

Language-Based Prejudice: Individual Differences, Contextual Influences, and the Impact on Non-Native Speakers' Well-Being

Chair: **Nigel Mantou Lou**, University of Alberta

Language discrimination is prevalent in society; non-native speakers often receive unfair treatment because of the way they talk (Lippi-Green, 1997). This interdisciplinary symposium brings together researchers from Social Psychology, Communication, and Applied Linguistics to examine the individual and contextual factors that influence the perceptions and experiences related to language-based prejudice, particularly accent prejudice. Specifically, the first paper by Dragojevic and Goatley-Soan on Americans' attitudes and categorization accuracy towards foreign accents demonstrates that not all foreign-accented speakers are equally denigrated. The authors also find that biases towards accented speakers are linked to national identification and belief in the standard language ideology. The second paper by Hansen and Birney highlights socio-cultural influences on the perceptions of non-native speakers. This cross-cultural investigation demonstrates that negative perceptions of non-native speakers are not universal; while in the UK non-native speakers are discriminated, in Poland they are perceived to be more competent and warm than native speakers. The third paper by Lou and Noels shows that language-based discrimination is partially rooted in language mindsets. Those who believe language ability is fixed are more likely to avoid contact with English language learners. At last, Montgomery and Zhang's paper shows that accent stigma and perceived ethnolinguistic pride moderated the effects of English competence and accentedness on communication anxiety among Latino non-native English speakers. Non-native speakers' communication anxiety in turn predicts their life satisfaction and sense of belonging to the country. Together, this symposium provides implications for intergroup communication and relations between non-native and native speakers in different societies.

Americans' Attitudes Toward Foreign Accents

Marko Dragojevic and **Sean Goatley-Soan**, University of Kentucky

This verbal-guise experiment examined Americans' attitudes toward Standard American English (SAE) and nine foreign accents commonly heard in the U.S. Participants (N = 267) listened to a male and female speaker of each variety. SAE speakers were attributed more status and solidarity, rated as easier to understand, and elicited more positive affect than foreign-accented (FA) speakers. However, not all FA speakers were equally denigrated, with some (e.g., German, French) consistently rated more favorably than others (e.g., Arab, Farsi). Categorization accuracy for FA speakers was generally poor (<50%), except for Hindi-, Mandarin-, and Vietnamese-accented speakers. Identification with America and belief in the standard language ideology were positively associated with FA speaker bias. Effects of categorization/stereotyping and listener fluency will be discussed.

Perceptions of non-native speakers in Poland and the UK: A cross-cultural investigation

Karolina Hansen, University of Warsaw, and **Megan Birney**, University of Chester at University Centre Shrewsbury

With globalization, linguistic diversity in many countries is increasing. Nevertheless, non-native speakers are evaluated less competent and hireable than native speakers. In two experiments, we investigate this phenomenon in Poland and the UK. In Poland, the non-native speaker was perceived more competent and warm than the native speaker, a difference explained by an appreciation of the speaker's effort to learn Polish (Experiment 1). In the UK, the non-native speaker was less hireable than the native speaker, but in Poland there was no advantage of speaking natively (Experiment 2). The speaker's perceived assimilation mediated hireability effects in the UK, but not in Poland. Negative perceptions of non-native speakers may not be universal and should be considered within the specific cultural context.

Language mindsets predict attitudes towards non-native English-speaking immigrants in Canada

Nigel Mantou Lou and **Kimberly Noels**, University of Alberta

Previous research demonstrated that migrants who held incremental mindsets (i.e., beliefs that language ability is changeable) were less anxious when using their second language than those who held entity mindsets (i.e., beliefs that language ability is fixed; Lou & Noels, 2017). This research investigates whether and how language mindsets influence Anglo-Canadians' attitudes towards non-native English-speaking immigrants. Study 1 showed that entity (vs. incremental) language mindsets predicted contact avoidance towards immigrants. Study 2 demonstrated that those who were primed with entity (vs. incremental) mindsets were less likely to believe that immigrants could improve their language competence and therefore showed more avoidant tendencies towards them. This research suggests that language-based prejudice towards immigrants is partially rooted in a fixed mindset about language.

Psychological and Acculturative Wellbeing of Hispanic/Latinos in the U.S.: Analyzing the Effects of Linguistic Competence, Ethnolinguistic Pride, and Stigma

Gretchen Montgomery and **Yan Bing Zhang**, University of Kansas

Communication research asserts the role of language competence in the acculturation process (Imamura, Zhang, & Shim, 2012; McKay-Semmler & Kim, 2014), but language attitudes research demonstrates the stigmatized nature of speaking English with a nonnative accent (Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010). Guided by ethnolinguistic identity theory (Giles & Johnson, 1987) and stigma

management communication (Meisenbach, 2010), the study examines the relationship between Hispanic/Latino nonnative English speakers' perceptions of their accentedness and English linguistic competence, and whether perceived ethnolinguistic pride and accent stigma are significant moderators of this relationship. Second, the study also tests the direct and indirect effects of nonnative English speakers' linguistic competence and accentedness on their life satisfaction and sense of belonging in the U.S. through intergroup communication anxiety.