Native Speaker Response to Non-Native Accent: A Review of Recent Research

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Introduction

Research has generally shown that without early exposure, non-native speakers cannot achieve a native-like accent in a foreign language (Gass & Selinker, 2001, p. 336). Differences in pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation remain. Nevertheless, accent has been shown to affect how native speakers (NSs) evaluate non-native speakers (NNSs). This single speech characteristic has been openly cited as justification for much broader judgments about individuals. Lippi-Green (1997), for example, highlights several cases in the U.S. in which NNSs lost jobs due to their accents, such as that of an Indian woman (who had studied English for over 20 years) deemed unfit for a librarian's position because of her "'heavy accent'" and "'speech patterns'" (p. 153). Matsuda (1991) reports on U.S. doctors who lost their malpractice insurance because the company felt accent would prevent them from successfully defending themselves in a lawsuit (p. 1346).

In light of the potentially high-stakes consequences of accent-based evaluation, particularly in major immigrant-receiving countries like the U.S., the goal of this paper is to examine recent contributions of language research to understanding NS attitude toward NNS accent. Specifically, this paper will address two questions relevant to the work of the past decade. First, what are the factors that affect NS attitudes toward accented speakers? This question has been investigated by a number of researchers, and the variety of accents, locations, and contexts examined in pursuit of an

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answer raises the issue of whether a comprehensive framework can be developed for understanding the "big picture" of NS attitude toward accent. The second question this paper will address is, what is the current position of a proposed theoretical model, the social process model of language attitudes (as outlined in Cargile, Giles, Ryan, & Bradac, 1994), in relation to the recent empirical studies? In attempting to answer these questions, this paper will first summarize the theoretical and empirical foundations of current work in order to set it in context. Next, several recent studies will be reviewed, with emphasis on the factors found to affect speaker evaluations. Based on this review, the place of the process model and its applicability to recent findings will be analyzed, along with other explanatory frameworks currently being referenced. Finally, limitations, avenues for future research, and pedagogical implications will be addressed.

Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of the Current Research

Investigations of the role of accent in evaluations of NNSs have traditionally been conducted under the heading of "language attitudes" research. According to Garrett, Coupland, and Williams (2003), the foundation of this research is the understanding that "linguistic forms, varieties and styles can set off beliefs about a speaker, their group membership, and can lead to assumptions about attributes of those members" (p. 3). Its scope covers such areas as attitudes toward particular dialects, toward code-switching, and even toward particular pronunciations or lexical choices (Cargile et al., 1994, p. 213). Though the term "attitude" has been conceptualized in a number of ways, a commonly cited definition states that attitude is "a disposition to react favourably or unfavourably to a class of objects" (Sarnoff, 1970, as cited in Cargile et al., 1994, p. 221). It is widely understood that attitude has three components or aspects: cognitive (beliefs); affective (feelings); and behavioral (that is, certain attitudes encourage certain actions) (Cargile et al., 1994, p. 221).

As Derwing, Rossiter, and Munro (2002) have noted, for NSs, accent is perhaps the most salient characteristic of a second language (L2) learner's speech (p. 246). Over the past four decades, scholars have sought reliable, empirical evidence of a link between this feature and speaker evaluation. Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner, and Fillenbaum's (1960) introduction of the matched-guise technique (MGT) in their study of French- and English-speaking Canadians' perceptions of each other offered an efficient vehicle for accomplishing this. The goal of this technique is to tap into a listener's true attitudes, not necessarily those they would verbalize if explicitly asked by a researcher. Using the MGT, the researcher can isolate accent and control for confounding variables—other differences in individuals' speech, such as pitch—by having the same person produce speech samples using different accents. The listener-evaluators are then typically told they will hear recordings of different speakers and are asked to rate them on a list of traits, as if they were forming a "first impression" of someone (Giles & Billings, 2004, p. 191). Though various rating scales and terms may be used, for example, Zahn and Hopper's (1985) Speech Evaluation Instrument, these traits typically fall under a few higher-level categories: status (e.g., confident, competent, ambitious), solidarity (e.g., friendly, generous), and dynamism (e.g., active, lively) (Giles & Billings, 2004, p. 190).

As Giles and Billings (2004) note, the MGT provided a "rigorous and elegant method for eliciting apparently private attitudes" while controlling for extraneous variables, and the Lambert et al. (1960) study prompted a host of investigations of language attitudes around the world (p. 190). Researchers focusing on NNS accent conducted numerous studies using the MGT or MGT-inspired techniques. The results have shown that in a variety of contexts, listeners may negatively evaluate speakers with various foreign accents. In the U.S., for example, Mulac, Hanley, and Prigge (1974) found listeners negatively rated the spontaneous recorded speech of

Italian, Norwegian, and Eastern European-accented speakers. Ryan, Carranza, and Moffie (1977) reported that the Spanish-accented English of bilingual speakers was rated more negatively than American-accented speech on attributes such as pleasantness and likelihood of being a friend. More recently, Gill (1994) found that U.S. college students responded less favorably to a Malaysian-accented teacher than to an American instructor.

Such negative evaluations of NNSs based on accent are consistent with overall findings from language attitudes research. Having reviewed a wide range of studies, Giles and Billings (2004) report that speakers of a "standard" language variety are typically upgraded on status-related traits, while "non-standard" speakers are downgraded; non-standard speakers may also be rated less favorably on traits related to solidarity, although in certain contexts, non-standard speakers may be upgraded (e.g., with reference to home and family, or when the listeners have a connection to the non-standard variety themselves) (pp. 194-195). However, as Giles and Coupland (1991) have stated, language attitudes research has ultimately been "overrepresented by one-off studies in widely varying cultures, sociolinguistic conditions, situations, and procedural domains," making it difficult to draw inferences and conclusions (p. 49). While the MGT offers the benefits of control and efficiency, it has also been criticized for framing language attitudes as simple responses to language stimuli (Cargile et al., 1994, p. 218).

Responding to these limitations, Cargile et al. (1994) proposed viewing language attitudes as a process, arguing that "attitudes about language are not a singular, static phenomenon. Rather, they affect, and are affected by, numerous elements in a virtually endless, recursive fashion" (p. 215). Their social process model attempts to account for the multiple factors involved in the application of language attitudes in specific situations: Certain attitudes are evoked when individuals speaking different language varieties interact. The salience of these attitudes is

determined by speaker behavior and characteristics, such as speech style, as well as listener characteristics, including social identity and current goals, level of attention, and mood or emotional state. Expression of attitudes is mediated by the individuals' perceived interpersonal history, as well as elements of the immediate social situation or context and perceived cultural factors, such as historical relations between groups. The outcomes of this process may be evaluations, use of particular communication strategies, or other behaviors (Cargile et al., 1994, p. 228). Reflecting the complexity and variability of language attitudes, the social process model offers a framework for understanding the results of speaker evaluation studies. This model also highlights avenues for further research, such as listener emotions, a long-neglected component of the attitude concept (Cargile et al., 1994, pp. 217-218). Figure 1 presents a simplified version of the diagram used by Cargile et al. (1994) to illustrate their model.

Figure 1. Social Process Model
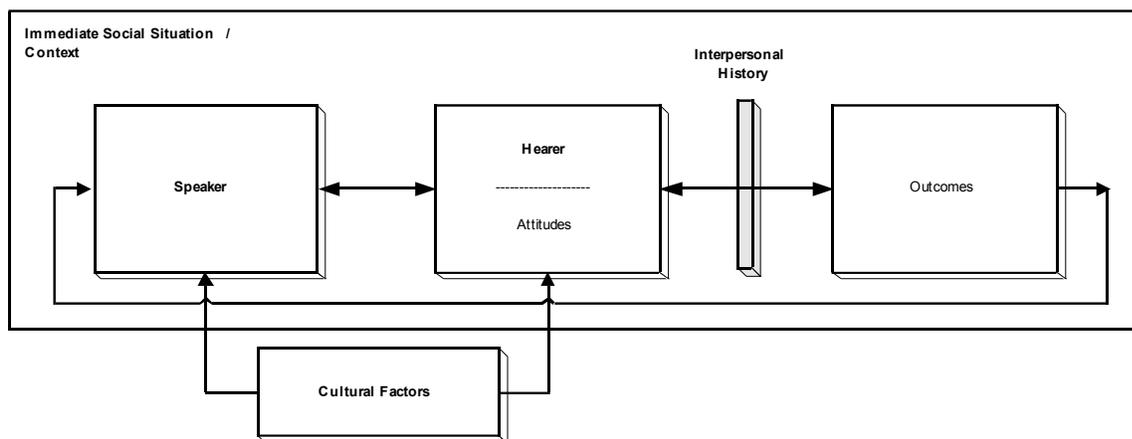
Note. This figure is adapted from "Language attitudes as a social process: A conceptual model and new directions," by Cargile et al., 1994, *Language & Communication*, 14, p. 214.

Broadening the Research Horizon: Recent Investigations of Attitude toward NNS Accent

Since Cargile et al. (1994) defined their process model and called for a broader research

agenda, where have researchers taken the study of NS attitude toward non-native accents and speakers? The following sections will review the results of subsequent studies in the traditional MGT paradigm, those using the "verbal-guise method," a modification of the MGT that seeks to achieve greater authenticity, and those representing new approaches to investigating language attitudes. Drawing on the social process model, emphasis will be placed on identifying the speaker-related, listener-related, and context-related variables that affect attitudes.

Results of Matched-Guise Studies

Cargile and Giles (1997) undertook an ambitious study of variables across the categories of listener factors (listener social identity) and contextual factors (the message being delivered). They elicited evaluations from 240 undergraduates to recordings of a speaker reading neutral and aggressive passages with standard American and Japanese accents. Competence, attractiveness, and dynamism were the focus of the evaluations. Questionnaires measured the baseline strength of listener social identities (how "American" the participants felt). The strength and salience (current awareness) of those identities and listener affective response while hearing the accented speech were also measured via questionnaires. Cargile and Giles (1997) predicted that both strength and salience would increase in response to foreign-accented speech, a cue to out-group membership; they expected a greater effect when the message was aggressive toward the listener's group membership (a critique of U.S. economic policy) (pp. 197-199). Cargile and Giles (1997) reported interactive effects among their variables: Greater salience of American identity was negatively related to evaluations of the accented speaker's attractiveness, but only when the message delivered was aggressive. Listeners' identity strength did not change in response to hearing an accent, but it did play an indirect role in evaluation in that the stronger the sense of identity, the more likely it was to become salient. Finally, in terms of affective response, it was found that

listeners experienced greater feelings of pleasure while listening to American-accented speech (pp. 211-213).

In another study using the MGT, Cargile (1997) focused specifically on a contextual variable, the role identity of the speaker in the interaction. First, 97 undergraduates received speaker "resumes" and listened to "job interview" recordings read with American and Chinese accents. Evaluations focused on status and attractiveness-related traits, and listeners also rated the suitability of each voice for jobs of varying prestige. At this point, accent did not appear to affect attitude or employment suitability ratings. The same recordings were then played to an additional 38 participants, who were told they would hear an English teacher reading from a student's paper. The same Chinese-accented voice reading the same text was rated less attractive than in the first study. Cargile (1997) proposed that the second context, which was more relevant and important to the student participants, may have affected attitude expression (p. 441).

These studies in the MGT paradigm thus provide evidence of the variety of factors that can affect listener attitudes toward accented speakers. Attitudes appear to vary in relation to context, what the role of the speaker is in the current interaction (for example, job applicant or teacher) (Cargile, 1997), and what he or she is saying (for example, is the message challenging to the listener's social identity?) (Cargile & Giles, 1997). In terms of listener dynamics, how salient the listener's social identity is during the interaction is also important, and salience appears to be affected by identity strength and contextual factors, such as message (Cargile & Giles, 1997).

Results of Verbal-Guise Studies

Despite its benefits, researchers have expressed concern that the MGT's requirement for a single speaker to produce different accents can lead to artificial-sounding speech samples (Nesdale & Rooney, 1996, p. 141). Lindemann (2003) believes that participants may not always be fooled

by the "guise" and may recognize that there is only one speaker (p. 351). One answer to these critiques has been the verbal-guise method, a technique in which the single-speaker restriction is relaxed for the sake of presenting more natural speech. Like the MGT studies reviewed previously, recent verbal-guise studies reflect a broadening of the research horizon to include a variety of variables affecting attitudes towards NNSs.

In a study combining major focuses of the Cargile and Giles (1997) and Cargile (1997) studies, Bresnahan, Ohashi, Nebashi, Liu, and Shearman (2002) examined the effects of strength of listener ethnic identity (listener dynamics), speaker role identity (contextual dynamics), and accent intelligibility (speaker dynamics). A group of 311 undergraduates was exposed to a speech sample from either a "teaching assistant" (TA) or "friend." The parts were read by a NS of American English, a highly intelligible NNS, or a NNS with low accent intelligibility. Questionnaires gauged the strength of listener ethnic identity, which was equated with listener American identity, as well as listener affective response. Overall, subjects' evaluations of the NS and intelligible NNS along dimensions of attractiveness, status, and dynamism were comparable and more favorable than responses to the unintelligible NNS. Role identity had an impact as well, as responses to the friend were more positive than to the TA in all accent conditions. In addition, subjects with strong ethnic identity gave less favorable ratings to the NNSs than subjects with weak ethnic identity. Finally, with regard to affect, subjects responded similarly to the NS and intelligible NNS in terms of pleasantness, but found the unintelligible accent less pleasant (Bresnahan et al., 2002, pp. 181-182). It should be noted, however, that Bresnahan et al. (2002) did not report the first languages (L1s) of their accented speakers; as will be discussed later, some studies, such as Lindemann (2005), have identified certain prestige accents that tend to be evaluated more favorably than other non-native accents.

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How do these results compare with those of the earlier MGT studies with similar focuses? Consistent with the Cargile (1997) study, an effect was reported for speaker "role identity." However, in the Bresnahan et al. (2002) study, the text for each role identity condition was different (a neutral lecture or a description of a trip), which means that speaker message may have been confounded with speaker role in this study. Bresnahan et al. (2002) found the direct effect for "ethnic identity" that Cargile and Giles (1997) did not find for "social identity." Though both studies defined the concept of social/ethnic identity similarly, as stemming from the listener's feeling of group membership, and equated it with American identity, they operationalized it using different measurement scales, which may have lead to the differing outcomes[2].

The effect of listener ethnic identity was revisited by Dailey, Giles, and Jansma (2005), although in this case, the researchers did not look at listeners' self-identifications but simply whether their backgrounds were standard in-group, i.e., Anglo-American, or out-group, i.e., Hispanic-American. The researchers' focus, however, was to determine the effect of a listener-based variable, listeners' perceptions of the "linguistic landscape" of their community. Dailey et al. (2005) used this term to describe the inclination in language use in the community (for example, what language is used in advertising, in school, and in the neighborhood), in this case, English or Spanish (p. 28). There were 190 high school student participants, 40 Hispanic and 150 Anglo. For their evaluation questionnaires, the researchers drew on traditional status-related factors, such as competence; dynamism; and solidarity. Both Anglo and Hispanic listeners rated Anglo-accented speakers more favorably on competence and dynamism; however, Anglos perceived greater differences between Anglo- and Hispanic-accented speakers. In addition to reporting this link between actual ethnic identity and attitude, Dailey et al. (2005) suggested that the Hispanic

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[2] Bresnahan et al. (2002) used Phinney's (1992) Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure, while Cargile & Giles (1997) used Brown, Condor, Mathews, Wade, and Williams' (1986) Group Identification Scale.

students had internalized "mainstream views" of their group (p. 35). The researchers also observed an interaction between ethnicity and perceived linguistic landscape: While linguistic landscape had no effect on Anglo ratings, when Hispanic students perceived more English in their environments, they upgraded the NSs to a greater degree. Dailey et al. (2005) concluded that the perceived presence or prevalence of a foreign language in the community did not positively or negatively influence judgments made by speakers of the standard language (p. 36).

The concept of linguistic landscape, which could be an indicator of the listener's degree of familiarity with a particular language variety, is related to another listener-based variable investigated by Nesdale and Rooney (1996), listeners' contact with NNSs. The researchers also examined the effect of accent strength and a contextual variable—knowledge of the speaker's ethnicity at the time of contact. Their study is unique among those reviewed here in that it is the only one to use children as participants. In addition to employing standard evaluative rating scales covering status and solidarity traits, they asked participants to rate the voices according to a list of stereotypical traits associated by Australians with members of each group represented by the speech samples. Eighty Australian children (ages 10 or 12) from multi- and mono-cultural schools heard six accents: strong and mild Australian, Italian, and Vietnamese. For half of the participants, the ethnicities of the speakers were labeled. Overall, greater status was assigned to the Australian speakers; an effect for accent strength on status ratings was only observed in the unlabeled condition, when the older children assigned greater status to the milder accents. Nesdale and Rooney (1996) suggested that the explicit accent identification reduced uncertainty; if a label is not available as a basis for making judgments, then listeners rely on accent strength to make status decisions (p. 148).

In terms of solidarity, however, stronger accents were correlated with higher ratings, and in

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this case, an effect was found for contact: Older children from multicultural schools were more likely to give positive solidarity ratings to the NNSs. Though contact had been expected to influence all ratings, Nesdale and Rooney (1996) felt listeners only drew on personal experience for solidarity judgments, which might be more sensitive to contact than status evaluations (p. 149). In terms of the stereotype ratings, non-native accented speech was stereotyped; however, accent strength, contact, and labeling had no effect on degree of stereotyping. Nesdale and Rooney (1996) concluded that language attitudes and ethnic stereotypes are not necessarily identical, though the two are linked, and that salient voice qualities such as accent can cue certain stereotypes (p. 149). At the same time, the lack of effect for these variables on stereotyping may be attributed to the use of children as evaluators; children may have had less exposure to stereotypes, or may even engage in a different judgment-forming process than adolescents or adults.

An issue highlighted by Nesdale and Rooney's (1996) labeled/un-labeled condition, which the researchers themselves note, is that in the un-labeled condition, it is not clear what ethnicity the children actually thought they were hearing, and what effect the identification process might have, if such a process occurred (p. 149). Two subsequent studies have provided evidence on the role of this listener-based variable, listener perception of speaker L1. Llurda (2000), however, did not originally set out to examine this variable; initially, he predicted that *actual* L1 background would be related to listeners' feelings of irritation (p. 292). Llurda (2000) further hypothesized that faster non-native speech would lead to lower accent intelligibility, which would lead not only to greater irritation but to the attribution of more negative personality traits (p. 292). Twenty-eight American undergraduates listened to readings by 12 NNSs from different L1 backgrounds (Spanish, Russian, Mandarin, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, and Polish) and of varying proficiency levels. Llurda (2000) used his own rating scales, dividing characteristics into "competence" traits (e.g., intelligence) and

"affect" traits (e.g., likeability), categories which roughly correspond to traditional status and solidarity dimensions, and also had participants rate the speed of speech, its intelligibility, and their level of irritation. Finally, he asked participants to choose each speaker's L1 from a list. An interaction between speed and intelligibility of speech was found: Faster speakers were rated lower on intelligibility, and lower intelligibility was associated with more negative trait assignments. Actual L1 was, in fact, not correlated with degree of irritation. Subjects were most irritated by speakers they incorrectly perceived as Korean or Arabic. Llurda (2000) thus concluded that perceived L1 background is actually a better predictor of degree of irritation than actual L1 (p. 297).

Drawing on Llurda's (2000) finding, Lindemann (2003) set out specifically to investigate the effect of listener perception of L1 background. She elicited judgments from 39 undergraduates on the speech of four American NSs and four Korean speakers. Participants rated each voice on features related to status and solidarity and whether or not it was the voice of a NS. A free-response question on the speakers' ethnicities was also included, providing a better opportunity for ascertaining the listeners' actual L1 assumptions than in Llurda's (2000) study, where the choices given may have affected responses. All Korean speakers were rated lower than any NS on status, but no significant difference was found for solidarity. Although listeners easily distinguished between NS and NNS, only 8% correctly identified the latter as Korean. Interestingly, ratings for those identified as East Asian were not significantly different from ratings for those identified as belonging to other minority groups that may be stigmatized in the U.S., such as Indian. This led Lindemann (2003) to suggest that listeners responded to a perception of general "foreign faultiness" in making their evaluations (p. 358). Lindemann (2003) concluded that higher-level social categories of native/non-native, and stigmatized NNS/non-stigmatized NNS, are salient for

listeners, even if specific L1s are not, and may affect evaluations (p. 359).

The verbal-guise studies reviewed here have thus expanded on investigations in the MGT paradigm and identified the effects of additional variables on NS attitudes. In terms of speaker variables, Bresnahan et al. (2002) and Llurda (2000) both reported a link between lower accent intelligibility and negative evaluations, and even feelings of irritation in Llurda's study. However, working with children, Nesdale and Rooney (1996) reported an effect for accent strength only in a specific condition, when speakers' actual ethnicities were not explicitly given.

Several listener-related variables were also examined. Bresnahan et al. (2002) reported that strength of ethnic identity correlated with more negative evaluations of out-group voices. Although the notion that listeners' familiarity with NNSs will affect evaluations is intuitively appealing, this was not consistently the case. As Dailey et al. (2005) reported, NSs' perceptions of the prevalence of Spanish in their linguistic landscape did not affect how they evaluated NNSs; however, perception of the presence of English did have a positive effect on Hispanic listeners' ratings of NSs. In addition, Nesdale and Rooney (1996) found a favorable effect from actual contact with NNSs, but on solidarity ratings only, not on status ratings. Another listener-based variable, perception of speaker L1, was linked by Llurda (2000) to listeners' feelings of irritation. Lindemann (2003), however, citing the numerous incorrect and unrelated guesses supplied by her participants, suggested that perception of a broader non-native-stigmatized category may be more important to attitudes than perception of a specific L1 (p. 359).

Finally, in terms of contextual variables, an effect was reported for speaker role identity (in the interaction and in relation to the listener) by Bresnahan et al. (2002) (for example, TA or friend). An effect was also reported for knowledge of the speaker's ethnicity at the time, with Nesdale and Rooney (1996) suggesting that this knowledge led listeners directly to stereotype-

associated status judgments, whereas when labels were unavailable in the situation, they relied on a characteristic of the accent itself—strength—to make judgments (p. 148).

New Approaches to the Study of Accent and NS Attitude

Recently, scholars investigating attitudes toward non-native accented speech have looked beyond the matched-guise and verbal-guise techniques and speaker evaluation scales. Derwing et al. (2002), for example, addressed the pedagogical implications of accent studies by examining whether instruction can affect attitude towards and comprehension of accented speech. The participants were 65 Canadian social work students. One group received cross-cultural awareness training, one received this training with accent instruction (e.g., pronunciation difficulties faced by Vietnamese speakers), and one received no training. Pre- and post-study listening comprehension tests measured ability to comprehend Vietnamese speakers, and questionnaires measured general attitudes toward speakers with accents. All groups improved on the post-study test, including the control, perhaps because the initial test served as a minor form of "training." However, on the final questionnaire, the accent instruction group showed the greatest gains in confidence in ability to communicate with speakers with accents. Both training groups showed a strong positive effect on empathy toward and willingness to interact with NNSs (Derwing et al., 2002, pp. 255-257). Though a consistently strong effect was not found in the verbal-guise study which specifically examined contact (Nesdale & Rooney, 1996), the Derwing et al. (2002) study does offer evidence of the positive benefits of familiarizing oneself with the speech characteristics of and challenges faced by NNSs.

Turning to techniques from the field of perceptual dialectology, Lindemann (2005) examined the linguistic-based preconceptions that American listeners may bring to bear on their responses to NNSs. Perceptual dialectology seeks to uncover "the folk's understanding" (i.e.,

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popular or mainstream understanding) of language varieties, looking not only at evaluations of language varieties but also at how people group and categorize varieties (Lindemann, 2005, p. 189). First, 213 undergraduates labeled a blank map with descriptions of the English spoken by individuals from different areas. Then, they were provided a list of countries and asked to rate speakers from these countries on familiarity and factors such as friendliness and speech correctness. Least familiar countries were described and rated most negatively, which led Lindemann (2005) to conclude that, lacking first-hand knowledge, these participants were drawing entirely on stereotype (p. 206). In the map labeling task, negative evaluations included comments on accent and specific pronunciation problems, but many were global evaluations of "goodness" or "badness" (Lindemann, 2005, p. 206). Consistent with Lindemann (2003), the largest salient category for subjects was a stigmatized NNS category. This category excluded most of Western Europe, whose speakers were accorded more prestige. Two salient sub-categories were East Asian and Latin American, with the former evaluated most negatively, despite the fact that Latin Americans represent the larger minority group in the U.S. Lindemann (2005) concluded that immigration patterns, which presumably identify the prominent out-group, may not predict which group is viewed most negatively (p. 209). Instead, she suggested that the familiarity or contact brought about by immigration can, perhaps, have a positive effect (Lindemann, 2005, p. 209).

Though the different formats used by Derwing et al. (2002) and Lindemann (2005) make direct comparison with MGT and verbal-guise studies difficult (for example, Derwing et al. [2002] relied on listener self-reflection, rather than an evaluation task, to determine the impact of training on attitudes), such studies may bring to light effects obscured by the more traditional designs. In fact, Munro, Derwing, and Sato (2006) find the "over-reliance" on pre-set rating scales problematic, suggesting that they actually *encourage* some raters to exhibit stereotyping behavior,

while drawing resistance from others who are unwilling to make judgments based on a person's

voice (p. 70). Providing an open-ended format for eliciting attitudes, such as the map labeling task

used by Lindemann (2005), may help address such issues. Thus, where verbal-guise studies have

produced some mixed results (Nesdale & Rooney, 1996; Dailey et al., 2005), the studies by

Derwing et al. (2002) and Lindemann (2005) provide some additional support for the positive

effects of two listener-based factors, familiarity with NNSs and instruction.

Summary of the Findings

The studies described above examined attitudes toward a variety of non-native accents in

English-speaking, immigrant-receiving countries, namely the U.S., Canada, and Australia.

Consistent with earlier work, a number of studies offered further evidence of differential

evaluations of NNSs compared to NSs, with NNSs rated more negatively on status-related

dimensions (Nesdale & Rooney, 1996; Llurda, 2000; Bresnahan et al., 2002; Lindemann, 2003;

Dailey et al., 2005)[3]. In addition, Nesdale and Rooney (1996) provided specific evidence of ethnic

stereotyping based on accent, and Lindemann (2005) identified some of the negative pre-conceived

notions about speakers of various stigmatized language groups that might be applied in interaction.

However, researchers have clearly moved beyond studying accent in isolation, beyond

seeking simply to establish a connection between accent and evaluation—and beyond reliance on

the MGT to provide answers. In fact, the verbal-guise technique appears to be the currently

preferred method for investigating attitudes toward NNSs, having out-paced the MGT among the

studies reviewed here, five to two. Recent work has provided evidence of the impact of speaker-

based variables, such as accent strength (Nesdale & Rooney, 1996), speech rate (Llurda, 2000),

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[3] Only Cargile and Giles (1997) and Cargile (1997) did not report an effect for accent on status, though they did
report one for attractiveness. Similar explanations were offered in both studies: Chinese and Japanese speakers may
be perceived as belonging to competitive, as opposed to subordinate, out-groups (Cargile, 1997, p. 435), leading to
higher status but lower attractiveness ratings.

and accent intelligibility (Llurda, 2000; Bresnahan et al., 2002); listener-based variables, such as strength and salience of social/ethnic identity (Cargile & Giles, 1997; Bresnahan et al., 2002) and how the listener perceives the speaker's L1 background (Llurda, 2000; Lindemann, 2003); and factors related to the context at the time of "interaction," such as the speaker's current role in relation to the listener (Cargile, 1997; Bresnahan et al., 2002), the speaker's message (Cargile & Giles, 1997), and whether the speaker's actual ethnic background is known to the listener (Nesdale & Rooney, 1996). Finally, some mixed results were reported for the listener-based variable of exposure or familiarity with speakers of an ethnic background: While Dailey et al. (2005) found no effect, positive or negative, of the perceived presence of the foreign language in the NS listener's linguistic landscape, Nesdale and Rooney (1996) did find a positive effect for contact on solidarity ratings, and Derwing et al. (2002) provided evidence of the benefits of familiarizing oneself with accents and accented speakers via training.

As this review has demonstrated, NS attitude toward non-native accented speakers is a complex phenomenon, and it can be difficult at times to reconcile the results of investigations undertaken in different countries and contexts, using different techniques and different accents. In an effort to understand the "big picture," the next section will attempt to define the place of Cargile et al.'s (1994) social process model in relation to this new body of evidence.

Seeking an Explanatory Framework: What's Become of the Process Model?

Recent studies focused on non-native accent have certainly answered Cargile and Giles' (1997) call to "move language attitudes research beyond the traditional paradigm of simply charting evaluative profiles" (p. 11). Is the social process model proposed by Cargile et al. (1994) applicable to this new research—and is it being applied by the researchers themselves?

Framing language attitudes as a process underscores the need to recognize interactions among various speaker, listener, and contextual variables that affect the salience and expression of attitudes. Researchers are doing this, routinely investigating multiple variables in a single study. This has resulted in the identification of complex relationships among variables, for example, the interactions noted by Cargile and Giles (1997) between strength of listener social identity, salience of identity, and speaker message. Though the spirit of the process model seems to have informed recent work, and some researchers speak generally of language attitudes processes (e.g., Nesdale & Rooney, 1996), interestingly, few studies reviewed here reference the model directly (and those that do are studies in which authors of the model were involved, i.e., Cargile & Giles, 1997, and Cargile, 1997).

How, then, are researchers accounting for their results? What explanatory frameworks do they draw on or propose to make sense of their data? To help account for individual evaluations, Cargile and Giles (1997) and Bresnahan et al. (2002) reference social identity theory (after Tajfel & Turner, 1986). According to social identity theory, individuals exhibit a preference for the variety of language associated with their in-group (Bresnahan et al., 2002, p. 172). Accent, a salient speech characteristic, serves as an indicator of an individual's out-group status and can thus evoke social, ethnic, or national stereotypes associated with the group (Bresnahan et al., 2002, p. 172). Social identity theory is consistent with observations made in these two studies that the strength of a listener's identification with his or her in-group and the salience of this identity can affect evaluations during a specific interaction.

Looking beyond the realm of interpersonal interaction, Lindemann (2003) draws on the concept of language ideologies in discussing her findings, considering language attitudes as part of this larger phenomenon (p. 349). Language ideologies, as defined by Woolard (1998), are

"representations, whether explicit or implicit, that construe the intersection of language and human beings in a social world" and which reflect the experience or interests of a particular social position (Woolard, 1998, p. 6). Language ideology takes into account not just evaluations of different language varieties, but also perceptions of what constitutes these varieties and who their speakers are (Lindemann, 2003, p. 349). In her later study, Lindemann (2005) attempted to identify some of these broader conceptualizations of or societal attitudes toward language varieties by eliciting open-ended classifications and descriptions of hypothetical speakers, leading her to emphasize the importance of a "non-native stigmatized" speaker category. As Lindemann (2005) points out, the next step is to compare de-contextualized responses with actual reactions to voice samples and determine the relationship between the two (p. 210).

The notion that general stereotypes associated with an out-group, or language ideologies associated with a language variety, are brought to bear on an individual's response to a particular accented speaker is not incompatible with the Cargile et al. (1994) social process model. These belief systems form part of the broader context in which interaction occurs—to use Cargile et al.'s (1994) term, the cultural factors. The degree to which a listener implicitly or explicitly holds to them could also form part of the listener dynamics aspect of the model. Thus, stereotype and language ideology could be seen as input to the process of generating and expressing attitudes associated with particular accents or particular kinds of accents.

An unresolved question that remains of interest to researchers is the nature of the relationship between stereotypes and language attitudes. Nesdale and Rooney (1996) assert that language attitudes and social stereotypes are related but not identical phenomena, stressing that status and solidarity rating scales may exclude key components of a particular stereotype (p. 135). However, theirs was the only study to separate the characteristics composing a social stereotype

from the other personality characteristics. In other studies, the judgments on personality attributes in the status and solidarity rating scales are treated as indicators of the application of some broader group stereotype. For example, Dailey et al. (2005) attributed the downgrading of their own in-group by Hispanic raters to their adoption of "mainstream views" of their social group (p. 35). Llurda (2000) suggested that perception of specific L1s led raters to the negative stereotypes associated with individuals of those backgrounds, affecting their feelings of irritation (p. 297).

There are two major conceptualizations of the role of stereotype in the evaluation of accented speakers. On one hand, Gallois and Callan (1981) have argued that accents do not invariably call up a particular stereotype; instead, there may be an "immediate reaction to the voice" which is based on previous experience with accented speech but not necessarily on a general stereotype about a national group (p. 135). On the other hand, social identity theory suggests that accent can trigger recourse to stereotype; Ryan (1983) has argued that speech cues such as accent are used to first identify social group memberships, and that these social categories are then used to derive specific stereotypes to apply to speakers (p. 149). These contrasting viewpoints raise a number of questions. First, does stereotype always play a role in speaker evaluations, or can first-hand experience (positive or negative) be more important? As noted earlier, some support has been found for the positive effect of contact or familiarity with NNSs. Second, if accent does trigger a classification process, ultimately leading to a group stereotype, how does this process work? As studies such as Llurda's (2000) and Lindemann's (2003) have shown, NSs can be poor judges of ethnic group based on accent; as Lindemann (2003) suggests, the truly salient categories for them may be simply a) native/non-native and b) non-native stigmatized/non-stigmatized. Alternatively, are judgments made and stereotypes invoked as an *implicit* response to the speech, without the listener consciously undertaking an identification

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process (Lindemann, 2003, p. 354)? For example, Milroy and McClenaghan (1977, as cited in Lindemann, 2003, p. 355) found the predicted evaluations of British RP, Irish English, and other varieties of English even when listeners incorrectly identified the accents they heard.

Ultimately, where to insert broader stereotypes or language ideologies in the language attitudes process may be a kind of chicken-and-egg question. Due to the wide variety of variables identified in the studies reviewed here, which may or may not be in play in a given situation, it may be impossible to determine a linear path for the expression of attitudes for all listeners. The social process model is, however, broad enough to allow for all these influences as well as the operation of sub-processes, such as the social differentiation process suggested by social identity theory. More pressing questions may be those raised in language ideologies work, for example, where do shared, biased beliefs come from (from experts or lay individuals, and through what processes) (Woolard, 1998, p. 27), can they be changed, and how do they change?

A recent update to the social process model suggests the importance of thinking locally, not just globally, in seeking answers to such questions. Giles, Katz, and Myers (2006) attempted to elaborate the role of context by integrating the original model with elements of communication infrastructure theory. According to this theory, individuals gain information in different ways depending on how the communication infrastructure of their community is built up; this infrastructure includes their interpersonal networks, elements of the local environment that affect if and how different groups interact, community institutions, and the media (Giles et al., 2006, p. 41). A model which views an individual interaction (as originally depicted in the process model) as situated within the "social architecture" of a community (articulated by communication infrastructure theory) allows for language attitudes to be viewed as being "(re)formulated in a particular local space" (Giles et al., 2006, p. 41). With the exception of Dailey et al. (2005), who

studied linguistic landscape, and Nesdale and Rooney (1996), who examined contact, there has been, thus far, little focus on how aspects of the local context or community may affect attitudes toward NNSs. In fact, some studies reviewed here do not even name the U.S. state in which they were conducted, and those that identify a particular university give little attention to the makeup of the school or the area in which it is located. The expanded process model emphasizes the importance of recognizing and examining potential local variations, how they come about, and how they change, alongside broader patterns in language attitudes or language ideologies.

Conclusions: Limitations, Future Research, and Pedagogical Implications

Language attitudes research has evolved greatly since the pioneering study of Lambert et al. (1960) and now encompasses a variety of methods and explanatory frameworks. Those seeking specifically to understand NS attitude toward NNSs have highlighted the complex nature of the phenomenon and identified key factors that affect evaluations. Recent studies underscore the variable nature of language attitudes, highlighting the effects of interactions among speaker-based, listener-based, and contextual factors. In addition, some studies suggest that groups currently perceived as belonging to a non-native stigmatized group, for example, Latin Americans and East Asians in the U. S., may be most at risk of being on the receiving end of negative attitudes.

However, in addition to the specific limitations noted earlier in the study reviews, several broader limitations have affected this body of work. The variety of rating scales used to capture attitude can make it difficult to draw solid conclusions; not only may theorists encounter difficulty, but during a study, participants may interpret terms differently, leading to inconsistency across individuals' ratings (Lindemann, 2005, p. 189). While an open-ended format may help address the latter issue by enabling raters to express beliefs in their own words, it may provide more

complications for researchers when they attempt to summarize and explain results. In addition, there has been an over-reliance on students as subjects, with seven of the nine studies cited using college students. Are college students representative of the majority of NS listeners? Are the results truly generalizable to the rest of the population, to different age groups and different communities? Finally, there is still a large focus on the cognitive aspect of attitude— listener judgments, beliefs, and evaluations—and little attention given to NS emotional response to NNSs; only a few studies cited here measured affect (i.e., Cargile & Giles, 1997, Bresnahan et al., 2002, and Llurda, 2000, in terms of measuring feelings of irritation).

The field is in need of studies with a wider variety of participants, preferably from different communities and regions, as attitudes may not be homogenous across a given area. In addition, more attention could be given to the emotional and behavioral aspects of attitude. How attitudes translate into actions is an important area of inquiry. For example, researchers could follow the method of Purnell, Idsardi, and Baugh (1999), who used phone calls to landlords in standard American, African American Vernacular, and Chicano English accents to demonstrate a link between minority accent and housing discrimination. Finally, more studies could, as Derwing et al. (2002) did, investigate how the negative consequences of language attitudes could be mitigated, for example, through education.

In terms of pedagogical implications, these studies reinforce the notion of the importance of accent to NS perceptions of NNSs. Taking the results of Llurda (2000) and Bresnahan et al. (2002) into consideration, English-language instructors could focus on helping speakers achieve greater intelligibility and control speech rates to enable them to make a more favorable impression on NSs. However, as Munro et al. (2006) have noted, accent is a common, normal, and difficult to erase aspect of NNS speech (p. 67). It seems that NSs may be more in need of instruction, to learn

how to better understand and communicate with NNSs.

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