LOST IN PRONUNCIATION: THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIOLINGUISTIC CUES ON TRUTH JUDGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

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Keywords: accent bias, standard language ideology, processing fluency, stereotype content model

Accent strongly shapes social perception, yet mechanisms driving accent-based bias are unclear. Focusing on truthfulness judgements, this thesis examined three competing theoretical explanations: (1) standard language ideology, which posits that standard-accented speakers are granted higher credibility due to institutional prestige; (2) accent-based stereotyping, which suggests that accent evaluations reflect the perceived status of associated ethnic or social groups; and (3) processing fluency, which argues that harder-to-understand accents trigger negative evaluations due to increased cognitive effort. This study tested one hundred and thirty-seven Turkish adults who listened to personal anecdotes from four types of Turkish speakers: (1) standard accented, (2) standard-accented with low audio quality, (3) high-status non-standard, and (4) low-status non-standard. After each recording, participants rated the perceived warmth, competence, and truthfulness of the speaker. The model based on *standard language ideology* best explained truth judgments. Unexpectedly, however, non-standard-accented speakers were rated as more truthful than standard-accented ones. Mediation analysis indicated that this effect was driven by higher warmth attributions, even though competence ratings were lower. This study offers novel insights into how accent standardness structures social judgments, revealing the nuanced nature of accent-based stereotyping.

ÖZET

TELAFFUZDA KAYBOLMAK: SOSYODİLBİLİMSEL İPUÇLARININ DOĞRULUK YARGILARI ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ

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Anahtar Kelimeler: aksan önyargısı, standart dil ideolojisi, işlem akıcılığı, kalıpyargı içerik modeli

Aksan, sosyal algıyı güçlü bir şekilde şekillendirir, ancak aksan temelli önyargıyı tetikleyen mekanizmalar belirsizdir. Bu tez, doğruluk yargılarına odaklanarak üç rakip teorik açıklamayı incelemiştir: (1) standart dil ideolojisi, standart aksanlı konuşmacıların kurumsal prestij nedeniyle daha yüksek güvenilirliğe sahip olduğunu öne sürer; (2) aksan temelli stereotipleme, aksan değerlendirmelerinin ilgili etnik veya sosyal grupların algılanan statüsünü yansıttığını öne sürer; ve (3) işleme akıcılığı, anlaşılması daha zor aksanların artan bilişsel çaba nedeniyle olumsuz değerlendirmelere yol açtığını öne sürer. Bu çalışma, dört tür Türkçe konuşmacının kişisel anekdotlarını dinleyen 137 Türk yetişkini test etti: (1) standart aksanlı, (2) düşük ses kalitesine sahip standart aksanlı, (3) yüksek statülü standart dışı ve (4) düşük statülü standart dışı. Her kayıttan sonra, katılımcılar konuşmacının algılanan sıcaklığını, yetkinliğini ve doğruluğunu değerlendirdi. *Standart dil ideolojisi* temel alan model, doğruluk yargılarını en iyi şekilde açıkladı. Ancak beklenmedik bir şekilde, standart olmayan aksanlı konuşmacılar, standart aksanlı konuşmacılardan daha dürüst olarak değerlendirildi. Arabuluculuk analizi, bu etkinin, yetkinlik puanları daha düşük olmasına rağmen, daha yüksek sıcaklık atıflarından kaynaklandığını gösterdi. Bu çalışma, aksanın standartlığının sosyal yargıları nasıl yapılandırdığına dair yeni içgörüler sunarak, aksan temelli stereotiplemenin nüanslı doğasını ortaya koymaktadır.

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To anyone who has been told they must sound 'right' to be right.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATONS

AIC Akaike Information Criterion

ANOVA Analysis of Variance

BIC Bayesian Information Criterion

RP Received Pronunciation

SAE Standard American English

SCM Stereotype Content Model

SDO Social Dominance Orientation

SNR Signal-to-noise Ratio

1. INTRODUCTION

In spoken communication, the manner of speech can be as important as the content itself. Listeners rapidly form higher-level social judgments based on speech patterns, even after hearing as little as a single word (Kraus et al. 2019). Among these patterns, accent is one of the most salient features, often serving as a cue for social evaluation (Pietraszewski and Schwartz 2014). Research has shown that listeners draw inferences about a speaker's social class, intelligence, trustworthiness, and attractiveness based on their accent (Fuertes et al. 2012). Stereotypes and biases surrounding non-standard accents contribute to systematic discrimination in both social and professional domains (Hideg, Shen, and Zhou Koval 2024; Rovetti, Sumantry, and Russo 2023). Understanding the mechanisms underlying accent bias is therefore not only of theoretical importance for sociolinguistic and social psychological research but also essential for addressing broader issues of social inequality. The present research investigates how accents influence perceived truthfulness and evaluates three explanations of accent bias: standard language ideology, group-based stereotypes, and processing fluency.

1.1 The Social Construction of Standard Accents

Language ideologies "systematically associate types of language use with socially located types of people" (Wortham 2008). Through the study of these ideologies, we can understand why some linguistic varieties, namely the standard ones, are seen as inherently more correct, more prestigious, and more pleasant (Niedzielski and Preston 2000). A standard variety of a language is considered the normative or model form of communication, and it is uniformly believed to be the proper use of a language. Therefore, it is taught in schools and to second language learners, used by official institutions, the media, and in literature. For instance, second language learners are likely to be taught BBC English rather than Hiberno-English (Irish va-

riety), or Parisian French rather than Québécois French, because these standardized varieties are widely regarded as the correct forms. However, correctness is not an inherent property of the standard variety, and there is no purely linguistic reason why one variety should be dominant over others. Rather, it is mostly institutionally imposed: social groups with economic, political, and cultural power can enforce a standard language ideology (Milroy 2001), compelling the broader language community to accept one variety as superior. Because, as Matsuda (1991) explains, in relationships where one party is dominant and the other is subordinate, we tend to see the dominant party as normal and the subordinate one as deviating from that norm.

The establishment of this norm is not merely a result of pre-existing social hierarchies but can also serve to reinforce them by marginalizing other dialects, accents, and their speakers (e.g., Sain and Hermansyah 2025). This ideology promotes the belief that the standard language is the variety we must all aspire to speak, although it is both constructed by and primarily accessible to an elite class. The association of the "correct" use of language with power, education, and socioeconomic status contributes to a halo effect (Thorndike 1920), whereby speakers of the standard variety are viewed more favorably across multiple dimensions, while speakers of non-standard varieties are burdened with negative stereotypes. Empirical research supports this dynamic: individuals who use non-standard linguistic varieties are consistently attributed lower status and competence (Fuertes et al. 2012; Schulte et al. 2024), are perceived as less successful, attractive, and likable (Schluter 2021), receive fewer job opportunities (Spence et al. 2024), and report lower levels of social belonging, heightened communication anxiety, and increased experiences of stigmatization (Gluszek and Dovidio 2010; Kim, Ramirez-Marin, and Tasa 2021; Lippi-Green 2012).

One of the most visible and socially consequential expressions of standard language ideology is accent stigma. Accents, defined as the set of phonetic and prosodic features (e.g., sounds, stress, intonation) that characterize a speaker's pronunciation of a language, provide a compelling opportunity to study the standard language ideology. Everyone uses a particular set of pronunciation rules, shaped by their geography, community, native language, and social group, yet some groups are perceived to be accented where others are not. This connects to Matsuda's (1991) observation that people in power are perceived as speaking normal, unaccented English, even though there is no such thing as truly unaccented speech. For instance, what is commonly referred to as "unaccented" Turkish is often called "Istanbul Turkish," a label that clearly indicates it is still a regional accent.

Despite there being no certain correct way to pronounce a language, the perception

of one accent's "correctness" still significantly influences societal attitudes. Even the speakers of non-standard varieties themselves often internalize the association between the standard accent and higher status. For example, Yook and Lindemann (2013) found that Korean second-language English speakers rated native English speakers more favorably than fellow Korean-accented speakers. Similarly, Kuyucu et al. (forthcoming) found that Turkish second-language English speakers rated Standard American English (SAE) speakers more competent and were more likely to hire them than Turkish-accented English speakers, regardless of whether they were presented as "American" or "Turkish" through their names and backgrounds. These studies show that the perceived superiority of the standard accent can override listener judgments beyond the existing intergroup attitudes, such as ingroup favoritism. However, most of the existing research in this area has focused on English-speaking communities, which are what Milroy (2001) refers to as "standard language cultures." To determine how widespread these beliefs truly are, more studies involving diverse linguistic communities are needed.

1.2 Accents as Social and Ethnic Markers

While standard language ideologies shape general perceptions of correctness and prestige, they do not fully account for how accents function as social markers of ethnicity and group membership, which presents a more complex picture. For example, in most English-speaking countries (where the majority of studies on the topic are conducted), a foreign accent often signals an immigrant status (Derwing and Munro 2009), which is considered a low-status position in society, regardless of how correct the person speaks. Whereas in countries that do not have a substantial immigrant population, having a foreign accent can signal multilingualism, which is associated with higher educational attainment, status, and intelligence (Bhatia and Ritchie 2008; Omoniyi 2012).

Past research shows that, even within the same social context, not all accents are regarded the same. For instance, Carrie and McKenzie (2018) examined how second-language English speakers in Spain perceive different standard English accents (Received Pronunciation (RP) and Standard American English (SAE)). They found that speakers with a standard British accent are attributed more status, whereas standard American speakers were attributed more solidarity, despite both being standard varieties. Similarly, Dovidio et al. (2010) found that speakers with Asian and Latino accents reported more perceived accent stigmatization than those with

European accents, while Hosoda and Stone-Romero (2010) showed that French-accented applicants were treated similarly to American-English-accented applicants in decisions related to employment, indicating that accents of high-status groups may not be perceived as inferior to standard accents. These findings suggest that stereotypes associated with perceived ethnic group membership, not just the accent itself, play a significant role in evaluation.

The Stereotype Content Model (Fiske et al. 2002) helps explain these differences in perception. The model posits that social groups are stereotyped along two primary dimensions: warmth and competence. Different ethnic or national groups, indexed through accent, can be stereotyped as warm but incompetent, competent but cold, or both/neither, leading to differing social evaluations and emotional responses. Often aligned with the dimensions of status and solidarity (Zahn and Hopper 1985), perceptions of competence and warmth have been shown to systematically vary across different accents, resulting in significant differences in speaker evaluations (Cargile and Bradac 2001; Fuertes et al. 2012; Jiang, Gossack-Keenan, and Pell 2020; Schulte et al. 2024; Sumantry and Choma 2021).

Accents associated with high-status groups are typically rated higher in competence, while those linked to socially marginalized or immigrant groups may evoke lower competence judgments, thereby influencing listeners' assessments of speaker credibility, likability, hireability, etc. (Gill 1994; Hansen, Rakić, and Steffens 2018; Hosoda, Nguyen, and Stone-Romero 2012; Lev-Ari and Keysar 2010). For instance, Hosoda and Stone-Romero (2010) found that Japanese-accented English speakers were less likely to be hired than French-accented English speakers, especially for jobs with high communication demands like customer service, even when applicant understandability is controlled for. This finding aligns with Lee and Fiske 2006, who noted that Asian immigrants are often stereotyped as competent but lacking warmth, possibly making them seem less suitable for jobs that require strong interpersonal skills. A meta-analysis by Maindidze et al. (2025) also found that stereotypes of competence, and to a lesser extent warmth, strongly predicted the accent discrimination in employee interviews. Notably, studies show that non-standard accented speakers are usually perceived as equally warm, if not warmer, than standard accented speakers, yet are evaluated less favorably on competence-related traits (Giles et al. 1992; Hosoda, Stone-Romero, and Walter 2007; Rakić 2019; Yzerbyt, Provost, and Corneille 2005), revealing the complexity of accent-based stereotyping. These findings highlight the importance of expanding the literature on accent perception by capturing the variations in stereotypes regarding different accents.

1.3 The Role of Processing Fluency in Accent Perception

Another central line of research investigating prejudice toward accented speakers builds on the processing fluency hypothesis. Processing fluency can be broadly defined as the subjective ease with which new information is processed (Schwarz 2010). The hypothesis posits that, when a stimulus is disfluent, i.e., harder to process and requiring greater cognitive effort, it tends to elicit more negative evaluations. In general, people are likely to find disfluent stimuli as less truthful (Reber and Schwarz 1999), less aesthetically pleasing (Reber, Schwarz, and Winkielman 2004), and less persuasive (Bullock, Shulman, and Huskey 2021; Dragojevic et al. 2020). Processing fluency has been shown to affect judgments across a surprisingly wide range of domains. For example, companies with more fluent names do better on the stock market (Alter and Oppenheimer 2006), and people with more fluent (i.e., easy to pronounce) names are found more likable (Laham, Koval, and Alter 2012). Even when the disfluency is purely artificial, e.g., through audio distortion, low microphone quality, research shows that the listener's social judgements regarding the speaker can become more negative (Newman and Schwarz 2018; Walter-Terrill, Ongchoco, and Scholl 2025).

According to dual-processing models of persuasion, when deciding about the truthfulness of a statement, individuals may either take the central route—thoroughly analyzing the message content—or the peripheral route, relying on mental shortcuts or heuristics (Petty and Cacioppo 1986). For instance, rather than verifying facts, we might assume a piece of information is accurate simply because it is presented by an expert or because it sounds familiar. Past research shows that, independently of the actual accuracy of a statement (central route), both declarative (e.g., source credibility) and experiential (e.g., fluency/ease of processing) cues can be utilized to determine the truth value (Nadarevic et al. 2020). In the context of accented speech, both types of cues significantly shape our perceptions of the speaker and their message. On one hand, social stigma associated with certain accents can directly undermine the speaker's credibility as demonstrated in the above sections; on the other, non-standard accents are often rated as less intelligible, less understandable, and more cognitively effortful to process (Dragojevic et al. 2017; Rovetti, Sumantry, and Russo 2023), which, in turn, can decrease the perceived truthfulness (Reber and Schwarz 1999; Unkelbach and Greifeneder 2018).

Many researchers believe that processing fluency is a defining feature of accent comprehension (Dragojevic 2020; Dragojevic and Giles 2016). When listeners find someone's speech difficult to understand, either due to frustration or negative affect

(Dragojevic et al. 2017) or due to naïve beliefs that disfluent speakers are less intelligent or coherent (Schwarz 2004), they tend to form less favorable impressions of the speaker. One of the most influential studies on accent and truth judgments supports this explanation: Lev-Ari and Keysar (2010) found that participants rated factual statements read by speakers with heavier accents as less truthful, even though they were explicitly told that the speakers were merely reading pre-written scripts and were not the source of the information. The authors attributed this effect to the increased listening effort required to process heavily accented speech. However, there has been an ongoing debate regarding the replicability of these findings, with some researchers suggesting that processing fluency is not a driving factor of accent bias in truth judgements (Souza and Markman 2013; Wetzel, Zufferey, and Gygax 2021). To determine whether accent influences higher-level social judgments through the subjective processing fluency or through general intergroup bias, these two explanations should be directly compared.

1.4 Practical Implications and Interventions

Prior research has offered evidence supporting each of these explanations. By identifying which of these factors most strongly influences the perceived truthfulness of accented speakers, the current study can guide the design of more precisely targeted intervention strategies to reduce bias. Potential venues for such interventions include oral hiring processes, where interviewers can be trained to recognize and counteract implicit biases during the evaluation of accented job candidates.

Some interventions emphasized the role of general attitudes toward accent standardness in shaping speaker evaluations. For example, Hansen et al. (2017) found that German participants who conversed with a confederate in their second language (English) did not discriminate against Turkish-accented German speakers, regardless of their prior contact with Turkish speakers. The researchers proposed that this may have been due to cognitive dissonance: participants who stereotyped non-standard speakers as less competent may have experienced discomfort when speaking with a foreign accent themselves, resulting in an adjustment in their attitudes. These findings suggest that interventions targeting linguistic stereotypes, particularly those related to accent standardness, can effectively reduce bias against non-standard speakers, even when perceived fluency and group-specific stereotypes remain unchanged. If accent stigma largely reflects a general negative attitude toward non-standard language varieties, then targeting these underlying attitudes

through perspective-taking or accent awareness interventions (e.g., Tajeddin and Rajabi 2025; Weyant 2007) may offer a promising route for intervention.

At the same time, if accents serve predominantly as markers of an ethnic group, improving intergroup attitudes toward especially negatively stereotyped groups may be a more efficient way to reduce accent-based discrimination. In one study, researchers found that U.S. adults who are high in social-dominance orientation (SDO) rated Latino-accented speech as less comprehensible than Asian-accented speech despite both samples being produced by the same speaker using a matched-guise technique (Hansen and Dovidio 2016). These participants were also less likely to recommend the Latino-accented speaker for hiring in a hypothetical scenario, mediated by their perception of comprehensibility. These findings indicate that listeners' ideological orientations and group-specific stereotypes can strongly influence their judgments. If this is the primary source of accent bias, then interventions promoting intergroup contact may be particularly effective, as they have been shown to enhance relations between specific social groups (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006) and reduce ideological predispositions toward prejudice, such as SDO (Dhont, Van Hiel, and Hewstone 2014; Shook, Hopkins, and Koech 2016).

Other studies that targeted fluency as the root cause of accent-based discrimination have shown that increasing processing fluency by familiarizing listeners with an accent or providing subtitles can reduce accent bias (Boduch-Grabka and Lev-Ari 2021; Dragojevic 2020; Rovetti, Sumantry, and Russo 2023). However, other research suggests that increased familiarity with an accent does not improve perceptions of truthfulness (Wetzel, Zufferey, and Gygax 2021), which the authors attribute to the possibility that fluency itself may not be a strong determinant of truth judgments for accented speech (Souza and Markman 2013).

1.5 The Present Study: Disentangling Sources of Accent Bias

Drawing on theoretical and empirical insights, the present study investigates three competing explanations for accent bias: standard language ideology, group-based stereotyping, and processing fluency. These accounts are tested within a single experimental design, using truthfulness judgments as the primary outcome measure. This focus is motivated by the central role of credibility and trust in interpersonal and intergroup dynamics. Source credibility is fundamental to building interpersonal trust (Giffin 1967), which in turn fosters positive intergroup relations (Kuglerová, Popper, and Poslon 2022; Tropp 2008). Therefore, understanding how accent stan-

dardness shapes these judgments is crucial for both social and professional contexts.

In addition to its theoretical contributions, this study also introduces a novel methodological approach. While previous research has often used informational statements to assess perceived truthfulness (Hanzlíková and Skarnitzl 2017; Lev-Ari and Keysar 2010), I employ personal anecdotes lacking objective truth value instead. This design mirrors real-life scenarios in which the truth of a personal story/statement cannot be easily verified, and listeners must rely solely on their impressions of the speaker. Focusing on person-level truthfulness rather than factual accuracy provides a more ecologically valid way of investigating how accent influences trust and believability in everyday interactions.

In the current study, four groups of speakers were compared: a high-status group with a non-standard accent, a low-status group with a non-standard accent, a group with a standard accent, and a standard accented group with low audio quality (i.e., disfluent but standard accented group). Three separate models, each corresponding to one of the proposed explanations, were constructed. The accent standardness model predicts that both groups with standard speech, regardless of audio quality, will be rated as more credible, while the two non-standard accented groups will be attributed lower truthfulness. The group stereotype model predicts that the low-status group will be attributed less truthfulness than the others, who are expected to be evaluated similarly. The fluency model predicts that the highly fluent group (i.e., the standard accented group with high audio quality) will be rated as more truthful, while all other speaker groups will receive similarly lower evaluations due to similar levels of disfluency.

In line with the Stereotype Content Model, dimensions of competence and warmth will be tested as potential mediators. Competence and warmth align with the two components of source credibility: expertise and trustworthiness (Hovland, Janis, and Kelly 1953) and have been shown to jointly influence trust (Oleszkiewicz and Lachowicz-Tabaczek 2016). However, competence is more consistently associated with standard accents, fluent speakers, and high-status social groups (Dragojevic and Giles 2016; Fuertes et al. 2012; Sumantry and Choma 2021) and emerges as a stronger predictor of source credibility (Linne, Schäfer, and Bohner 2022). Thus, I expect competence perceptions will be the main mediator of truthfulness bias, regardless of how the speakers are grouped (i.e., fluent/disfluent, high-status/low-status, standard/non-standard), while warmth will play a comparatively weaker mediating role.

2. PRELIMINARY STUDY: STIMULUS SELECTION

A stimulus selection study was conducted to determine the scripts, noise level, and speaker ethnicities appropriate for a reliable comparison. The descriptive statistics from this study were utilized to select the stimulus for the main study. Full descriptive statistics for the items are provided in Appendix A.

2.1 Methods

2.1.1 Participants and Procedure

A total of 66 participants were recruited through the university research credit pool (38 women, Mage = 21.4, SDage = 1.45). On average, participants reported that their speech was very similar to the 'standard accent' (i.e., Istanbul Turkish), M = 6.48, SD = 0.66, on a 7-point scale.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: accented speech, standard speech, or audio distortion (standard accented speakers made disfluent through audio manipulation). After providing informed consent, participants were told they would listen to eight audio recordings randomly selected from a previous study, in which individuals had written about an interesting event they experienced during the previous summer and then read their scripts aloud.

In the accented speech condition, participants listened to recordings of one female and one male speaker from each of the following regions or countries: Azerbaijan, Eastern Türkiye, Japan, and Italy. All speakers spoke in Turkish, and the order of recordings was randomized. In the standard speech condition, participants listened to four female and four male speakers, presented in random order. In the audio distortion condition, participants listened to the same four female and four male speakers whose recordings were altered to reduce fluency using one of four audio

manipulation types: rectifier distortion, low white noise, moderate white noise, or high white noise, also in random order.

After each recording, participants rated the speech and the speaker on several dimensions: fluency, status, truthfulness, and Stereotype Content Model (SCM) traits. They were also asked to guess the speaker's place of origin. Upon completing all eight recordings, participants filled out a demographics questionnaire and were debriefed

2.1.2 Experimental Stimuli

2.1.2.1 Speakers

Sixteen speakers (half standard, half non-standard accented) were recruited through my personal and professional network. All selected speakers demonstrated sufficient fluency in Turkish to accurately read and articulate the provided scripts. Still, all scripts were written by researchers to eliminate potential confounding language proficiency levels.

2.1.2.2 Scripts

The scripts used in the recordings were written by research assistants in response to the prompt: "*Think of an interesting event that happened last summer and write it down in a few sentences.*" This prompt was selected to elicit short, nondescript responses containing personal anecdotes. Each script was evaluated by four researchers to ensure they were similarly interesting and believable, of comparable length, and free from any identifying information about the hypothetical speaker (e.g., age, socioeconomic status, political orientation). Twenty potential responses was compiled, from which eight scripts were selected by consensus (See Appendix B for all scripts in Turkish).

2.1.2.3 Audio manipulation

Audio stimuli were processed in *Audacity* (Version 3.7.0; Audacity Team 2024). To decrease the fluency, white noise was generated and mixed with the original standard accented speaker recordings at three relative intensity levels. The speech

recordings were kept at their original amplitude (0 dB), and the white noise was added at reduced levels:

–12 dB gain: high-intensity noise (lower signal-to-noise ratio),

–18 dB gain: medium-intensity noise (moderate SNR),

–24 dB gain: low-intensity noise (higher SNR).

Lastly, rectifier distortion was applied using the Effect → Distortion → Rectifier tool with the distortion amount set to 50%.

2.1.3 Measures

2.1.3.1 The fluency scale

Participants rated how comprehensible, easy to understand, clear to understand, and effortful to understand the speaker was on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very*). The scale is adapted from Dragojevic and Giles (2016). Items were averaged to create a composite fluency score.

2.1.3.2 Stereotype Content Model (SCM) traits

Participants rated the speaker on 10 traits "as viewed by society," corresponding to the dimensions of the SCM. Ratings were made on a 7-point scale (e.g., 1 = *very cold*, 7 = *very warm*), and the trait list was adapted from Sumantry and Choma (2021). This scale was included for exploratory purposes and was not analyzed in the present study.

2.1.3.3 Truth judgments

Participants evaluated the perceived truthfulness of each anecdote on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *definitely a lie*, 7 = *definitely true*).

2.1.3.4 Status

Participants were instructed to rate the social status of the speaker's group ("Some groups may be considered to have a high (e.g. doctors) or low (e.g. criminals) status in society. What do you think is the social status of the social group to which the speaker you just heard belongs?", 1 = *low*, 7 = *high*)

2.1.3.5 Place of origin

Participants were asked to guess the speaker's place of origin using an open-ended response format.

2.2 Results

2.2.1 Audio Manipulation

Among the four audio manipulation conditions, the speakers with the lowest added noise were the only ones to be rated relatively fluent ($M = 4.14$). However, they were still perceived as less fluent than accented speakers ($M = 4.76$). To achieve a similar fluency level across accented and audio-distorted conditions, the noise level is lowered even further for the main study

2.2.2 Scripts

From the eight selected scripts, two were excluded from the main study due to their relatively low believability and high variability. These were the only items with mean believability ratings below the midpoint 4, even in the standard accent condition (both Ms = 3.95), whereas all other items were rated above this threshold. In addition, they had the highest standard deviations (2.01 and 2.04), indicating considerable inconsistency in how participants evaluated them. These factors suggest that these scripts may have been perceived as less believable or more contextually ambiguous, and thus were not included in the subsequent study.

2.2.3 Speaker Ethnicity

Series of t-tests were performed to compare speakers in terms of status and fluency. The Eastern Anatolian accent was rated as the lowest status group. Specifically, the mean status score for the Eastern Anatolian accent was 3.12, significantly lower than that of the standard accent ($M = 4.29$, $t = 5.56$, $p < .001$). Moreover, Eastern Anatolian speakers were found less fluent than standard accented speakers, with a mean difference of 0.95 ($t = 6.61$, $p < .001$), but not more or less fluent than any other accent (all p's > 0.5). These results indicate that the Eastern Anatolian accent was both less fluent and lower in status relative to the standard accent. Thus, the Eastern Anatolian accent was selected as the low-status accent group for the subsequent study.

In comparison, the Italian accent had the highest mean status among accented speakers ($M = 4.56$), significantly higher than the Eastern Anatolian accent ($M = 3.12$, $t = 8.27$ $p < .001$), and it did not surpass the standard accent in status ($M = 4.32$, $t = 1.33$, $p = 0.78$). The Italian accent also had a mean fluency score of $M = 4.67$, which was not significantly different from the Eastern Anatolian accent ($M = 4.95$, $t = 1.56$, $p = 0.95$), but lower than the standard accent ($M = 5.90$, $t = 7.53$, $p < .001$). Thus, the Italian accent was selected as the high-status accent group for the subsequent study.

On average, only 12.5% of responses correctly identified the place of origin for accented speakers, excluding Eastern Anatolian speakers. In contrast, Eastern Anatolian speakers were correctly identified 72% of the time, likely reflecting greater familiarity with this regional accent. Thus, to allow for a direct test of group-based stereotyping, I decided to provide stereotypical names for the speakers in the main study, following a similar procedure to past studies on this topic (e.g., Dragojevic and Giles 2016).

3. MAIN STUDY: IMPACT OF ACCENT ON TRUTHFULNESS

After using a between-participant design in the stimulus selection study to ensure comparability of believability across scripts and fluency levels across disfluent speakers, I employed a within-participant design in the main study, in which all participants evaluated all speaker conditions. The within-subjects approach allowed for direct comparisons between speakers while controlling for individual differences among listeners.

3.1 Methods

3.1.1 Participants

I conducted an a priori power analysis in *G*Power 3.1.9* (Faul et al. 2007) for a repeated measures ANOVA. The required sample size was 138, with a perfect sphericity assumed, for a small effect size ($f = .10$) and for a conventional alpha level of .05 to achieve 80% power. In total, 141 participants were recruited through the research subject pool of Sabancı University ($n = 69$) and the social network of the primary researcher and social media posts (n =72). Four participants were eliminated from the sample due to failing an attention check question ("If you are reading this question, please choose 3"), making the final sample size 137 (91 women, M_{age}= 26, $SD_{age} = 7.9$). On average, participants reported that their speech was very similar to the 'standard accent' (i.e., Istanbul Turkish), $M = 6.43$, $SD = 0.61$, on a 7-point scale.

3.1.2 Procedure

After providing informed consent, participants were told they would listen to eight audio recordings randomly selected from a previous study in which individuals had written about an interesting event they experienced during the previous summer and then read their scripts aloud. All participants listened to one male and one female speaker from each of these four categories: Italian accent (high-status), Eastern Anatolian accent (low-status), standard accent, and audio distortion (low fluency), as summarized in Table 3.1.

After each recording, participants were asked to rate the characteristics (SCM Traits), native-speaker status, perceived fluency, and standardness of language of the speaker, as well as the truthfulness of the statement given by the speaker. The order of speakers was randomized across participants, and the order of questions was randomized across trials. Upon evaluating all eight recordings, participants filled out an SDO scale, demographics questionnaire, and were debriefed.

Table 3.1 Speaker groups and their characteristics

Speaker Group	**Fluency**	**Standardness**	**Status**
Italian accent	Low	Low	High
Eastern Anatolian accent	Low	Low	Low
Standard accent	High	High	High
Audio distortion	Low	High	High

3.1.3 Experimental Stimuli

3.1.3.1 Speaker names

To allow for accurate group-based stereotyping, all speakers were assigned names that matched their accent's cultural and ethnic associations. Names were selected via Google search using queries such as "popular Turkish/Eastern Anatolian/Italian names." The assigned names included *Emir, Sarp, Aylin, Ceren, Baran, Helin, Franco,* and *Maria.*

3.1.3.2 Recordings

Six of the original recordings from the stimulus selection study were retained. Two speakers re-recorded new scripts, due to the elimination of previous two in the stimulus selection study. These new scripts are also provided in Appendix B.

3.1.3.3 Audio manipulation

Audio files were processed using *Audacity* (Version 3.7.0; Audacity Team 2024). To reduce fluency, white noise was generated and overlaid on two standard accented recordings. Original speech was preserved at 0 dB, while the white noise was added at -36 dB gain, resulting in a relatively higher signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) to approximate the fluency levels of accented speakers.

3.1.4 Measures

Fluency and Truthfulness measures were identical to those of the preliminary study. In addition to the measures listed here, each speaker's perceived native-speaker status, as well as participants' Social Dominance Orientation (Pratto et al., 2013), was measured for exploratory purposes and not analyzed here. An attention check item ("If you are reading this question, please choose 3") was included in the SDO scale.

3.1.4.1 Stereotype Content Model (SCM) traits

Participants rated the speaker on 10 traits corresponding to the dimensions of the SCM. Unlike the stimulus selection study, they were not asked to rate them "as viewed by society" but rather give their own evaluations. Items from the two dimensions were averaged to create composite warmth (traits are: *warm, sincere, tolerant, good-natured*) and competence (traits are: *competent, independent, competitive, confident, intelligent, educated*) scores.

3.1.4.2 Standardness

Participants evaluated the standardness of the speaker's Turkish on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *very different from standard*, 7 = *standard "Istanbul Turkish"*).

3.2 Results

All analyses were conducted in *R version 4.2.2* (R Core Team 2022), with *RStudio 2024.12.0.467* (Posit Team 2024).

3.2.1 Manipulation Checks

To confirm the validity of my theoretical groupings, I conducted paired samples t-tests comparing groups on their respective manipulation check variables.

3.2.1.1 Accent standardness manipulation

Speakers categorized as "standard" (i.e., standard accent and audio-distorted versions) were perceived as significantly more standard sounding ($M = 6.33$, $SD = 0.70$) than those categorized as "non-standard" (i.e., Italian and Eastern Anatolian accents; $M = 2.50$, $SD = 1.01$), $t(136) = 39.58$, $p < .001$. The mean difference was 3.82 (95% *CI* [3.63, 4.01]), supporting the intended distinction based on accent standardness.

3.2.1.2 Group stereotype manipulation

Competence ratings are used as a proxy for perceived status, consistent with prior research showing that status is most closely (Sumantry and Choma 2021). The results showed competence attribution was higher for speakers in the "high-status" group (i.e., standard, audio-distorted, and Italian speakers; $M = 4.41$, $SD = 0.57$) than for those in the "low-status" group (i.e., Eastern Anatolian speakers; $M = 3.71$, $SD = 0.72$), $t(136) = 10.21$, $p < .001$. The mean difference was 0.70 (95% *CI* [0.57, 0.84]), indicating consistency with the predicted group-based stereotype structure.

3.2.1.3 Fluency manipulation

Participants rated speakers in the "fluent" group (i.e., standard accent with high audio quality) as significantly more fluent ($M = 6.55$, $SD = 0.86$), than those in the "disfluent" group (i.e., all other speaker types; $M = 5.06$, $SD = 0.91$), $t(136) = 15.32$, $p < .001$. The mean difference was 1.49 (95% CI [1.30, 1.69]), indicating the accuracy of the fluency grouping structure.

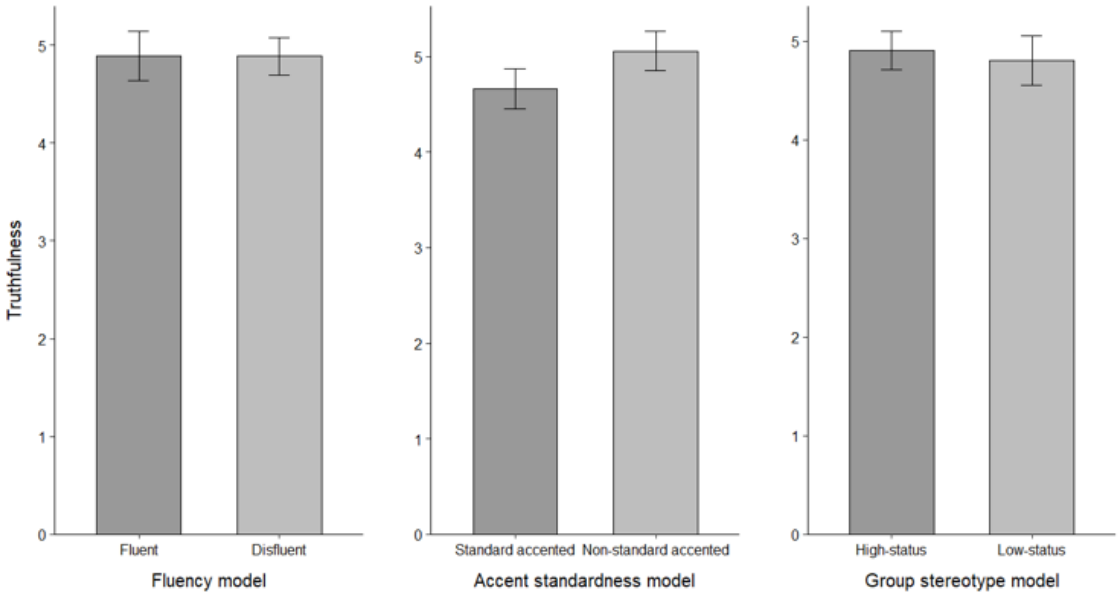
3.2.2 Model Comparison

To evaluate which model best explains perceived truthfulness, three linear mixed-effects models were constructed: predicting truth ratings from accent standardness-based, group stereotype-based, and fluency-based speaker categorizations. Model fit was assessed using Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC), with lower values indicating better fit. Each model included a random intercept for participants to account for within-subject variability.

The accent standardness model demonstrated the best fit (AIC = 3940.00, BIC = 3959.99), outperforming both the fluency model (AIC = 3963.70, BIC = 3983.69) and the group stereotype model (AIC = 3962.81, BIC = 3982.80). The AIC/BIC differences exceed 20, providing strong evidence for a meaningful model preference in favor of accent standardness (Burnham and Anderson 2004). These findings suggest that participants primarily differentiated between speakers based on accent standardness, rather than fluency or perceived social group membership.

To further explore this effect, a post-hoc analysis of the accent standardness model was conducted. Contrary to expectations, non-standard accented speakers were rated as more truthful than standard accented ones (b = -0.39, $SE = 0.08$, t = -4.95, $p < .001$). Figure 3.1 displays truth ratings by group across the fluency, accent standardness, and group stereotype models.

Figure 3.1 Truthfulness ratings across theoretical models



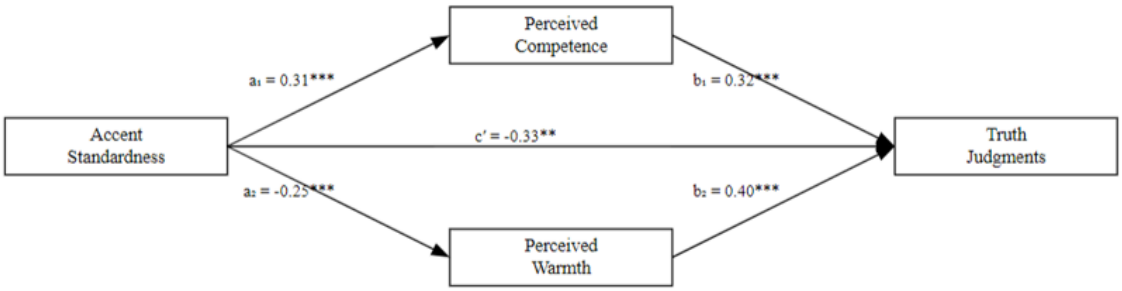
3.2.3 Mediation Analysis

To examine whether the relationship between accent standardness and truth ratings was mediated by trait perceptions, I tested a parallel mediation model using the *lavaan* package with 5,000 bootstrap samples. In this model, accent standardness (coded as 1 = standard, 0 = non-standard) predicted competence and warmth ratings, which in turn predicted truthfulness judgments.

Accent standardness positively predicted competence ratings (a = 0.31, $p < .001$), showing that standard accented speakers were perceived as more competent. In contrast, it negatively predicted warmth ratings (a = -0.25, $p < .001$), such that non-standard accented speakers were perceived as warmer. In turn, both competence (b = 0.32, $p < .001$) and warmth (b = 0.40, $p < .001$) positively predicted truth judgments.

The indirect effects showed a significant positive pathway through competence, *indirect* = 0.10, 95% CI [0.05, 0.15], and a significant negative pathway through warmth, *indirect* = -0.10, 95% CI [0.16, 0.04]. These opposing mediating effects canceled each other out, leaving a statistically significant but modest total effect of accent standardness on truth ratings (c = -0.33, p = .001), favoring non-standard speakers. The mediation structure is visualized in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2 Parallel mediation model of the effect of accent standardness on truth judgments via perceived competence and warmth



4. DISCUSSION

This study investigated how sociolinguistic cues shape listeners' judgments, focusing on three major theoretical explanations of accent bias: accent standardness, group-based stereotypes, and processing fluency. The accent standardness model argues that standard varieties of a language are socially constructed as more legitimate or correct, leading to systematic disadvantages for non-standard accented speakers, regardless of their ethnic/social group status. The group stereotype model posits that listeners rely on social category-based expectations, such that accents associated with low-status ethic groups are perceived as less competent and therefore less credible. The fluency account suggests that disfluent speech, whether through accent or audio distortion, leads to negative speaker and content evaluations due to comprehension difficulties. Among the models tested, accent standardness emerged as the strongest predictor of truth judgments. Interestingly, however, non-standard accented speakers were rated as more truthful overall, despite being perceived as less competent. Mediation analysis revealed that while competence associated with standard accented speakers increased truth judgments, warmth had a similar positive effect and was more strongly attributed to non-standard speakers. The overall pattern showed a stronger effect for warmth, and non-standard accented speakers were favored in perceived truthfulness.

These results suggest that accent standardness may serve as a particularly strong cue in speaker evaluation. Rather than categorizing speakers based on fluency or ethnic group membership, listeners appeared to make the primary distinction between standard and non-standard accents. Despite differences in fluency, participants treated the two standard-accent conditions as similar, and similarly grouped the two non-standard accents together despite differences in social status. This finding aligns with the idea of *standard language ideology* (Milroy 2001), which posits that standard language forms are associated with power and prestige; thus, the speakers of such varieties are automatically evaluated as having more positive qualities. This was reflected in the higher competence-related trait attributions for standard-accented speakers in this study. However, the higher ratings of warmth and truthfulness for

non-standard accented speakers point to a more complex stereotype structure that does not uniformly favor standard speech.

The findings provided support for what Yzerbyt et al. (2005) termed a *compensation pattern*: standard accented speakers benefit from institutional prestige (Giles and Coupland 1991) and are thus associated with competence, while non-standard accented speakers, often devalued in terms of status, are granted compensatory warmth. This trade-off reflects the principle of *positive distinctiveness*, which refers to the motivation to view one's ingroup positively different from outgroups. It is achieved through *social creativity*, a strategy in which low-status groups emphasize alternative, non-dominant dimensions such as warmth or morality to preserve a positive group identity despite structural disadvantage (Tajfel and Turner 1979). High-status group members may be willing to acknowledge the low-status group as superior in social or interpersonal domains, as long as their own dominance in competence-related domains remains unchallenged. Supporting this idea, multiple studies showed that standard accents are consistently evaluated more favorably on the competence dimension, while non-standard accents are usually evaluated equally or more favorably on the warmth dimension (Fuertes et al. 2012; Giles et al. 1992; Hosoda, Stone-Romero, and Walter 2007; Maindidze et al. 2025; Rakić 2019; Yzerbyt, Provost, and Corneille 2005).

These warmth and competence attributions map closely onto the two components of source credibility: expertise and trustworthiness (Hovland, Janis, and Kelly 1953). Competence aligns with expertise, encompassing traits like intelligence and education, while warmth reflects trustworthiness, as it includes traits like sincerity and a good nature. Both competence and warmth dimensions are central to credibility, and prior research suggests they jointly contribute to trust (Oleszkiewicz and Lachowicz-Tabaczek 2016). Yet in the present study, warmth exerted a stronger effect than competence on truth judgements, resulting in a credibility bias in favor of non-standard speakers. This pattern may reflect the relevance of stereotype/context alignment, that is, the match between the traits typically associated with a speaker's social group and the traits valued within the evaluative context. While prior studies have found that high-competence, low-warmth sources are generally more persuasive than low-competence, high-warmth sources (Linne, Schäfer, and Bohner 2022) and that standard accented speakers are typically perceived as more competent, credible, and persuasive (Dragojevic et al. 2020; Fuertes et al. 2012; Lev-Ari and Keysar 2010), these studies often define credibility in terms of expertise rather than sincerity or honesty. The message content in those studies, such as health advice, trivia facts, or product evaluations, tends to emphasize factual accuracy and technical authority, thus prioritizing competence over warmth.

Kuyucu and Mouratidis (2023) found that science news stories in Turkish were judged as less plausible when delivered by a speaker with an Eastern Anatolian accent compared to a speaker with a standard Turkish accent. This finding is particularly relevant, as it involved the same language community and one of the same accent groups examined in the present study. However, the pattern observed in the current study was reversed: non-standard accented speakers were rated as more truthful than speakers with a standard Turkish accent. This reversal suggests that message content can impact the relative importance of competence versus warmth in truth judgements. While competence traits may carry more weight in professional or informational domains, such as science communication, warmth traits may more strongly influence credibility in interpersonal domains, such as when someone shares a personal anecdote.

Supporting this interpretation, research on relationship initiation shows that warmth is prioritized in personal contexts, while competence is more valued in professional ones (Porter and Rigby 2019). Similarly, persuasion research indicates that sources using narrative (anecdotal) evidence are perceived as warmer, while those using statistical evidence are viewed as more competent (Clark, Green, and Simons 2019). There is also evidence to support a similar distinction in accent research, as the small number of studies using personal knowledge rather than factual knowledge as message content (such as "She has access to this building") have shown that when vocal cues indicate doubtfulness, out-group accents are judged as more believable than ingroup accents (Jiang, Gossack-Keenan, and Pell 2020; Jiang, Sanford, and Pell 2018).

Overall, these findings offer initial evidence for a more complex relationship between accent standardness and perceived truthfulness. While much of the existing literature documents a credibility advantage for standard accented speakers (e.g., Boduch-Grabka and Lev-Ari 2021; Kuyucu and Mouratidis 2023; Lev-Ari and Keysar 2010), these effects appear to be context dependent and may be most pronounced in competence-focused domains. In more interpersonal contexts, where perceived sincerity and warmth are likely to play a greater role, non-standard accented speakers may enjoy a credibility advantage. These findings are particularly relevant in real-life scenarios such as court hearings and in narrative persuasion across political, scientific, and marketing communication (Green and Brock 2005), where interpersonal trust can shape broader societal attitudes and decisions.

5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Since this study examined truth judgments only in the context of personal storytelling and did not include a direct comparison with more professional/informational message types, further evidence is needed before drawing definitive conclusions about contextual effects. Future research may directly test how message content and setting interact with accent-based stereotypes to shape evaluations of credibility and real-life decision-making outcomes. Moreover, while the personal stories in this research were carefully created by the researchers and are shown to be equivalent in terms of truthfulness, their equivalence in other factors, such as emotional valence or vividness of detail, was not tested. As narrative persuasion can depend on multiple factors in natural conversation, different stories varying in these factors should be tested to infer whether these results can be generalized to personal storytelling in all contexts.

An additional limitation of this study is that it examined only the direct effects of accent standardness, ethnicity, and fluency, without testing their potential interactions. Furthermore, this study focused on auditory cues alone, but in real-world scenarios, accents are often processed in a complex environment where various cues are available, such as the environmental noise, the interactive nature of communication, appearances, etc., which may interact with accent-based expectations. For example, Hansen et al. (2017) found that among German-speaking participants, individuals who looked Turkish but spoke with a standard German accent received the most favorable evaluations on competence and warmth, compared to all other combinations of appearance and accent. Similarly, Dragojevic and Giles ((2016) demonstrated that reducing fluency through background noise elicited more negative evaluations for a non-standard accented speaker, but had no such effect for a standard accented speaker. These findings highlight that while accent standardness may serve as a particularly salient cue in speaker evaluations, its impact can be moderated by fluency and other group-related markers. Future research is needed to explore the interactive effects of these variables, as understanding how they jointly influence social judgments could offer more nuanced insights.

Lastly, this study was conducted in Turkey, using standard Turkish speakers as participants and including two types of non-standard speakers: one with a regional accent and one with a foreign accent. As the participants self-reported being speakers of standard Turkish, they were likely most familiar with the standard accent, and possibly more accustomed to the regional accent than the foreign one. Moreover, since Turkish is not widely spoken internationally as a second language, cultural attitudes toward second-language speakers may be particularly positive in this context. Together, both culture-specific dynamics and participant/speaker familiarity may have influenced the results. To enhance generalizability, future research should examine a broader range of participant characteristics, speaker types, and cultural contexts.

6. CONCLUSION

This study compared three theoretical explanations for accent bias: accent standardness, group-based stereotyping, and fluency, within a single experimental study. Results indicated that participants primarily categorized speakers based on accent standardness. They grouped together the two standard-accent conditions despite differences in fluency, and the two non-standard accent conditions despite differences in perceived social status. Unexpectedly, non-standard accented speakers were judged to be more truthful than standard-accented speakers, even though they were rated as less competent. This unexpected pattern was explained by higher warmth attributions toward non-standard speakers. These findings align with a stereotype–context match interpretation: in an interpersonal rather than professional context, truthfulness judgments may rely more on perceived warmth than competence, thereby granting non-standard speakers a compensatory advantage. These findings contribute to the accent bias literature by revealing a more nuanced structure of stereotyping linked to accent standardness and provide critical new research avenues for exploring the role of sociolinguistic cues in individuals' judgments.

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APPENDIX A

Descriptives for Stimulus Selection

Table A.1 Believability ratings (means and standard deviations) for all scripts

Text	**M**	**SD**
Antik	5.00	1.53
Düğün	4.47	1.68
Gazete	3.95	2.04
Karpuz	4.42	1.50
Orman	4.05	1.68
Otobüs	4.79	1.51
Simit	5.05	1.39
Tekne	3.95	2.01

Table A.2 Fluency ratings by speaker group (means and standard deviations)

Speaker Group	**M**	**SD**
Azeri	5.12	1.51
Eastern	4.95	1.24
Italian	4.67	1.40
Japanese	4.29	1.35
Standard	5.90	1.25
High Noise	2.36	1.31
Low Noise	4.14	1.40
Medium Noise	2.79	1.67
Rectifier Distortion	4.31	1.63

Table A.3 Status ratings by speaker group (means and standard deviations)

Speaker Group	**M**	**SD**
Azeri	4.19	1.14
Eastern	3.12	1.16
Italian	4.56	1.11
Japanese	4.25	1.21
Standard	4.32	1.09
High Noise	4.09	1.05
Low Noise	4.64	1.01
Medium Noise	4.34	1.12
Rectifier Distortion	4.23	0.96

APPENDIX B

Stimulus Selection Scripts

Orman: Ormanda piknik yapmaya gittim ve su almak için piknik malzemelerini koyduğumuz alandan uzaklaşıp yolumu kaybettim. Telefon çekmiyordu bu yüzden uzun bir süre kendi kendime yolu bulmaya çalıştım. Arada birkaç kişiyle karşılaştım ve yol tarifi istedim ama pek yardımcı olmadılar. En son yolu bulduğumda artık güneş batıyordu ve tüm gün yuvarlaklar çizerek dolandığımı fark ettim.

Karpuz: Semt pazarında alışveriş yaparken bir tezgahta indirimli sebzeler buldum. Ben de tam mevsimiydi diye karpuz alayım dedim. İyi bir tane seçmek için baya uğraştım ve eve geldim. Karpuzu kestiğimde içinden bir sürü böcek çıktı. O kadar rahatsız oldum ki karpuzu çok sevmeme rağmen o günden sonra hiç yiyemedim.

Tekne: Teknede balık tutarken neredeyse hayatımın en büyük balığını yakalıyordum.Tekne sağa sola sallandı, az kalsın suya düşecektim ama balığı kaçırmak istemedim. O kadar büyük ve güzeldi ki, çekmeye çalışırken oltam kırıldı. Balık geri kaçtı ve ne kadar büyük olduğuna kimseyi inandıramadım. (Removed from the main study materials.)

Simit: Sokakta simit alırken bankta oturan bir adam simidini bölüp parçaları kuşlara atıyordu. Ben de yanına oturup simidimi yerken "Ne güzel yapıyorsunuz" dedim. Simidimizi yiyip sohbet ederken evcil hayvan dükkanı işlettiğini ve yaptığı işten ötürü biraz vicdan azabı çektiğini söyledi. Herhalde kuşları besleyerek vicdanını rahatlatıyor diye düşündüm.

Otobüs: Bir gün otobüsle eve dönerken şoför birden durdu ve dışarı çıktı. Ben ve diğer yolcular ne oluyor anlamaya çalışırken adam yanında küçük bir çocuk ile geri döndü. Çocuğun durağı kaçırdığını ve otobüsün peşinden koştuğunu fark etmiş. Yol boyunca çocuğa hangi durakta inmesi gerektiğini tarif edip çocuğun halini sordu. Bir sürü kişi otobüsten inerken adamı tebrik etti.

Antik: Bir grup arkadaşla antik kalıntıları gezdik. Bir kalıntının içine girdiğimizde, duvarda eski duran garip bir sembol fark ettik. Etrafta açıklama göremeyince görevlilere sorduk ama görevliler de anlamını bilmediklerini söylediler. Sonra internetten bakarız diye fotoğrafını çektik. İnternette arattığımızda da hiçbir şey bulamadık, şaşırtıcıydı.

Gazete: Eski bir köyü gezmeye gitmiştim. Yıkık bir evin içinde bir gazete buldum. Okumaya başladım ama isimler ve olaylar hiç tanıdık gelmedi. Tarihe bakınca 20 yıl önce basılmış olduğunu fark ettim, ama gazete sanki dün basılmış gibi yeni duruyordu. (Removed from the main study materials.)

Düğün: Bir düğüne gitmiştim, herkes ya yemek yiyor ya dans ediyordu ama gelin ve damat nedense ortada yoktu. Merakla onları bekliyorduk. Bir süre sonra gelin ve damat, beklenmedik bir şekilde atlarla düğün alanına giriş yaptı. Açıkçası o an çok komiğime gitti ve düğünün en akılda kalan anlarından biri oldu.

New Scripts for the Main Study

Tatil: Tatilde gittiğimiz otelde odamız, otelin en iyi manzarasına sahipti. Üstelik tamamen şans eseri başka birileri son dakika rezervasyon iptali yapmış, odayı ücretsiz yükselttiler. Tüm tatil boyunca kendimizi kraliyet ailesi gibi hissettik.

Doktor: Yazın başında küçük bir operasyon geçirmem gerekiyordu. Açıkçası ilk ameliyatım olacağından biraz tedirgindim. Ameliyattan hemen önce hemşire gelip konuştuğumuz doktorun acil bir işi çıktığını, ameliyatta başka bir doktorun olacağını söyledi. Ben de iyice gerildim. Ama doktorumla tanışınca endişelerim hemen bitti çünkü doktor ilkokul arkadaşım çıktı.