagu aru saada rohkem, kuidas see keel näiteks no, kuidas see rääkida hästi, kuidas kirjutada hästi, nagu grammatika jaoks. Sest näiteks minu emakeelt, indoneesia keelt, ei ole palju inimesed teavad, kuidas kasutada õige, kirjutada õigesti, rääkida. Sest me, näiteks indoneesia keelt, meil on kaks vormid indoneesia keelt. On – kuidas eesti keel – nagu formal ja informal.

Mhm.

Igapäevane keelt ja siis formal keel. Aga kui, kui on küsimus formal, see vormid, inimesed ei tea, kuidas teha, ja mina, mina tahan teada. Ma tahan saan aru rohkem eesti keelt. Nagu kuidas see grammatika. Sellepärast ma ütlesin tegelikult, kui ma räägin eesti keelt, ma mõtlen, millal ma kasutan “keda” ja “mida” ja “mis”, millal see kasutada.

[...]

Participant 6: Spanish (5:22–5:52 ; 10:34–11:16)

[...]

Kas sul oli ka mingisugune aktsent, kui sa alguses siia tulid?

Ma arvan, et jah nagu mul on raske öelda. Ma ei tea, ma ei kuule seda, aga ma mäletan, noh kui ma hakkasin nagu seal, selles töös, kus ma töötan – siis ma hakkasin seal töötama viis

aastat tagasi – , kunagi mulle mainiti küll, et aa, et nad kuulsid, et mingit aktsenti, aga nad arvasid, et äkki ma olen, ma ei tea, venelane või midagi sellist. Aga jah, jaa, et, nii et võib-olla jah mul on. Ma lihtsalt ise nagu tunne ära.

[...]

Kas on ka mingi soov täiesti kohalike kõnelejatega sisse sulanduda?

Jah, ma arvan, et jah, sest alati on see, et ma, nagu ma ise, see on nagu minu tunne, et lihtsalt ma, ma kuidagi tahaksin nagu paremini rääkida ja ennast paremini nagu välja seletada ja et nagu jah, sest ma tihti pean nagu asju hästi palju mõtlema, et nagu, kuidas ma seda ütlen või kui mul ei tule meelde mingi sõna või kuidas midagi kääntata, siis ma pean ümber nagu mõtlema, et see on nagu siis nagu natuke raske mu jaoks. Et see, kui ma oskaks paremini, siis see tuleks niimoodi paremini välja. Jah.

[...]

Participant 7: French (7:16–8:15; 9:41–10:17)

[...]

Kas sa oled ka tajunud eesti keelt kõneledes, et kuidagi negatiivselt suhtutakse sinusse, kui siis siin emakeelsed kõnelejad kuulevad, et sul on aktsent?

Mhm. Mul ei olnud nii sellised asjad. Alati, kui ma, kui ma rääkisin, räägin kellega uus, nad ütlevad, et aa, aga kus sa oled pärit. Prantsusmaalt. Aga sa räägid nii hästi eesti keelt ja sul pole aktsendid ja no kuidas. No siis no, kuidagi õppisin, aga mul ei olnud mingisugused probleemid selle aktsendiga või et ma räägin teistmoodi. No, muidugi ma räägin teistmoodi. Ma ei ole nagu emakeelne kõneleja. Aga mkm. Jah.

[...]

Ja kuidas sa ise praegu tajud, et aktsenti, kas see häirib sind, kas on soov sellest vabaneda kunagi?

Aktsendiga?

Jah.

Mul üldse, ma, kui ma võin midagi öelda ja inimesed saavad mind aru, siis see on okei ja see sobib mulle. Mul üldse ei olnud selle mõtte, et mul on aktsent ja ma hirmu, mul on selle, mul on probleem sellega, selle aktsendiga. Mkm.

Mhm.

Nojah, see ei tähenda mitte midagi minu jaoks.

[...]

Participant 8: Italian (12:40–14:45)

[...]

Rääkides siis veel sellest kogemusest, et kuidas sa ise hindad, kas sul on aktsent, kui sa kõneled eesti keelt?

Mul on võib-olla jah aktsent. Võib-olla see ei ole nii, ma ei tea, kas see on itaalia aktsent, aga mõni inimene ütles, et mul on natuke soome nagu soome moodi või aktsent. Ma ei tea, miks või millest. Võib-olla sellistes konsonantides eesti keeles, mis on nagu raskemad ja noh ma olen harjunud soome keelega. Et aga jah. Mul on kindlasti aktsent. See on raske, raske öelda, jah.

Ja see sind ennast väga ei mõjuta nagu ma olen aru saanud.

Mhm.

Või on sul endal probleem sellega, et sa kõneled aktsendiga?

Ei ole probleem.

Mhm. Aga kas sa sooviksid siis eesti keelt edasi õppides, et see aktsent kaoks ära mingil hetkel? On see see, mida sa nagu kuhu sa lõpuks tahad välja jõuda?

Võib-olla et ma kogu aeg üritan nagu paremini lausuma. Eesti keelt lausuma? Aga siis, kas see on minu eesmärk? Jah, võib-olla jah, et natukene nagu ei kaoks ära, vaid tuleks paremaks natuke. Et oleks selgem. Aga ei, minu meelest ei ole nii tähtis. Jah. Jah. Et kui mul on aktsent. Nii. Ükskõik. Võib jääda niimoodi. Lõpuni.

[...]

Participant 9: American English (4:26–5:28; 7:27–9:30)

[...]

Kas sul on olnud eesti inimesega rääkides ka mõni halb kogemus või hea kogemus?

Kui oli hea kogemus, aga enne oli nagu, kui rääkisin eesti keeles ja nad kuulasid mu aktsent või et ma ei oska hästi, nad, läks, läksin üle inglise keeles, inglise keelele. Aga praegu enam mitte nii palju.

Mhm.

[...]

Ja sa ütlesid enne aktsendi kohta, et kas, kuidas sa ise tunned, kas sa tahaksid kõneleda ilma aktsendita? Kas sa...

Üks kord veel palun.

Jaa. Sul on rääkides aktsent. Kas sa tahaksid, et sul pigem ei oleks seda, kui sa eesti keelt veel edasi õpid?

Ma arvan, et nii. Räägin, ma juba räägin nii, niimoodi, et eestlased saavad minust aru.

Mhm.

Seega ma ei arva, et seega aktsent oleks kõige olulisem.

Mhm.

No. Õppimises. Ma arvan, et sõnad ja – kuidas öelda, ma ei tea seda sõna – kiiresti rääkimine oleks olulisem.

Mhm. Kas keegi on ka midagi halvasti öelnud sinu aktsendi kohta?

Aktsendi kohta? Ei, ei.

Mhm, ei ole.

[...]

Participant 10: Russian (9:35–11:18; 14:26–15:57)

[...]

Nii et kas sul siis alguse poole, kas sa ise tajusid, et sul oli kõneledes mingisugune aktsent juures või kas inimesed näiteks seda kuuldes üritasid mõnele muule keelele üle minna?

Seda ei olnud võib-olla. Võib-olla see on, ma, ainuke sarnane probleem on selles, et ma mõnikord pean, näiteks, kui ma pöoran inimestele kaubanduskeskuses või poes, kui ma ütlen midagi, et siis ma mõtlen ette mingi lause, siis ma seda ütlen ja inimesed esimesest korrast sellest ei saa aru. Ma pean seda kordama.

Mhm.

Et ma saan aru, et võib-olla minul võib-olla, mõnes mõttes minu eesti keele prosoodia ei ole tavapärane, aga aktsendi poolest olen ainult kuulnud sõnu, et mul on öelnud, et mul ei ole seda

tüüpilist vene aktsenti ega ükskord ka mainiti, et mul, nagu, et ma kõlan enam-vähem nagu emakeele kasutaja.

Mhm.

Et selles, selles mõttes aktsendi poolest jaa võib-olla mul ei ole seal sellist tunnet, et kas on väga – ei tea –, et nõuab palju, et inimesed peaksid seda uuesti kuulama, vaid see on harjutamatu, et see on või see on väga haruldane. Et selles mõttes jah. Ainuke probleem on võib-olla see prosoodia.

[...]

Mhm, nii et kas on siis ka soov täiesti emakeelsete kõnelejatega sisse sulanduda kunagi? Ma arva, et ma täiesti ei saaks sulanduda.

Mhm.

Et võib-olla mõnes mõttes näiteks mõned sõnad, mis on nii palju sõnu, et ma ei õpiks kunagi oma elus, elu jooksul. No ei tea, näiteks mingid väljendid nagu “siuh-viuh” ja sellised sõnakesed. Et seda peab eraldi õppima või näiteks mingid tavalised asjad kodus. Et ma ei tea kõike, mis on kodus, kõik objektid. Et selles mõttes, ma saan aru, et see ei ole väga realistlik, et ma teaksin kogu sõnavara, mis tuleks. Et ma oleksin võrdsel tasemel eesti keele emakeelena kõnelejaga. Aga mõnes mõttes see, mis need asjad, mis on seotud näiteks teiste inimeste suhtlemisega. Et kui ma pean näiteks ühiskonnaga suhtlema või kui ma olen, ma olen kodust väljas, mingis asutuses, et selles mõttes, võib-olla mitte sulanduma vaid olla näiteks, osata, osata olla näiteks vastama või tegelema igas olukorras.

Nii et selline üleüldine hakkama saamine.

Jah, jaa just jah.

[...]

Participant 11: German (8:05–8:54; 12:01–12:51; 13:43–14:49)

[...]

Nüüd sul on juba päris suur keelekogemus, aga alguses, kas sul oli kõneledes ka mingisugune aktsent ja kuidas inimesed seda vastu võtsid?

Ikka oli mingi aktsent, aga see oli suhtelt väike, sest noh saksa keeles esinevad häälikud on peaaegu samad nagu eesti keeles. Ehk siis noh selle “uuga” pidin natukene võitlema ja siis vahel, kui ma ei ei keskendu, siis “esist” saab “sõhh”, sest noh see on saksa keeles levinum. Aga mulle meeldib mõelda, et ma räägin enam-vähem puhtalt.

Mhm.

Aga jah, vastuvõtt oli väga soe. Et seda hinnatakse ikka väga, väga palju siin Eestis, kui keegi viitsib õppida eesti keelt.

[...]

Ja ma ei tea, kas sul on ka mingisugune soov veel enda eesti keelt edasi arendada üldiselt? Pigem, kõigepealt tahan seda hoida heal tasemel. See tähendab, et ma pean igapäevaselt aktiivselt võimalusi otsima.

Mhm.

Sest niisama neid ei ole mu elus. Aga just täna tegelikult mõtlesin, et võib-olla tuleks nüüd rohkem ilukirjandust eesti keeles lugeda, et oma sõnavara natukene laiendada. Et kipun kogu aeg samu sõnu kasutama ja siis mul on, noh ma arvan, et igal inimesel on niimoodi, aga ma leian, et nagu võiks, võiks natuke noh värvikamalt ennast väljendada ja selleks on vaja lugeda.

[...]

Ja kuidas sa praegu tunned, et kas sa kõneled eesti keelt hästi?
Ma olen täitsa rahul oma keeletasemega.

Et kas on ka soov täiesti sisse sulanduda eestikeelsete või noh eesti keelt emakeelena kõnelejatega või sa juba sulandudki sisse?
Mida see tähendab? Konkreetsemalt.

Et igapäevases suhtluses, kas inimesed saavad aru, et kas sa oled pärit kusagilt mujalt? Või...
Vahel mitte. Et kui see on uus inimene, keda ma ei tea, kes mind ei tea, siis mõnel läheb aega, et aru saada, et nagu alles siis, kui vestluse käigus selgub, et "Aa, aga miks sa Saksamaal elaisid?", "Et aa jaa, ma sündisin seal", et nagu siis, siis tuleb välja tavaliselt.

Mhm.

Jah.

Nii et läheb hästi.

Jah.

Sulandud sisse.

Et okei, selge. Et jah, et selle definitsiooni järgi jah, ma juba sulandusin sisse, et.

[...]

Participant 12: Portuguese (5:48–7:05; 15:57–16:49)

[...]

Kuidas need inimesed suhtuvad sinusse, kellega sa kõneled eesti keeles?

Ma arvan, et inimesed meeldib seda, et ma olen portugallane ja ma räägin. Aga sest ma olen autojuht, kui ma jõuan mingi klient ja siis ma hakkas räägin eesti keelt ja minu aktsent ei ole päris hea, siis kliendid arvab palju kordi, et ma olen vene mees.

Mhm.

Ja siis proovi räägib mulle vene keel. Siis ma ütlen, ütlesin “ei, ma ei räägi vene keelt”. Siis kui ma, siis kui ma ütlesin, et ma olen Portugalist, siis inimesed on väga “ah, ahah, oh väga hea sa räägid”. Aga jah aga, ma arvan, et inimesed arvab, et kui ma olen portugallane ja ma räägin, siis see on “oo päris hea”, aga ma arvan, et minu eesti keelt ei ole väga hea.

[...]

Kas sa tahad eesti keelt edasi õppida? Kas sul on soov seda ükskord väga hästi osata?

Jaa, ma tahan õppida veel muidugi. Aga jah, ma õpin, ma õpin, ma proovin iga päev. Ma mõtlen, et ma ei ole, mina ei ole väga hea ja võib-olla kümme aastat veel, kümme aastat veel ja siis räägin natukene paremaks, aga perfektne ma arvan, et ei, ei oleks.

Mhm.

Et, aga see on minu viga. Ei, ei ole eesti keelt viga.

Ei ole midagi.

Mhm.

Eesti keelt ongi raske õppida kindlasti.

Jah.

[...]

Participant 13: Chinese (6:30–7:21; 11:22–13:00)

[...]

Mhm. Aga nüüd see just see alguse poole, kas sa mäletad ka inimese sellist suhtumist sinusse? Võib-olla kui sa kõnelesid näiteks aktsendiga. Kas sa ise üldse tajusid, et sul oli aktsent?

Jaa, muidugi ma tean, et mul on aktsent. Isegi praegu on aktsent. Sest see, seda ma tean ja teised inimesed vist ei pidanud seda väga oluliseks. Eks mul on aktsent, aga nad saavad ju

minust aru nagu ma arvan, et nad peavad seda kõige olulisemaks, et aru saamiseks, et mitte aktsent või hääldamiseks, isegi, isegi kui grammatika pole, pole nende jaoks väga oluline. Et jaa, tol ajal küll on B1, aga aga see on selline tase, mida ma arvan, et on just piisav nagu suhtlemiseks ja siis see on teiste jaoks ka päris okei.

Mhm.

[...]

Kas on ka soov nüüd edaspidi eesti keelt veel arendada? Arendada enda eesti keele oskust? Muidugi. Et kuigi ma olen, tegin juba C1 eksami ära, aga see punkt ei ole nii kõrge, see on nii-öelda umbes üle kuuekümne nagu nagu punkti, mis peaaegu sain selle kätte. Aga ma tahaksin kindlasti uuesti C1 taseme osaleda ja minu punkti nagu parandada. See on, see on praegune minu no nii-öelda minu motivatsioon siin edasi eesti keelt õppida. Ka seda, et ma tahaksin veel paremini minu kursusekaaslastest või või või õppejõududest nagu loengul sellist aru saada. Ja siis kindlasti mul on vaja eesti keelt parandada.

Mhm. Kas on ka soov aktsendist täiesti vabaneda kunagi?

Jaa, ühel küljel see on väga hea asi, et ma võtan teadlikult ka, sel semestril hääldusõpetust ja sellepärast, et tahaksin parandada oma aktsenti, aga teisel küljel ma arvan, et aktsent on nii-öelda ka ühe minu identiteet. Kuna ma olen pärit Hiinast ja siis ma arvan, et hiina aktsent, ma tahaksin las inimesed teada, et ma olen pärit teisest kultuuriruumist aktsendi kaudu. Sellepärast, et jah, ma parandan, aga mõnel, mõnel hetkel ma, mulle tundub, et ei ole vaja nagu täiesti puhtas eesti keelt rääkida. Ma arvan, et hetkel on päris okei. Jah.

Mhm.

[...]

Participant 14: Finnish (4:35–6:29)

[...]

Mhm. Ja mida sa oled tajunud, kui sa kõneled eesti keelt? Kuidas teised eestlased sellele reageerivad? Kas nad on kuidagi, teevad nalja sinu üle või reageerivad positiivselt? Enamasti on, on reageerinud positiivselt. Et mõned küsivad, et kui kaua sa oled siin elanud, ja näiteks paar aastat tagasi ütlesid, et ainult üks-kaks aasta, et “oo, nii räägid nii hästi ja nii kiiresti oled õppinud”.

Kas sa ütlesid neile ka, et sa oled Soomest pärit või mida nad selle peale vastasid?

Nojah ja mul on see, kui ma räägin eesti keelt, siis inimesed kuulevad, et et ma ei ole päris eestlane. Ja mõned arvavad, et ma olen Soomest. Et on see tuttav dialekt.

Mhm. Kuidas sa ise enda aktsenti tajud? Et kas see häirib sind?
Mis? Vabandust.

Et jah. Kui sa kõneled, siis sul on kõneledes aktsent.
Jah, aktsent jah.

Et kas see sind ennast ka häirib?
Ei häiri. Et mul on, ma tahan rääkida õigesti ja ja, heas, et olen arusaadav.

Mhm.
Ma ise saa kuulata nii palju, et.

Mhm. Kas on ka soov kunagi täielikult aktsendist vabaneda?
See on hea küsimus. Ma arvan, et see ei ole võimalik. Sada protsendiliselt vabaneda.

[...]

Participant 15: Turkish (5:45–6:35)

[...]

Kas on ka öeldud, et sul on mingisugune aktsent kõneledes? On seda mainitud?
Inimesed arvavad, et ma, mul on hea aktsent. Ma ei tea. Kas sa oled nõuga?

Aga mis sa ise arvad, kas sul on aktsent?
Jaa, absoluutselt. Mul on aktsent.

Ja kas sa soovid näiteks vabaneda kunagi sellest aktsendist? Kas soovid kõneleda nagu kohalik?
Ei ole kohalik. Ma arvan, et mul on välismaalane aktsent.

Mhm. Aga kas sa tahaksid olla nagu kohalik siin?
Jah, noh jah.

[...]

Participant 16: Malayalam (6:25—7:21)

[...]

Okay. Do you think you have an accent when you speak in Estonian language?

Ei ole täpselt, aga minu mõned eesti, eesti sõbrad ütles minu, kui ma räägin eesti keel, ei ole nii probleem, aga Eestis on mõned tähed, see on natukene raske meile.

Do you care like about accents in general? Do you care about Estonian accent or...?

Jaa, ma proov, tavaliselt ma proovin rääkida nagu kõik eestlased. Ja mul on poeg, kes käib Eesti koolis selle eest, ma, ta õpetab mulle ka.

Okay. Would you like to sound more like a native speaker?

Jaa, see on ka hea.

[...]

Appendix 2

1. Strategy and planning for conducting semi-structured interviews

- Making interviewee comfortable
- Basic Questions
 - How do you identify yourself?
 - Where are you from?
 - How many languages do you speak?
 - What do you think your level is in Estonian?
 - Your age
 - Educational background
 - What do you do in Estonia? Work or studies?
 - How long they have live in Estonia
 - Just arrived
 - Less than 2 years
 - Less than 5 years
 - More than 5 years
 - Do you like Estonian food? What about 'Kohuke' or 'Verivorst'?
 - Their learning journey
 - Pros - Positive things
 - Cons - Negative things
 - Do Estonian speakers dial down while speaking to you? I mean do they speak slowly or accommodate their speech to your level?
 - How keen are Estonians to speak with someone who is learning it as a second language? How was your experience?
 - Do you think you have an accent? Do you care about it?
 - Has anyone (an Estonian speaker) commented on your accent? Can you describe it?
 - Do you want to sound more like a native speaker?
 - How do Estonians feel when they see you are learning the Estonian language? Do they have a positive attitude or a negative attitude?

- Lastly, do you feel confident speaking in Estonian?
- Their motivation for learning the Estonian language?
 - Interest
 - Settling and integration
 - Spouse
 - Anything else...
 - Do you use what you learned from the book in your daily life?

Reading text - Please read the following sentences

- Kas tõesti on kell juba nii palju? Ma pean küll nüüd kiiresti koju minema.
- Minu nimi on Annika ja tema on Anneli.
- Isa Ants saatis Saarale kaks klaasi ja vaasi.
- Vanaema kasvatab maal kartuleid.
- Ma ei saa aru, kas Kadi on Kati ema?
- Saaremaa on kaardil vasakul.
- Haapsalu, Rapla ja Tapa on Eesti linnad.
- Vanaisa Aadi andis Kaarlile sada kala.
- Maasikad ja vaarikad on magusad marjad.
- Magamistoas on papa ja mamma padjad.
- Karla, pane matemaatika raamat lauale.
- Paks hall kass magas voodis.
- Ma armastan oma maad, kas sina ka?

Summary

Two studies were carried out as part of the Master's thesis entitled “Native speakers’ attitudes towards foreign-accented Estonian speech”. The first study investigated the attitudes of native speakers towards the accent of speakers of Estonian as a foreign language (L2), and the second focused on the attitudes of Estonian L2 speakers towards their own accent and attitudes that they have come across when communicating with Estonian native speakers.

The first chapter of the thesis defines the main concepts used in the work (attitude, language attitude, accent) and provides an overview of previous research.

Chapter two introduces the main study of the Master's thesis, the aim of which was to investigate the attitudes of Estonian native speakers towards foreign-accented Estonian speech. An online survey was conducted with speech stimuli, consisting of read sentences by both female and male speakers of 10 different languages (Finnish, Russian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Swedish, Danish, German, Spanish, French, Japanese) who speak Estonian as a foreign language (a total of 20 L2 Estonian speakers).

After listening to each speech stimulus, 54 native speakers of Estonian rated various statements on a 6-point scale regarding the following factors: intelligibility of speech, speaker’s proficiency, accent strength, accent acceptance, speaker’s intelligence, speaker’s friendliness and (hypothetical) comfort of communication with the speaker. The ratings show that attitudes towards different L2 Estonian accents vary. For example, L2 Estonian with the Finnish accent was rated as easiest to understand and less disturbing than other accents, and speakers with the Finnish accent were rated more positively on proficiency and Accent Strength scales. The next most positive ratings were given to L2 Estonian with Swedish,

French and Lithuanian accents, while L2 Estonian with the Latvian accent was rated as most difficult to understand and L2 Estonian with the Spanish accent the strongest. In terms of intelligence and friendliness of the speakers, as well as ease of communication, all stimuli were rated equally.

On the one hand, native speakers' judgments were influenced by their background, especially age and gender. Older participants rated speech stimuli on the whole more negatively and women generally rated the stimuli more positively than men. In addition, the ratings were influenced by the native speakers' education and the number of languages they knew and used on a daily basis. On the other hand, the background of L2 Estonian speakers also influenced the ratings. Speech stimuli of L2 Estonian speakers with a higher level of language proficiency were evaluated more positively, and stimuli by female speakers were evaluated slightly more negatively.

Chapter three introduces a study that tried to map the attitudes of L2 Estonian speakers towards their accent in Estonian. The material was collected from 16 informants during semi-structured interviews, which were conducted in Estonian. Most of the participants thought that they have an accent when they speak Estonian. It can be concluded from the interviews that when communicating in Estonian, L2 Estonian speakers consider it on the whole more important to be understood than to aim to speak Estonian without an accent. At the same time, while some of the interviewees were motivated to speak Estonian like native Estonian speakers, others felt that the accent (caused by their native language) is part of their identity.

The interviews also show that most L2 Estonian speakers have encountered positive attitudes when communicating with native Estonian speakers, but there were also some negative experiences due to the speaker's language skills and pronunciation (e.g. bullying at school). The interviewees had different opinions about how comfortable they felt in communication with native speakers, varying from comfortable to very uncomfortable. Some mentioned that native speakers of Estonian often switch to another language when they hear a speaker with a foreign accent.

In summary, the results of the Master's thesis indicate that native speakers of Estonian recognise foreign-accented Estonian, but are generally tolerant to it and speakers of Estonian as a foreign language. The attitudes of L2 Estonian speakers regarding their own accent and their experiences of communicating with native Estonian speakers are predominantly positive.

Kokkuvõte

Magistritöö „Eesti emakeelega kõnelejate hoiakud võõraktsendiga eestikeelsesesse kõnesse“ raames viidi läbi kaks uurimust. Esimene neist uuris emakeelsete kõnelejate hoiakuid eesti keelt võõrkeelena rääkivate kõnelejate aktsendi suhtes ning teine keskendus eesti keelt võõrkeelena kõnelejate hoiakutele oma aktsendi suhtes ja sellele, milliste hoiakutega nad on kokku puutunud, suheldes eesti emakeelega kõnelejatega.

Magistritöö esimeses peatükis defineeritakse töös kasutatavad põhimõisted (hoiak, keelehoiak, aktsent) ja antakse ülevaade varasematest uurimustest.

Töö teises peatükis tutvustatakse magistritöö peamist uurimust, mille eesmärgiks oli uurida eesti emakeelega kõnelejate hoiakuid võõraktsendiga eestikeelsesesse kõnesse. Viidi läbi veebiküsitlus kõnestiimulitega, milleks kasutati loetud lauseid eesti keelt võõrkeelena kõnelevatelt 10 erineva emakeelega (soome, vene, läti, leedu, rootsi, taani, saksa, hispaania, prantsuse, jaapani) nais- ja meessoost kõnelejalt (kokku 20 eesti keelt võõrkeelena kõnelejat).

Viiskümmend neli eesti emakeelega kõnelejat hindasid pärast iga kõnestiimuli kuulamist 6-pallisel skaalal erinevaid väiteid, mis puudutasid järgmist: arusaadavus kõnest, kõneleja keeleoskus, aktsendi tugevus, aktsendi häirivus, kõneleja intelligentsus, kõneleja sõbralikkus ja (hüpoteetiline) mugavus kõnelejaga suhtlemisel. Hinnangutest selgub, et hoiakud erinevate aktsentide suhtes on erinevad. Näiteks, soome aktsenti hinnati paremini arusaadavaks ja vähem häirivaks ja soome aktsendiga kõnelejaid hinnati positiivsemalt keeleoskuse ja aktsendi tugevuse skaalal. Positiivsusest järgmised hinnangud anti rootsi, prantsuse ja leedu aktsendile, samas kui läti aktsenti hinnati kõige raskemini arusaadavaks ja hispaania oma kõige

tugevamaks. Kõnelejate intelligentsuse ja sõbralikkuse ning suhtlusmugavuse osas hinnati kõiki stiimuleid võrdväärselt.

Ühelt poolt mõjutas emakeelsete kõnelejate hinnanguid nende taust, eriti vanus ja sugu. Vanemad osalejad hindasid kõnestiimuleid negatiivsemalt ja naised üldiselt positiivsemalt. Lisaks mõjutas hinnanguid emakeelsete kõnelejate haridus ning keelte arv, mida nad oskasid ja mida nad igapäevaselt kasutasid. Teisalt mõjutas hinnanguid eesti keelt võõrkeelena kõnelevate inimeste taust. Kõnestiimuleid, mille kõnelejal oli kõrgem keeleoskuse tase, hinnati positiivsemalt ja stiimuleid, kus kõnelejaks olid naine, hinnati veidi negatiivsemalt.

Töö kolmandas peatükis tutvustatakse uurimust, mis püüdis kaardistada eesti keelt võõrkeelena rääkijate hoiakuid oma aktsenti suhtes. Materjal koguti kuueteistkümnelt keelejuhilt poolstruktureeritud intervjuude käigus, mis viidi läbi eesti keeles. Enamik osalejaid arvas, et neil on eesti keelt rääkides aktsent. Intervjuudest võib järeldada, et valdavalt on eesti keelt võõrkeelena rääkijatele tähtsam olla eesti keeles suheldes arusaadav kui püüda rääkida eesti keelt aktsendivabalt. Samas, kui mõned küsitletutest olid motiveeritud kõnelema eesti keelt nagu eesti emakeelega kõnelejad, siis tunnevad teised, et nende emakeelest põhjustatud aktsent osa nende identiteedist.

Intervjuudest selgub ka, et enamusel eesti keelt võõrkeelena kõnelejal on emakeelsete kõnelejatega suheldes olnud positiivsed kogemused, kuid leidis ka üksikuid kõneleja keeleoskusest ja hääldusest tingitud negatiivseid kogemusi (nt koolikiusamine). Intervjueeritavatel olid erinevad arvamused emakeelsete kõnelejatega suhtlemise kohta, varieerudes mugavast ebamugavani. Mõned mainisid, et eesti keelt emakeelena kõnelejad

lähevad tihti üle mõnele teisele keelele, kui kuulevad, et kõneleja räägib eesti keelt võõrkeelena.

Kokkuvõttes osutavad magistritöö tulemused, et eesti keelt emakeelena kõnelejad tunnevad aktsendiga eesti keele ära, kuid on üldiselt võõraktsendi ja eesti keelt võõrkeelena kõnelejate suhtes tolerantsed. Eesti keelt võõrkeelena kõnelejate hoiakud nende endi aktsendi osas ja kogemused emakeelsete kõnelejatega suhtlemise osas on valdavalt positiivsed.

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27/05/2024