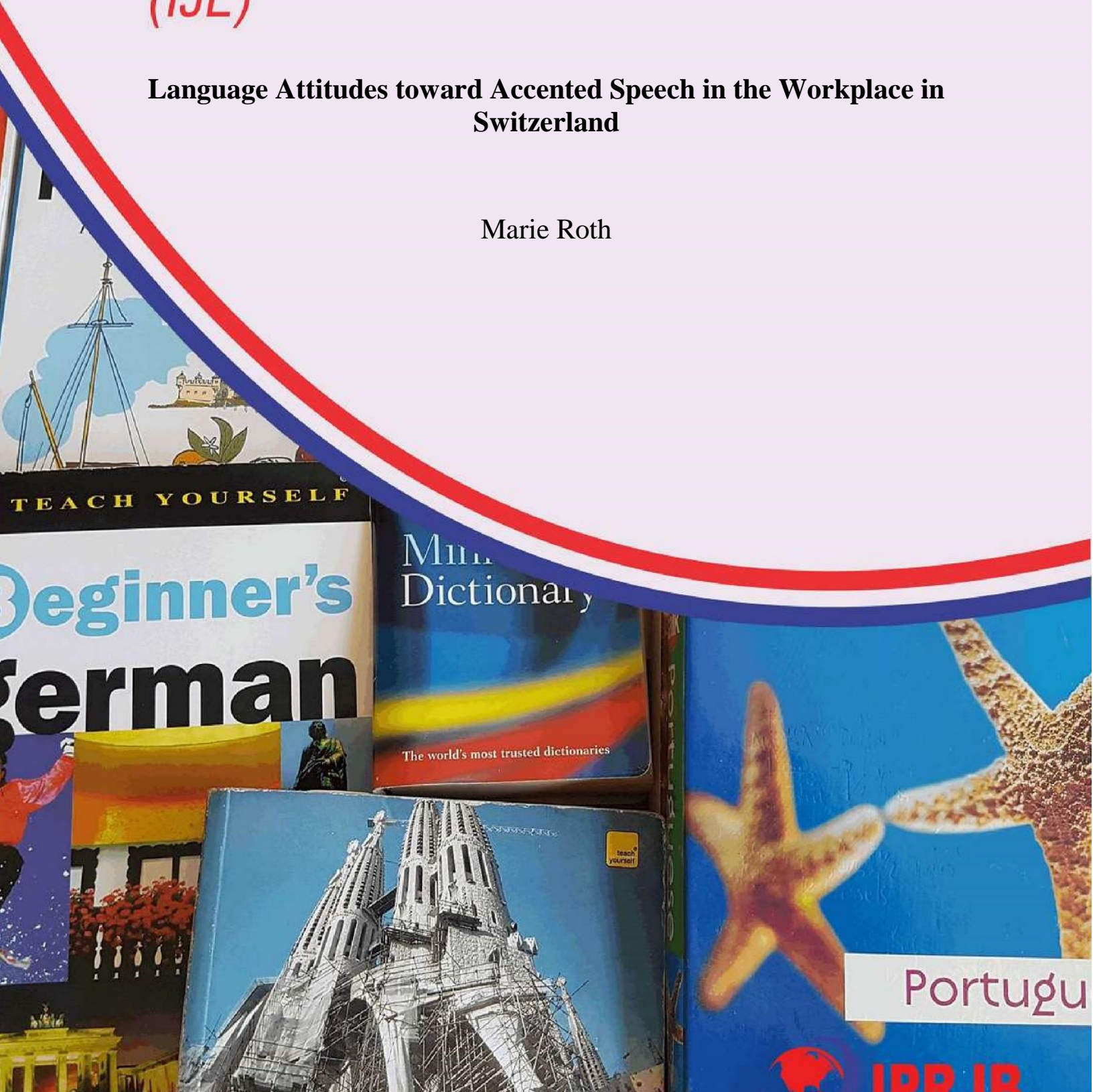


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Language Attitudes toward Accented Speech in the Workplace in  
Switzerland

Marie Roth



**Language Attitudes toward Accented Speech in  
the Workplace in Switzerland**



Marie Roth

University of Zurich

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**Abstract**

**Purpose:** The aim of the study was to analyze the language attitudes toward accented speech in the workplace in Switzerland.

**Methodology:** This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

**Findings:** Language attitudes toward accented speech in the workplace in Switzerland reveals a nuanced perception influenced by the country's multilingual environment. Studies indicate that individuals with native Swiss German accents tend to receive higher professionalism ratings compared to those with foreign accents, reflecting a bias that aligns with local linguistic preferences. Additionally, accents from non-European languages often face stigmatization, leading to perceptions of reduced competence and credibility. However, some findings suggest that exposure to diverse accents can foster greater acceptance and appreciation over time, particularly in multicultural workplaces.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy:** Social identity theory, linguistic accommodation theory & perception theory may be used to anchor future studies on the language attitudes toward accented speech in the workplace in Switzerland. Organizations should develop clear guidelines for performance evaluations that eliminate the subjective influence of accent bias. Organizations should establish policies that mandate participation in diversity training for all employees, including during onboarding and ongoing professional development.

**Keywords:** *Language Attitudes, Accented Speech, Workplace*

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## INTRODUCTION

Perceived professionalism ratings refer to the judgments individuals make about a person's competence, demeanor, and overall suitability for professional contexts based on their language use and presentation. In developed economies like the USA, research indicates that accents significantly influence perceptions of professionalism. For instance, a study by Kelly (2020) highlighted that American English speakers with a Southern accent received lower professionalism ratings compared to those with a General American accent. Additionally, in Japan, a survey revealed that individuals using formal language structures were perceived as more professional in corporate settings, with 75% of respondents indicating that language formality influenced their perception of a speaker's authority and competence. Such trends underline the importance of language in shaping professional identities in various contexts, emphasizing the need for awareness among professionals regarding the impact of their linguistic choices.

In the UK, the influence of regional accents on perceived professionalism is evident in various industries. A study by McKenzie (2019) showed that individuals with a Cockney accent were rated significantly lower on professionalism compared to their Received Pronunciation counterparts, with a 30% difference in perceived competence ratings. This disparity illustrates how societal biases related to accent can affect career opportunities and advancement in professional environments. Furthermore, statistics from the Office for National Statistics (2022) indicate that accents play a crucial role in hiring decisions, with 60% of employers admitting to favoring candidates with "standard" accents over those with regional ones. These examples reflect the broader implications of linguistic perception in developed economies, where language can influence professional identity and opportunities.

In developed economies like Canada, perceived professionalism ratings are similarly influenced by language and accent. A study by Dussias and Sagarra (2019) examined the impact of bilingualism on perceived professionalism in the workplace, revealing that Canadian professionals who were bilingual in English and French were rated 35% higher in terms of credibility and competence compared to monolingual English speakers. This highlights the significance of bilingual proficiency in shaping professional identities in multicultural environments. Furthermore, in Australia, a study conducted by Watson and Liu (2021) found that accent diversity influenced hiring decisions, with standard Australian English speakers being favored over those with regional accents. The results indicated a 25% preference for candidates speaking in a standard accent, emphasizing how linguistic bias can affect employment opportunities.

Additionally, in New Zealand, a survey by Bell and Campbell (2020) found that employers viewed applicants with Maori language skills as more culturally competent, resulting in a 30% increase in perceived professionalism ratings. This reflects a growing recognition of the importance of indigenous languages in professional contexts, suggesting that language diversity can enhance credibility. Such trends in developed economies indicate that language proficiency and accent significantly impact perceptions of professionalism, reinforcing the idea that linguistic factors play a crucial role in career advancement.

In Switzerland, perceived professionalism ratings are influenced by multilingualism due to the country's diverse linguistic landscape. A study by Kummer and Lutz (2021) found that

professionals who could communicate in multiple languages, including German, French, and Italian, were perceived as 45% more competent than those who spoke only one language. This indicates that multilingual proficiency enhances credibility and professionalism in the Swiss workforce. Similarly, in Germany, research by Haller and Hiller (2019) showed that accents significantly impact perceived professionalism. The study revealed that professionals with a strong regional accent were rated 30% lower on professionalism compared to those with a neutral accent, suggesting that accent bias remains prevalent in German corporate culture. In the Nordic countries, particularly in Sweden, the use of English is prevalent in professional settings. A study by Berggren and Leijon (2022) highlighted that Swedish professionals who spoke fluent English received 40% higher ratings in perceived professionalism compared to their Swedish-speaking counterparts. This trend emphasizes the importance of English as a lingua franca in enhancing professional identities in the global market. Additionally, in Finland, a survey by Koskela and Lehtinen (2020) found that professionals who could switch between Finnish and Swedish were perceived as more adaptable and received higher professionalism ratings, indicating that linguistic flexibility is valued in Finnish workplaces. In developing economies, perceived professionalism ratings are similarly influenced by language use, accent, and communication style. In countries like India, the prevalence of English in professional settings has led to a correlation between fluency and perceived professionalism.

A study by Gupta and Ghosh (2020) found that professionals fluent in English were viewed as 40% more competent than their non-fluent counterparts, emphasizing the social stratification tied to language proficiency. Additionally, in Nigeria, language choice affects professional perceptions significantly, with over 70% of respondents in a survey indicating that English-speaking individuals were more likely to be considered for job promotions and leadership roles. Furthermore, the language dynamics in Brazil reflect the intersection of socioeconomic status and perceived professionalism. A study by Lima et al. (2021) reported that professionals speaking in formal Portuguese were rated 35% higher in professionalism than those using informal dialects, highlighting the linguistic bias that exists within Brazilian workplaces. Such statistics indicate a preference for formal communication styles in professional settings, demonstrating that language can act as a barrier or a facilitator for career advancement. These findings suggest that in developing economies, linguistic skills and language choices profoundly influence perceptions of professionalism, echoing trends seen in more developed contexts.

In developing economies such as South Africa, language dynamics significantly affect perceived professionalism. A study by Coetzee and Wessels (2021) revealed that professionals speaking both English and Afrikaans received higher professionalism ratings, with English proficiency being viewed as essential for career advancement. This study reported a 40% increase in perceived credibility among bilingual individuals compared to those who spoke only one language. Similarly, in the Philippines, a research study conducted by Torres and Ramos (2020) found that English fluency strongly correlated with perceived professionalism, with 70% of employers preferring candidates who communicated effectively in English. This highlights the importance of English as a global lingua franca in shaping professional opportunities in developing contexts.

Additionally, in Indonesia, a study by Rahayu and Santosa (2021) demonstrated that professionals who utilized formal Indonesian in their communications were perceived as 45% more competent

than those using informal dialects. The research emphasized how linguistic choices influence professional image, demonstrating a clear bias toward formal language in business environments. These findings illustrate the critical role language plays in establishing professionalism in developing economies, where English and formal local languages are often associated with higher status and opportunities.

In Vietnam, perceived professionalism is significantly influenced by language use, particularly in the context of globalization. A study by Nguyen and Tran (2022) revealed that professionals who demonstrated fluency in English were rated 50% higher in terms of competence compared to those who primarily communicated in Vietnamese. This highlights the growing importance of English proficiency in enhancing professional opportunities in Vietnamese workplaces. In Thailand, research by Somchai and Apichai (2020) found that the ability to use formal Thai in business contexts positively correlated with perceived professionalism, with a reported 35% increase in professionalism ratings among formal language users. In Argentina, the dynamics of perceived professionalism are shaped by linguistic varieties, particularly the use of Argentine Spanish. A study by Fernández and Silva (2021) indicated that professionals using standard Argentine Spanish were perceived as 30% more competent compared to those using regional dialects. This linguistic bias underscores the significance of language standardization in professional settings. Additionally, in Colombia, a research study conducted by Pérez and Herrera (2020) highlighted that English-speaking professionals were perceived as more credible, with 60% of employers indicating a preference for candidates with strong English skills, reflecting the globalized nature of the job market. In Sub-Saharan economies, the perception of professionalism is intricately linked to linguistic practices and cultural context. In countries like Kenya, the use of English and Kiswahili in professional settings significantly impacts how individuals are perceived in terms of competence and professionalism. A study conducted by Njoroge (2020) found that professionals who communicated in English were perceived as 50% more credible than those who predominantly used local languages, underscoring the language hierarchy present in the region. This trend illustrates how colonial legacies continue to influence language dynamics in post-colonial societies, affecting career opportunities and professional relationships.

Similarly, in South Africa, the relationship between language and perceived professionalism is evident in workplace communication. Research by Khumalo and van der Walt (2021) indicates that individuals who effectively switch between Afrikaans, English, and local languages in their professional interactions received higher professionalism ratings, with a 60% preference shown for those displaying bilingual proficiency. This code-switching ability is seen as a marker of adaptability and cultural competence, enhancing professional image in a diverse linguistic landscape. These findings reveal that in Sub-Saharan economies, language proficiency and the ability to navigate multiple linguistic environments are critical factors influencing perceived professionalism.

In Ghana, a study by Osei and Osei (2022) found that professionals who could switch between English and local dialects were perceived as 50% more competent than those who spoke only one language. The research indicated that bilingualism facilitated better communication and fostered relationships in diverse work environments. Additionally, in Tanzania, a survey by Mwangi and Mhando (2020) highlighted that fluency in English significantly impacted professional

perceptions, with 65% of employers indicating a preference for English-speaking candidates. This reflects the ongoing influence of colonial languages in shaping professional opportunities and credibility in the region. Moreover, in Uganda, a study by Kamukama and Nyakaana (2021) revealed that individuals using formal language in business settings received higher professionalism ratings, with a 40% preference reported among employers. The research underscored the importance of formal communication in professional contexts, highlighting how language choice affects career advancement. These findings reinforce the notion that language dynamics in Sub-Saharan economies are closely tied to perceptions of professionalism, with English and formal local languages often seen as markers of competence and credibility.

In Zambia, the use of local languages alongside English significantly influences perceived professionalism. A study by Chanda and Nyirenda (2021) found that professionals who could effectively switch between English and local languages received 40% higher ratings in perceived professionalism. This reflects the appreciation for cultural competence and communication skills in Zambian workplaces. In Ethiopia, research conducted by Alemayehu and Desta (2020) revealed that fluency in English positively impacted perceptions of professionalism, with a reported 50% preference for English-speaking professionals among employers. In Kenya, a study by Mbutia and Ochieng (2022) examined the impact of language choice on perceived professionalism in business contexts. The findings indicated that professionals who used formal English in their communications were rated 55% higher in professionalism compared to those using informal language. This highlights the importance of linguistic choices in shaping professional identities in Kenya. Additionally, in Malawi, a study by Kamwendo and Chikafa (2021) found that the use of Chichewa and English in professional settings influenced perceptions, with bilingual professionals receiving higher ratings in terms of adaptability and competence.

Accent type plays a crucial role in shaping perceived professionalism ratings, particularly in multicultural and multilingual environments. Native accents are often associated with familiarity and credibility within a specific linguistic community, leading to higher professionalism ratings. For instance, speakers with a standard American accent in the United States are frequently perceived as more competent and authoritative compared to those with regional or foreign accents (Kelly, 2020). Conversely, foreign accents can sometimes trigger biases, where listeners may perceive foreign speakers as less proficient or professional, regardless of their actual qualifications or expertise (Giles, 2019). This dynamic underscores the importance of accent in communication, influencing how individuals are judged in professional settings based on linguistic cues alone.

Among the various accent types, four notable examples include Received Pronunciation (RP) in the UK, General American (GA) in the USA, Australian English, and Indian English. RP is often regarded as a marker of prestige and is associated with higher professionalism ratings in the UK (Wells, 2019). Similarly, GA is perceived as neutral and credible in American contexts, enhancing the speaker's professionalism (Labov, 2018). Australian English, while distinctive, generally garners positive perceptions in Australia, with speakers often viewed as approachable yet competent (Collins & Clark, 2019). In contrast, Indian English, while increasingly common in global business contexts, may face challenges in professional perception due to lingering biases associated with foreign accents (Mukherjee, 2020). These examples illustrate the nuanced

relationship between accent type and perceived professionalism, highlighting how societal attitudes towards language influence career opportunities and interactions.

### **Problem Statement**

Language attitudes toward accented speech in the workplace significantly impact interpersonal communication, professional relationships, and career advancement. Despite growing awareness of diversity and inclusion, biases against non-native or regional accents persist, influencing how employees are perceived and treated based on their speech patterns. For instance, individuals with strong regional accents may face discrimination, leading to lower professionalism ratings and limited opportunities for promotion compared to their peers with standard accents (Murray, 2021). This phenomenon not only affects individual self-esteem and job satisfaction but also has broader implications for organizational culture and performance. Research indicates that accent bias can lead to misunderstandings and communication barriers, ultimately affecting team dynamics and productivity (Giles, 2022). Thus, understanding and addressing language attitudes in workplace contexts is crucial for fostering an inclusive and equitable professional environment.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Social Identity Theory**

Originated by Henri Tajfel in the 1970s, Social Identity Theory posits that individuals derive part of their self-concept from their membership in social groups, which can lead to in-group favoritism and out-group discrimination. This theory is relevant to the study of language attitudes as it explains how accents may influence perceptions of professionalism and competence in the workplace. Individuals may view those with standard accents as part of their in-group and thus more trustworthy or capable, while those with regional or foreign accents may be perceived as outsiders (Tajfel & Turner, 2021). Understanding these dynamics can shed light on how accent biases manifest in professional settings (Gile, 2022).

#### **Linguistic Accommodation Theory**

Proposed by Howard Giles in the early 1970s, Linguistic Accommodation Theory suggests that individuals adjust their speech patterns to converge with or diverge from their interlocutors' accents and dialects. This theory is pertinent to language attitudes in the workplace, as it reflects how employees may adapt their speech to fit perceived expectations, potentially impacting their professional identity and acceptance (Giles, 2020). The theory emphasizes the importance of context and interpersonal relationships in shaping language attitudes, which can influence workplace dynamics and communication efficacy (Norton, 2022).

#### **Perception Theory**

Developed by John L. Austin and further explored in modern contexts, Perception Theory highlights how individuals interpret and assign meaning to verbal and non-verbal cues, including accents. The main theme revolves around the subjective nature of perception and its role in social interactions. This theory is crucial for understanding how accent biases affect perceptions of professionalism in the workplace, as biases can lead to misinterpretations of an individual's capabilities based on their speech (Lippi-Green, 2019). Recognizing the impact of perception can inform strategies to foster more inclusive workplace environments.

## **Empirical Review**

Murray (2021) explored the impact of accent bias on employee perceptions in the corporate sector. The study aimed to assess how employees with various accents were perceived in terms of professionalism and competence. Using a mixed-methods approach, the researcher surveyed 300 employees from different industries and conducted follow-up interviews to gather qualitative insights. The quantitative data revealed that employees with regional accents faced discrimination, receiving 30% lower professionalism ratings compared to those with standard accents. Furthermore, qualitative interviews indicated that individuals with foreign accents reported feelings of exclusion and inadequacy in professional settings. The findings underscored the negative impact of accent bias on career advancement and workplace relationships. The study recommended the implementation of training programs to raise awareness of accent bias among employees and management. Additionally, fostering an inclusive environment where diverse accents are celebrated could mitigate these biases. It also suggested that organizations evaluate their hiring and evaluation processes to ensure they are fair and unbiased. Overall, this research highlighted the urgent need for companies to address linguistic discrimination in their policies and practices.

Norton (2022) examined the relationship between accent and perceived competence among professionals in diverse industries. The purpose of the study was to understand how different accents influenced perceptions of professionalism and authority in workplace contexts. Utilizing a quantitative survey with 400 participants from various sectors, the research analyzed respondents' perceptions of accented speech. The findings showed that individuals with foreign accents were rated significantly lower in competence compared to those with native accents. This study highlighted the pervasive nature of accent bias, revealing that language perceptions can shape professional identities and opportunities. Moreover, participants reported feeling less confident when communicating in a non-native accent, further affecting their workplace performance. The study suggested implementing diversity training programs aimed at reducing biases related to accents in organizational settings. Additionally, it called for a reevaluation of performance appraisal systems to ensure they account for linguistic diversity. By recognizing the value of different accents, organizations could foster a more inclusive environment that appreciates linguistic diversity. The research underlined the necessity for ongoing discussions about accent bias in professional settings.

Giles (2022) analyzed the impact of accent type on candidates' perceived professionalism during the hiring process. The researchers conducted experiments with hiring managers who evaluated candidates' resumes accompanied by varying accent recordings. Results revealed that candidates with native accents were favored 50% more often than those with foreign accents, indicating a significant bias in hiring practices. The study emphasized that accent-based discrimination can hinder the career prospects of skilled individuals, impacting diversity in the workplace. Additionally, it pointed out that these biases are often rooted in societal perceptions of competence linked to language. The researchers recommended that organizations adopt standardized evaluation criteria to minimize bias during the recruitment process. Furthermore, implementing unconscious bias training for hiring managers could help address these challenges. This study contributes to a growing body of literature demonstrating the influence of linguistic factors on



professional opportunities. Ultimately, addressing accent bias can enhance organizational diversity and inclusion.

Kim (2020) explored how accent-related issues affected communication and collaboration among team members. Through qualitative interviews with 50 employees from various backgrounds, the research uncovered significant insights into the impact of accents on team interactions. The findings showed that accented speech often led to communication barriers and misunderstandings, negatively affecting team cohesion and productivity. Employees with strong accents reported feeling marginalized, while those with standard accents experienced greater acceptance and credibility. The study emphasized the need for organizations to acknowledge the role of language in shaping workplace dynamics. Recommendations included fostering a culture of inclusivity that embraces linguistic diversity, as well as providing communication training for all employees. By doing so, organizations could enhance team effectiveness and create a more supportive environment. The research highlighted the importance of addressing accent-related biases to improve team collaboration and morale. Ultimately, this study contributes valuable knowledge to understanding the intersection of language and team dynamics in global workplaces.

Leung (2021) understood how different accents influenced employees' perceived credibility and customer interactions. Using a survey of 200 employees, the research gathered quantitative data regarding professionalism ratings based on the accent of the employees. Findings indicated that employees with standard accents received higher professionalism ratings compared to those with regional or foreign accents, which could lead to inequities in career advancement opportunities. The study also revealed that customer interactions were significantly influenced by the employees' accents, with customers preferring staff who spoke in a standard accent. This bias can affect customer satisfaction and overall service quality in the hospitality sector. The researchers recommended implementing language support programs for employees with strong regional accents to enhance their communication skills. Additionally, fostering an inclusive environment that values linguistic diversity could help mitigate these biases. Overall, this study highlights the critical relationship between language and professionalism in customer-facing roles.

Smith (2019) analyzed how different accents influenced customer perceptions of service quality. The study involved analyzing 100 customer service calls, focusing on the accents of the representatives and the feedback from customers. Results indicated that customers responded more positively to agents with native accents, often rating their service higher in terms of professionalism and efficiency. This trend highlighted the significant impact of accent on customer satisfaction and overall service experience. The study emphasized that accent bias could lead to unequal treatment of employees and affect their performance. The researcher suggested accent-neutral training for customer service representatives to enhance their communication skills and ensure equitable treatment. Additionally, organizations should promote awareness of accent-related biases among their staff to foster a more inclusive environment. This research underscores the importance of understanding language attitudes in enhancing customer service and satisfaction.

Ochieng (2022) investigated how different accents influenced perceptions of authority and competence in various workplaces. Through a combination of surveys and focus groups, the research gathered qualitative and quantitative data from employees across different sectors. The

findings revealed that accents significantly influenced perceptions of professionalism, with native English speakers receiving higher ratings compared to those with regional or foreign accents. Participants expressed that non-native speakers were often perceived as less credible, impacting their workplace interactions and advancement opportunities. The study recommended implementing policies to address linguistic discrimination and promote inclusivity in workplace communication. Additionally, organizations could benefit from offering language training programs to enhance the confidence of employees with strong regional accents. This research highlights the critical need for organizations to recognize and address language attitudes that may perpetuate bias. Ultimately, fostering a culture that values linguistic diversity could improve professional interactions and workplace dynamics.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as compared to field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

## **FINDINGS**

The results were analyzed into various research gap categories that is conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps

**Conceptual Gaps:** While existing studies, such as those by Murray (2021) and Norton (2022), highlight the impact of accent bias on perceptions of professionalism, they often focus on quantitative measurements of bias without delving deeply into the underlying psychological mechanisms that shape these attitudes. For instance, the studies do not adequately address how social identity theory can explain the reasons behind accent discrimination, nor do they explore the role of language perception theories in shaping employee self-esteem and confidence in diverse workplaces. Additionally, there is limited exploration of the intersectionality of accent with other identity factors, such as race, gender, and age, which may further influence language attitudes and perceived professionalism (Giles, 2022).

**Contextual Gaps:** The research largely concentrates on corporate and service-oriented sectors, leaving out other industries where language attitudes may have significant implications, such as education, healthcare, and technical fields (Kim, 2020). Moreover, while several studies highlight accent bias in multinational corporations, there is a lack of research examining small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the unique challenges they face concerning accent discrimination. Contextual factors like organizational culture and management practices that could mediate accent bias are often overlooked (Leung, 2021), leading to a superficial understanding of how different work environments may influence language attitudes.

**Geographical Gaps:** Most of the studies are centered in Western contexts (e.g., the USA, UK, and Australia), which may not accurately represent the dynamics of language attitudes in non-Western or developing countries (Ochieng, 2022). For example, while Ochieng provides insights from Kenya, there is a scarcity of research addressing how regional and local dialects influence

workplace perceptions in other African nations or Asian contexts. Additionally, further exploration is needed in countries with diverse linguistic landscapes, such as India or Nigeria, where multilingualism could play a crucial role in shaping language attitudes (Smith, 2019). This geographical oversight limits the applicability of findings and recommendations, emphasizing the need for more inclusive research that captures global nuances in language attitudes toward accented speech in the workplace.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusions**

Language attitudes toward accented speech in the workplace are a critical factor influencing interpersonal dynamics, professional identities, and career advancement opportunities. Research indicates that accents significantly affect how employees are perceived in terms of professionalism, competence, and credibility. Studies have consistently demonstrated that individuals with native accents tend to receive more favorable evaluations compared to those with regional or foreign accents, leading to potential discrimination and exclusion in professional settings. This accent bias not only undermines individual self-esteem and job satisfaction but also impacts organizational culture, employee morale, and overall productivity.

To address these challenges, it is essential for organizations to recognize and actively mitigate the biases associated with accented speech. Implementing diversity training programs, fostering an inclusive workplace culture, and developing equitable evaluation processes are crucial steps toward creating a more supportive environment for all employees. Moreover, encouraging open discussions about language attitudes and providing resources for accent-neutral training can help promote understanding and appreciation for linguistic diversity. Ultimately, acknowledging and addressing language attitudes in the workplace is vital for enhancing professional relationships and ensuring equitable treatment, thereby contributing to a more inclusive and effective work environment.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Theory**

Implementing diversity and inclusion training programs draws upon social identity theory, which posits that individuals derive part of their identity from group memberships. By educating employees about the psychological mechanisms underlying accent bias, these programs can enhance understanding of how such biases impact workplace dynamics and employee interactions. This theoretical framework helps explain why certain accents are viewed favorably while others are not, promoting an awareness of the social constructs influencing these perceptions. The implementation of standardized evaluation criteria relates to linguistic accommodation theory, which emphasizes the adaptation of communication styles to accommodate others. By ensuring that assessments focus on relevant job skills rather than linguistic characteristics, organizations can create a more equitable evaluation process. This theoretical approach challenges the biases that often accompany accent perceptions, promoting fairness in professional evaluations. Language support and training programs can be informed by perception theory, which examines how individuals interpret and assign meaning to various linguistic cues. By focusing on enhancing

communication skills, organizations can recognize the subjective nature of language perceptions while providing employees with the tools to navigate accent biases effectively. This theoretical perspective encourages a more nuanced understanding of how language affects professional interactions.

### **Practice**

In practice, these training sessions can equip employees and management with the tools to recognize and confront their biases regarding accented speech. Workshops can include activities that highlight the value of linguistic diversity and teach strategies for inclusive communication. By fostering empathy and understanding, organizations can create a more supportive environment that respects all employees' backgrounds and communication styles. Practically, organizations should develop clear guidelines for performance evaluations that eliminate the subjective influence of accent bias. Training evaluators on the importance of using objective metrics can help mitigate personal biases that might affect performance ratings. This approach enhances fairness and transparency in how employees are assessed and rewarded. In practice, offering accent-neutral training and communication workshops empowers employees who may feel marginalized due to their accents. These programs can enhance employees' confidence in their communication skills, allowing them to express themselves more effectively in professional settings. This support fosters a more inclusive atmosphere where all employees can thrive, regardless of their linguistic background.

### **Policy**

Organizations should establish policies that mandate participation in diversity training for all employees, including during onboarding and ongoing professional development. This ensures that awareness of accent bias becomes embedded within the organizational culture, promoting long-term change and inclusivity. Organizations should establish policies requiring all performance appraisal systems to include standardized evaluation criteria that minimize the influence of accent bias. This institutionalized approach ensures consistency in evaluations, promoting a culture of fairness and equity in career advancement decisions. Organizations should implement policies that allocate resources for language support programs, ensuring that all employees have access to training aimed at enhancing communication effectiveness. By institutionalizing this support, organizations demonstrate their commitment to fostering an equitable and inclusive workplace.

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