Seeing a foreign accent: Accentedness perception in Asian and Caucasian Non-Native English Speakers

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Reverse-linguistic stereotyping and negative bias:

- American-accented speech + Asian face = rated more accented (Rubin, 1992)

- Foreign-accented speech + Asian face = rated more accented than without visual information (Yi et al., 2013)
Ethnicity and intelligibility

**Experience** (McGowan, 2015):

- Accented speech + Asian face more intelligible than + Caucasian face or silhouette
- Asian listeners – more intelligible.
- No interaction, but trend for silhouette to be more intelligible for more experienced listeners
Experience (Gnevsheva, accepted):
- Korean L1: audiovisual = audio = video
- German L1: audiovisual > audio > video
Research Questions

1. Will Asian listeners behave differently from Caucasian listeners in an accentedness rating task?
   - Korean L1 speakers
   - German L1 speakers

2. Will Korean and non-Korean Asian listeners behave similarly in response to Korean-accented speech?
Model predictions

**German L1 Speakers**

- More accented
- Less accented

**Korean L1 Speakers**

- More accented
- Less accented

**Reverse linguistic stereotyping**

**Experience-based model**

**Listeners:**
- Korean Asian
- non-Korean Asian
24 speakers

- 9 L1 Korean, 9 L1 German, 6 L1 English (NZE, SBE, SAE)
- 6 higher proficiency in each L2 group
- 12 Females
- Age: 21-34, average 25
- Students or recent graduates
Korean L1 speaker

German L1 speaker
Stimuli:

- interview about major on campus
- a lapel Opus 55.18 MKII beyerdynamic microphone, an H4n Zoom audio-recorder and a Sony video-recorder
- minimum of 30 words
- mean length = 15 sec.; range = 8-22
- E-prime
91 listeners:

- 45 non-Korean Asian-descent listeners
- 46 Korean Asian-descent listeners
- 39 female; 52 male
- mean age = 24.4
Procedure:

- 3 conditions: audio only, video only, audiovisual
- speakers presented in random order
- 1-7 accentedness scale ("No foreign accent at all" and "Very strong foreign accent")
- 30 minutes
Mixed-effects model in R (R core team, 2014)

- **DV:** rating
- **IDV:** ListenerEthnicity*SpeakerL1*Condition, Progression(1~24)
- **Random effects:** Condition/Speaker, Listener
- **Other social factors** were also tested, like age, gender, social networks, etc. They were not significant.
Result

Listeners:  

Caucasian

non-Korean Asian

Korean Asian

More accented

Less accented

rating

German  Korean

audiovisual

audio

video

Speaker L1
Model predictions

Reverse linguistic stereotyping

Experience-based model

Korean L1 Speakers

More accented

Less accented

Listeners: Korean Asian  non-Korean Asian

More accented

Less accented
Result, Cont.

Listeners: Caucasian

More accented

Less accented

German

Korean

Listeners: non-Korean Asian

More accented

Less accented

German

Korean

Listeners: Korean Asian

More accented

Less accented

German

Korean

Contrary to RLS (Rubin, 1992)
Model predictions

**German L1 Speakers**

- More accented
- Less accented

**Reverse linguistic stereotyping**

**Experience-based model**
Result, Cont.

Listeners:
- Caucasian
- non-Korean Asian
- Korean Asian

### German
- More accented
- Less accented

Speaker L1

**Caucasian**
- Audiovisual
- Audio
- Video

**non-Korean Asian**
- Audiovisual
- Audio
- Video

**Korean Asian**
- Audiovisual
- Audio
- Video
Perception of Korean L1 speakers

- Korean-descent listeners showed experience effect in video only and audiovisual conditions, which is contrary to negative bias (Rubin, 1992).

Perception of German L1 speakers

- Expectation mismatch effect (Gnevsheva, accepted) — not found in Asian-descent listeners


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