Accent Speaks Louder Than Ability: Elucidating The Effect of Nonnative Accent on Trust

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Abstract

Nonnative accent often leads to prejudicial judgements. In this paper, we examine the effect of a job candidate's Mandarin Chinese accent on a hiring manager's perceptions of trust and the three dimensions of trustworthiness. The results of an online experiment with 179 working adults suggest that speaking with a nonnative accent (vs. *no* accent) adversely affects hiring decision-makers' perceptions of trust and the ability dimension of trustworthiness, but not the benevolence and integrity dimensions. We also examined the effects of perspective taking (vs. *no* perspective taking) on trust and trustworthiness to test its beneficial role in interpersonal evaluations. The findings suggest that perspective taking may significantly mitigate the effect of language-based stigma on people's judgements, providing evidence-based insights for organizational leaders and HR professionals.

Keywords: language-based stigma, bias, trust, trustworthiness, perspective taking

Introduction

How can a supposedly imperfect command of the English language by someone who did not have the good fortune of being born and raised in what linguist David Crystal has termed an "inner circle" country – such as the UK, the US, or Canada – be acceptable grounds for dismissing their considerable expertise?

– Schmid, Here's How Your Foreign Accent Can Unfairly Destroy Your Credibility

Nonnative English speakers' (NNESs) spoken communication is often perceived as being less credible regardless of its truthfulness (Fuertes et al., 2012; Lev-Ari & Keysar, 2010). In 2019, for example, a judge rejected a nonnative English-speaking pathologist's testimony based on the doctor's foreign accent, and minor grammatical and phonetic errors in his statement. As shown in the epigraph, the judge's mistreatment was criticized, and scholars have raised questions concerning unfair judgements toward NNESs based on language-based stigma (Hideg et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2019). Indeed, English is "the global language of business" (Neeley, 2012, p. 177), thereby leading language to be a strong and salient marker for one's identity in work settings. As a result, nearly 1.2 billion NNESs at work around the world (Stevens, 2019) likely encounter explicit and implicit mistreatment and struggle to move up the career ladder (Hosoda et al., 2012; Huang et al., 2013; Livingston et al., 2017; Timming, 2017).

Despite its prevalence, language-based stigma has received limited attention compared to other types of stigmas at work, such as race, gender, age, and disability (Birney, 2020; Hideg et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2019; Russo et al., 2017). In this study, we apply theoretical and empirical insights gleaned from stigma and trust literature to examine how a speaker's nonnative accent (i.e., Mandarin Chinese) damages a listener's trust perceptions in a hiring context. Our study extends evidence on the effects of speakers' accents on interpersonal evaluations (see Fuertes et al. [2012] for review) by examining its effects on trust and three dimensions of trustworthiness:

ability, benevolence, and integrity. This elucidates the current understanding of *why* NNESs can be disadvantaged in a hiring context. Importantly, we also examine the potential beneficial role of perspective taking (PT) to answer the recent call for more research on critical moderators that can help reduce language-based stigma (Hideg et al., 2022). PT helps people put themselves in others' shoes, which can have benefits to interpersonal evaluations (Ku et al., 2015; Todd et al., 2012). Thus, testing the role of PT can help business leaders design and implement evidence-based practices that make their organizations more diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

Hypotheses

Stigma theory suggests that people with a stigmatized identity tend to be devalued because of social stigma (Goffman, 1963). Nonnative accents serve as an implicit cue that leads NNESs to be misjudged (Russo et al., 2017; Summers et al., 2018). Given that trust is a fundamental element of social interaction (Meyer et al., 1995), if nonnative accents unfairly influence people's trust perceptions, this likely hurts NNESs' career opportunities and work relationships substantially. Although past primary studies have examined the relation between nonnative accent and trust (e.g., Caballero & Pell, 2020; Lev-Ari & Keysar, 2010), they have defined trust as a generic concept. Yet, trustworthiness (but not trust) embodies three different attributed characteristics of the trustee, including *ability* – an individual's perceptions based on domain-specific judgements of the trustee's competence, *benevolence* – an individual's perceptions of a trustee's goodwill and caring, and *integrity* – whether the trustee will choose to act ethically and to the benefit of the trustor (Colquitt et al., 2007; Mayer et al., 1995). To address the conceptual and empirical distinctiveness among trust perceptions and to expand our knowledge of *why* nonnative accents unfairly hurt trust perceptions, these perceptions need to be broken down into trust and three dimensions of trustworthiness. Thus, we posit the following:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): People will rate a job candidate with a Mandarin Chinese accent (i.e., NNES) lower than a job candidate with *no* accent (i.e., native English speaker) on (a) trust, (b) ability, (c) benevolence, and (d) integrity.

We also examine the role of perspective taking (PT) – an individual's cognitive process to understand another person's viewpoints (Galinsky et al., 2005). This goal-oriented cognitive effort has been shown to relate to positive attitudes and behaviors toward others (Longmire & Harrison, 2018; Sherf & Morrison, 2020), and tends to result in more favorable outcomes in contexts requiring interpersonal interactions (Galinsky et al., 2008; Ku et al., 2015). Moreover, PT is expected to foster empathy, which involves a greater understanding of and sensitivity toward others (Parker & Axtell, 2001), and promote interpersonal understanding, perceived similarity, and understanding behavior, which are important facilitators of trust development (Williams, 2001). Given the positive influences that PT has on trust processes, we suggest that when people actively engage in PT, they will show higher levels of trust toward an individual. Specifically, we expect that people will trust a job candidate to a greater extent when they engage in PT compared to when they do not. Likewise, the influence of PT on trust processes should result in more positive perceptions of the job candidate's trustworthiness.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): People who engage in perspective taking (vs. those who do not) will rate a job candidate higher on (a) trust, (b) ability, (c) benevolence, and (d) integrity.

More importantly, people's explicit attempt to consider NNESs' viewpoints may mitigate the effect of language-based stigma. To test this effect, we examined PT as a critical moderator for the relation between nonnative accent and trust perceptions. The potential of PT as a mitigator of stigma can be explained by prior research findings suggesting that PT reduces stereotyping and prejudice by improving intergroup attitudes (Ku et al., 2015). Similarly, Parker

et al. (2008) showed that PT is likely to reduce potential attribution errors. Given that people tend to make internal attributions when interpreting others' behavior (Ross, 1977), engaging in PT may weaken this tendency. In the context of this study, PT is expected to effectively reduce people's perceptual errors (Todd et al., 2012; Vescio et al., 2003), meaning that PT will prevent people from making internal attributions based on negative stereotypes about NNESs. As a result, the difference in trust perceptions between nonnative and native English speaking job applicants will be significant when there is *no* PT and negligible when there *is* PT.

> **Hypothesis 3 (H3):** Perspective taking will mitigate the difference in ratings of a job candidate with a Mandarin Chinese accent (i.e., NNES) and those of a job candidate with *no* accent (i.e., native English speaker) on (a) trust, (b) ability, (c) benevolence, and (d) integrity, as engaging in perspective taking (vs. *no* perspective taking) contributes to improving people's ratings of a NNES.

Method/Results

We used experimental vignette methodology (EVM) to test the hypotheses. We solicited nominations of working adults interested in participating in the online experiment from business school students in exchange for extra credit. The final sample used for hypothesis testing included 179 adults working in the U.S. (M_{age} = 31.9 years) who were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions: (1) accent – PT, (2) accent – *no* PT, (3) *no* accent – PT, (4) *no* accent – *no* PT. Participants were given a vignette[1] (adapted from Kim et al. 2004, 2006) and instructed to imagine themselves as a manager in charge of hiring and supervising a tax

[1] We assessed the extent to which the vignette scenario was realistic to the study participants using two items adapted from Dirks et al. (2011): "The events described in this workplace scenario seem realistic" and "It would not be surprising if the events in this scenario actually happened in a workplace." Items were assessed on a 7-point scale ranging from (1) *strongly disagree* to (7) *strongly agree*. With respect to item 1, 85.5% of participants at least *somewhat agree* and 58.1% *agree* or *strongly agree*. For item 2, 86.6% of participants at least *somewhat agree* and 64.8% *agree* or *strongly agree*. Additional details are provided in the online appendix.

accountant. After reading the scenario, they listened to a voicemail left by a job candidate who was described in the scenario. Participants assigned to the accent condition listened to a voicemail of a middle-aged woman with Mandarin Chinese as a first language and English learned as a second language. Those assigned to a *no* accent condition listened to a voicemail of a middle-aged woman whose native language is English. For the two PT conditions, we used two distinct instructions adapted from Baston (2009). Participants in the PT condition were instructed to consider the perspective of the job candidate, whereas those in the *no* PT condition were instructed to take an objective perspective of the job candidate. After listening to the voice message, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire asking about their trust-related perceptions of the candidate. Trust was measured with three items used in Mayer and colleagues' work (e.g., Mayer & Gavin, 2005), and the three dimensions of trustworthiness were assessed using Mayer and Davis's (1999) 17 items. Scales were adapted to reflect the context of this study as recommended (Heggestad et al., 2019).

The results in Figure 1 show that people rated a job candidate with an accent (vs. *no* accent) lower on trust and the ability dimension of trustworthiness. A significant difference was not found in ratings between a job candidate with an accent and a job candidate with *no* accent for benevolence and integrity. Thus, H1a and H1b were supported, but H1c and H1d were not supported. Figure 2 displays that regardless of the existence of an accent, people engaging in PT (vs. *no* PT) rated a job candidate higher on ability, but not trust, benevolence, or integrity. Thus, H2b was supported, but H2a, H2c, and H2d were not supported. Lastly, Figure 3 and Figure 4 show that the difference in ratings on trust and ability between a job candidate with an accent and a job candidate with *no* accent became negligibly small when people were asked to engage

in PT (vs. *no* PT). Thus, H3a and H3b were supported. No support was found for benevolence (H3c) and integrity (H3d).

[Figures 1 through 4 here]

Taken together, our study supports past research showing that nonnative accents lead to negative trust perceptions of NNESs. Importantly, we further elucidate the relation by highlighting that the potential cause of the link may be nonnative accents' damaging effect on perceived competence, but not goodwill or ethicality. Our findings also suggest that active PT may play a significant role in altering people's negative perceptions of NNESs' competence and credibility. Additional details on both the methods and the results of this study are available in the online appendix, including bias checks of random assignment, vignette and script of the voicemail recording, measures, factor analyses, and all study results including descriptive statistics and both significant and nonsignificant findings.

Discussion

Language is a fundamental part of many peoples' identities (Krauss & Chiu, 1998). Based on our findings, we offer several recommendations for managers and organizations. First, the results of this study provide evidence suggesting that a nonnative accent significantly damages people's perceptions of trust and ability, but not benevolence or integrity. This finding is essential as it elucidates *why* nonnative accents hurt perceived trust, which can have a significant influence on high-stakes HR decisions. Indeed, managers should be mindful that a nonnative accent may influence their judgements on the competence and credibility of NNESs, leading to inaccurate and unfair decision-making. Decision-makers should also understand that language is a communication tool to deliver an individual's message, which does not necessarily reflect the person's level of expertise. Moreover, managers who have no experience of learning a second

language should understand that language is a type of tacit knowledge that requires a significant amount of time and cultural experience to be obtained (Jiang, 2000). Relatedly, our results indicate that ability may be more subject to bias than other aspects of an individual's character. Considering this, managers are encouraged to consider the extent to which language-based stigma may result in missing out on highly capable nonnative English-speaking job candidates.

We also provide evidence indicating that engaging in PT significantly buffers the negative effect of a nonnative accent on perceptions of trust and ability, suggesting PT to be an effective cognitive tool in reducing biases against NNESs. Indeed, our results suggest that simply asking someone (e.g., manager, coworker) to explicitly consider the perspective of NNESs can significantly reduce the effects of bias against NNESs. Relatedly, organizations may need to emphasize the importance of PT as part of their employee training programs. Managers may also need to work on exhibiting inclusive leadership by purposefully considering and seeking out diverse voices and implementing feedback gathered from various viewpoints. Lastly, HR professionals should ensure employee recruiting, screening, and selection criteria are valid and free of bias by actively engaging in PT in the process of developing and executing HR practices.

Limitations/Future Research/Conclusion

This study should be considered in light of its limitations which can be informative for future research. First, most of the study participants were White/Caucasian (92.2%) and native English speakers (93.3%), and intergroup bias (Hewstone et al., 2002) might have influenced the results. Second, our sample size is relatively small and future studies may want to validate our findings with a larger sample (see online appendix for the *post-hoc* power analysis). Third, the context of a performance-based error may have had a uniquely strong influence on participants' judgements of ability relative to benevolence and integrity. In the future, researchers may want to

consider isolating and manipulating ability, benevolence, and integrity individually to further triangulate the effects of nonnative accents and PT on interpersonal trust. Fourth, the NNES who recorded the scenario has a Mandarin Chinese accent, and people may have different attitudes toward different foreign accents (Hansen & Dovidio, 2016). Relatedly, female voices were used in the recording. Thus, we did not assess the potential differential effects of a male voice.

In conclusion, more research on nonnative accents and language-based stigma seems warranted. Indeed, there is a growing trajectory of immigration, international business, and telework in which nonnative speakers are becoming increasingly prevalent in work contexts. The need to understand the potential implications of this trend is a timely issue for organizations and employees alike. We hope that our study prompts more research on this topic and our evidence-based insights can help managers and organizations design strategies contributing to NNESs feeling respected and valued for their competence.

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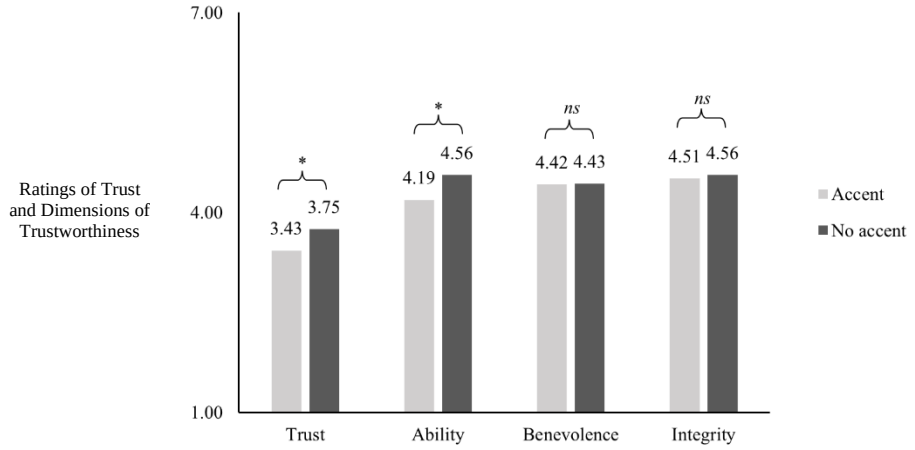
Figure 1

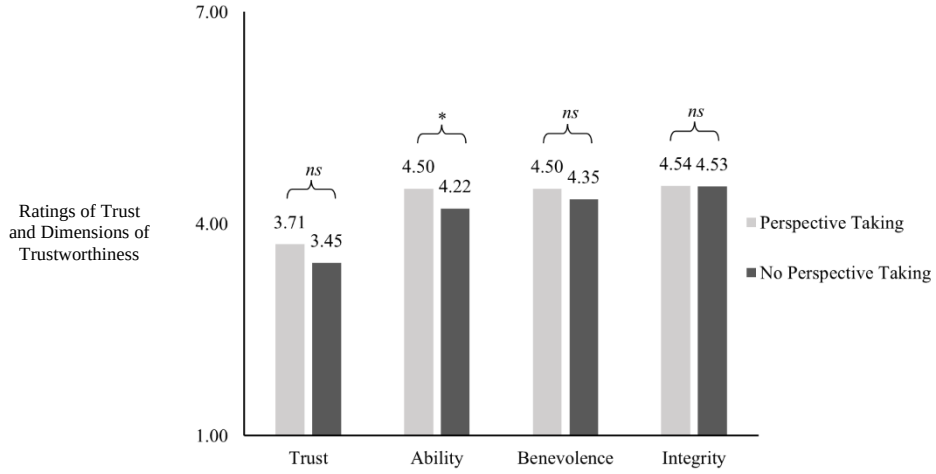
The Effect of Nonnative Accent on Trust and the Three Dimensions of Trustworthiness



Note: Ratings reflect a range of 1 (low degree of trust and trustworthiness) to 7 (high degree of trust and trustworthiness).
N = 179.
* = $p < .05$.
ns = not significant.

Figure 2

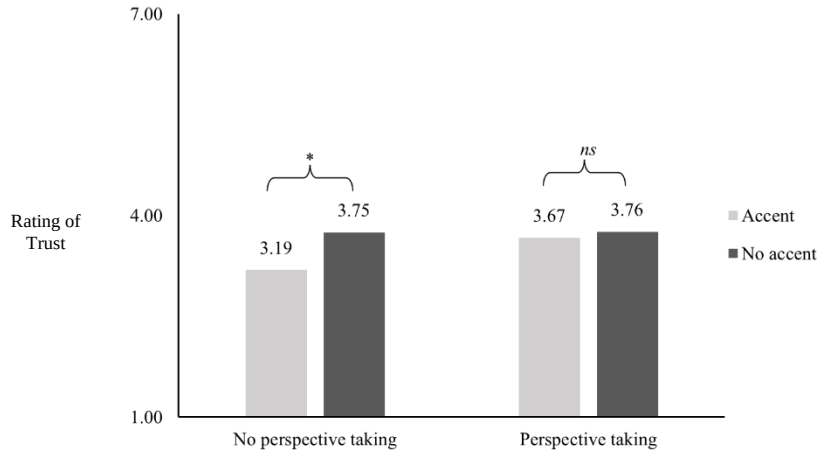
The Effect of Perspective Taking on Trust and the Three Dimensions of Trustworthiness



Note: Ratings reflect a range of 1 (low degree of trust and trustworthiness) to 7 (high degree of trust and trustworthiness).
N = 179.
* = $p < .05$.
ns = not significant.

Figure 3

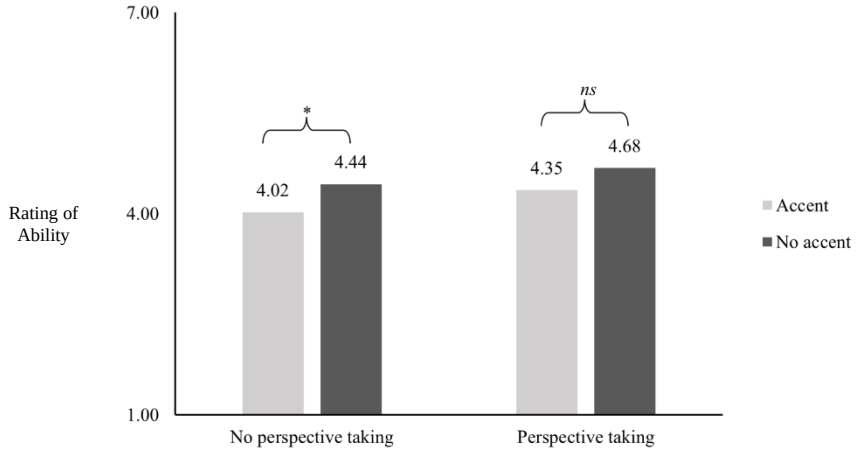
The Effect of Perspective Taking and Nonnative Accent on Trust Ratings



Note: Rating reflects a range of 1 (low degree of trust) to 7 (high degree of trust).
N = 179.
* = $p < .05$.
ns = not significant.

Figure 4

The Effect of Perspective Taking and Nonnative Accent on Ability Ratings



Note: Rating reflects a range of 1 (low degree of ability) to 7 (high degree of ability).
N = 179.
* = $p < .05$.
ns = not significant.

Methods/Results Appendix

(Prepared in accordance with GOM Now submission guidelines)

Participants

We used experimental vignette methodology (EVM) to test the hypotheses. We solicited nominations of working adults interested in participating in the online experiment from business school students in exchange for extra credit. This study received approval from the [University Name withheld] institutional review board and participants provided consent to participate in this research. Responses from participants who failed an attention check were removed.[1] The final sample used for hypothesis testing included 179 adults working in the U.S. (M_{age} = 31.9 years). 71.5% were women and 93.3% reported themselves as a native English speaker. Regarding participants' race/ethnicity, 92.2% were White/Caucasian, 2.2% were African American, 1.7% were Asian, 1.1% were Hispanic, and 2.8% were unspecified.

Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions: (1) nonnative accent – PT, (2) nonnative accent – *no* PT, (3) *no* accent – PT, (4) *no* accent – *no* PT. Method bias checks were performed to assess the random assignment of participants into experimental conditions. Bias checks were based on participant characteristics as reported in an online survey prior to the experiment and included participants' propensity to trust (Frazier et al., 2013), age, gender, race/ethnicity, and nonnative English. As shown in Table A1, the results suggest no significant differences among conditions based on these characteristics.

[Insert Table A1 here]

[1] As an attention check, we included a question (i.e., *What is the name of the applicant you called?*) immediately after participants read their scenario. Participants were asked to choose one among the following five names: Kelly, Katherine, Kim, Kayla, and Kate. Six participants who chose answers other than "Kim" were removed.

Participants were given a vignette (adapted from Kim et al. 2004, 2006) and instructed to imagine themselves as a manager in charge of hiring and supervising a tax accountant. After reading the scenario, participants listened to a voicemail recording left by the job candidate described in the scenario. Participants assigned to conditions with a nonnative accent listened to a voicemail of a middle-aged woman with Mandarin Chinese as a first language and English learned as a second language (a pilot study was conducted to assess the presence of a nonnative accent). Those assigned to a *no* accent condition listened to a voicemail of a middle-aged woman whose native language is English. For the two PT conditions, we used two distinct instructions adapted from Baston (2009). Participants in the PT condition were instructed to consider the perspective of the job candidate, whereas those in the *no* PT condition were instructed to take an objective perspective of the job candidate. The content of the experiment – vignette, script of the voicemail and instructions for the PT conditions – are displayed in Table A2.

[Insert Table A2 here]

Manipulation Check

To check the accent manipulation, participants were asked to answer the following dichotomous question at the end of the experiment: *"Did Kim have an accent?"* Aside from two missing manipulation check data points, 100% of the participants exposed to the nonnative accent manipulation and 100% of the participants exposed to the *no* accent manipulation correctly indicated the assigned condition. The crosstab test of the manipulation effect was significant ($\chi^2 = 177.00$, $p < .001$), suggesting a successful accent vs. *no* accent manipulation.

To check the PT manipulation, participants were asked to answer the following dichotomous question at the end of the experiment: *"Were you instructed to imagine how the person interviewed feels or to remain objective?"* Aside from two missing data points, 78% of

the participants exposed to the PT manipulation and 94% of the participants exposed to the *no* PT manipulation correctly indicated the assigned condition. The crosstab test of the manipulation effect was significant ($\chi^2 = 93.883$, $p < .001$), suggesting a successful PT vs. *no* PT manipulation.

We also assessed the extent to which participants viewed the vignette as a realistic scenario using two items adapted from Dirks et al. (2011). Participants were asked to rate the following items on a 7-point scale ranging from (1) *strongly disagree* to (7) *strongly agree*: (Item 1) "The events described in this workplace scenario seem realistic" and (Item 2) "It would not be surprising if the events in this scenario actually happened in a workplace." With respect to item 1, 85.5% of participants at least *somewhat agree* and 58.1% *agree* or *strongly agree*. For item 2, 86.6% of participants at least *somewhat agree* and 64.8% *agree* or *strongly agree*. Figure A1 displays the full results of the realistic scenario assessments. We also complemented these assessments with a method bias check to assess if ratings of these items among experimental conditions might have influenced the results of the study. As displayed in Table A3, the results suggest no significant differences among conditions based on ratings of a realistic scenario.

[Figure A1 and Table A3 about here]

Measures

After listening to the voice message, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire asking about their trust-related perceptions of the job candidate (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Scales were adapted to reflect the context of this study based on recommendations for scale adaptation in organizational research (i.e., Heggestad et al., 2019). Attention check and manipulation check questions were built into all conditions as described above. Measurement items used in this study are provided in Table A4.

[Insert Table A4 here]

Trust. We assessed trust using three items adapted from Mayer and colleagues' research that defines trust as an individual's willingness to be vulnerable to another party (Mayer & Davis, 1999; Mayer & Gavin, 2005; Mayer et al., 1995). An example item is "I would be willing to let Kim have complete control over my future in this company" ($\alpha = .76$).

Trustworthiness. The three dimensions of trustworthiness were measured with 17 items adapted from Mayer and Davis (1999). The scale measuring *ability* comprises six items and an example item is "Kim is very capable of performing her job" ($\alpha = .90$). The *benevolence* scale comprises five items and an example item is "Kim is very concerned about my welfare" ($\alpha = .85$). The scale assessing *integrity* consists of six items and an example item is "Kim has a strong sense of justice" ($\alpha = .89$).

Results

Prior to testing the proposed hypotheses, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed using Mplus to test the measurement model of all latent dependent variables. As shown in Table A5, the CFA results indicated that treating trust and the three dimensions of trustworthiness (ability, benevolence, integrity) as separate constructs fit the data significantly better than treating any combination of the dependent variables as a single construct.

[Insert Table A5 here]

All hypotheses were tested using one-way ANOVA models in SPSS. Means, standard deviations, internal consistency estimates, and correlations are shown in Table A6. The results in Figure A2 show that individuals rated a nonnative English speaker job candidate lower than a native English speaker job candidate on trust [$M_{accent} = 3.43$, $M_{no\ accent} = 3.75$, $F(1,177) = 4.082$, $p < .05$] and the ability dimension of trustworthiness [$M_{accent} = 4.19$, $M_{no\ accent} = 4.56$, $F(1,177) = 6.842$, $p < .05$], but not the benevolence and integrity dimensions [$M_{accent} = 4.42$, $M_{no\ accent} =$

4.43, $F(1,177) = .014$, *ns* and $M_{accent} = 4.51$, $M_{no\ accent}$ 4.56, $F(1,177) = .134$, *ns*, respectively]. Thus, H1a and H1b were supported, but H1c and H1d were not supported.

[Insert Table A6 and Figure A2 here]

As shown in Figure A3, regardless of the existence of a nonnative accent, people who engaged in PT were shown to rate a job candidate higher than those who did not on the ability dimension of trustworthiness [$M_{PT} = 4.50$, $M_{no\ PT} = 4.22$, $F(1,177) = 3.916$, $p < .05$], but not trust [$M_{PT} = 3.71$, $M_{no\ PT} = 3.45$, $F(1,177) = 2.645$, *ns*] or the other two dimensions of trustworthiness [benevolence: $M_{PT} = 4.50$, $M_{no\ PT} = 4.35$, $F(1,177) = 1.488$, *ns*; integrity: $M_{PT} = 4.54$, $M_{no\ PT} = 4.53$, $F(1,177) = .014$, *ns*]. Thus, H2b was supported, but H2a, H2c and H2d were not supported.

[Insert Figure A3 here]

Lastly, Figure A4 and Figure A5 show that PT mitigated the difference in ratings between a nonnative English speaker and a native English speaker job candidate on trust [*no* PT condition: $M_{accent} = 3.19$, $M_{no\ accent} = 3.75$, $F(1,88) = 5.768$, $p < .05$; PT condition: $M_{accent} = 3.67$, $M_{no\ accent} = 3.76$, $F(1,87) = .182$, *ns*] and the ability dimension of trustworthiness [*no* PT condition $M_{accent} = 4.02$, $M_{no\ accent} = 4.44$, $F(1,88) = 4.207$, $p < .05$; PT condition: $M_{accent} = 4.35$, $M_{no\ accent} = 4.68$, $F(1,87) = 2.918$, *ns*]. However, the mitigating effects of PT for the benevolence dimension [*no* PT condition, $M_{accent} = 4.39$, $M_{no\ accent} = 4.30$, $F(1,88) = .232$, *ns*; PT condition, $M_{accent} = 4.44$, $M_{no\ accent} = 4.58$, $F(1,87) = .728$, *ns*] and integrity dimension [*no* PT condition, $M_{accent} = 4.44$, $M_{no\ accent} = 4.62$, $F(1,88) = .952$, *ns*; PT condition, $M_{accent} = 4.58$, $M_{no\ accent} = 4.49$, $F(1,87) = .260$, *ns*] were not significant. These nonsignificant results are displayed in Figure A6 and Figure A7. Thus, H3a and H3b were supported, but H3c and H3d were not supported.

[Insert Figure A6 and Figure A7 here]

Post-Hoc Power Analysis

We performed a “post-hoc power” or “observed power” analysis of the statistically significant results (Bliese & Wang, 2020). The result of each post-hoc power analysis is reported below the figure of the respective significant finding. The results showed an observed power of 52% for the effect of accent vs. *no* accent on trust and 74% for the effect of accent vs. no accent on the ability dimension of trustworthiness (Figure A2). An observed power of 50% was found for the effect of perspective taking vs. no perspective taking on the ability dimension of trustworthiness (Figure A3). With respect to the no perspective taking condition, an observed power of 66% was found for the effect of accent vs. no accent on trust (Figure A4) and 53% for the effect of accent vs. no accent on the ability dimension of trustworthiness (Figure A5). The results of post-hoc power analyses ranged from 50% to 74% for statistically significant findings. This range is consistent with other published studies reporting a small sample size as a limitation (e.g., Shao et al., 2021). Future research, however, is encouraged to cross-validate the findings of this study with a larger sample size.

Table A1

Bias Checks of Random Assignment of Participants into Experimental Conditions

Participant variable	Experimental Condition	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*F*(3,175); p-value	Robustness tests	Result
Propensity to trust	Accent – perspective taking.	49	4.89	1.51	.578; p = .630	Welch's test: p = .658 Brown-Forsythe's test: p = .632	No significant difference among groups in propensity to trust.
	Accent – no perspective taking.	48	4.69	1.28			
	No accent – perspective taking.	40	4.73	1.21			
	No accent – no perspective taking.	42	5.00	1.32			
Age	Accent – perspective taking.	49	32.39	12.88	.475; p = .700	Welch's test: p = .699 Brown-Forsythe's test: p = .707	No significant difference among groups in age.
	Accent – no perspective taking.	48	30.06	12.25			
	No accent – perspective taking.	40	31.80	13.86			
	No accent – no perspective taking.	42	33.55	17.73			
Gender	Accent – perspective taking.	49	.71	.46	.137; p = .938	Welch's test: p = .937 Brown-Forsythe's test: p = .938	No significant difference among groups in gender.
	Accent – no perspective taking.	48	.69	.47			
	No accent – perspective taking.	40	.75	.44			
	No accent – no perspective taking.	42	.71	.46			
Race/ Ethnicity	Accent – perspective taking.	49	.08	.28	.208; p = .891	Welch's test: p = .857 Brown-Forsythe's test: p = .889	No significant difference among groups in race/ethnicity.
	Accent – no perspective taking.	48	.08	.28			
	No accent – perspective taking.	40	.05	.22			
	No accent – no perspective taking.	42	.10	.30			
Nonnative English	Accent – perspective taking.	49	.04	.20	1.082; p = .358	Welch's test: p = .326 Brown-Forsythe's test: p = .352	No significant difference among groups in nonnative English.
	Accent – no perspective taking.	48	.10	.31			
	No accent – perspective taking.	40	.03	.16			
	No accent – no perspective taking.	42	.10	.30			

Note: N = 179. Method bias checks were performed to assess the random assignment of participants into experimental conditions. Tests were based on participant characteristics as reported in an online survey prior to the experiment and included participants' propensity to trust, age, gender, race/ethnicity and nonnative English. Propensity to trust measured with a four-item scale from Frazier et al. (2013), including '*I usually trust people until they give me a reason not to trust them*,' '*Trusting another person is not difficult for me*,' '*My typical approach is to trust new acquaintances until they prove I should not trust them*,' and ' *My tendency to trust others is high*.' Age in years. Gender coded as 1 = female and 0 = male. Race/ethnicity coded as 1 = non-White/non-Caucasian and 0 = White/Caucasian. Nonnative English coded as 1 = nonnative English speaker and 0 = native English speaker. Results suggest no significant differences among conditions based on these characteristics.

Table A2

Vignette, Recording Script and Perspective Taking Manipulations

Vignette

Kim is an applicant for the accountant position that has passed the initial interview screening for candidates. However, upon checking Kim's employment references, you discovered that she allegedly filed an incorrect tax return. You called to ask Kim about this discovery but had to leave her a voice message instead. Kim returned your call and left you a voice message.

Script for the recording

I want to go on the record with you in saying that those accusations are true I was guilty in preparing an incorrect tax return. It is quite a long and drawn-out story, but the situation was that there had been new tax codes passed recently which were relevant to that client's situation. Truth be told, I was not as knowledgeable about the new codes as I should have been and, as a result, miscalculated the tax return. Now I'm just looking for a new start… And I'm glad that you brought it up, because I want you to know that although that accusation regarding the return is true, I am truly sorry for what occurred and will not let it happen again. And your firm would have no concerns about my ability as an accountant if I am hired.

Perspective taking manipulations

Instruction for the perspective taking condition: Imagine how the person interviewed feels about what has happened and how it has affected her life. Try to feel the full impact of the interviewee's experiences and how she feels as a result. Put yourself in her shoes.

Instruction for the no perspective taking condition: Take an objective perspective toward what is described. To remain objective, do not let yourself get caught up in how the person who is interviewed feels about her experience. Remain objective and detached.

Table A3

Method Bias Checks of Realistic Rating Among Experimental Conditions

Realistic rating item	Experimental Condition	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*F*(3,175); p-value	Robustness tests	Result
Item 1	Accent – perspective taking.	49	5.33	1.21	1.420; *p* = .239	Welch's test: *p* = .104 Brown-Forsythe's test: *p* = .230	No significant difference among groups in rating of Item 1.
	Accent – no perspective taking.	48	5.31	1.13			
	No accent – perspective taking.	40	5.75	0.78			
	No accent – no perspective taking.	42	5.48	1.23			
Item 2	Accent – perspective taking.	49	5.61	1.12	.805; *p* = .492	Welch's test: *p* = .566 Brown-Forsythe's test: *p* = .494	No significant difference among groups in rating of Item 2.
	Accent – no perspective taking.	48	5.69	0.95			
	No accent – perspective taking.	40	5.75	0.93			
	No accent – no perspective taking.	42	5.40	1.31			

Note: N = 179. Method bias checks were performed to assess the potential influence of perceptions of a realistic scenario among experimental conditions. Tests were based on participants responses to two items: (Item 1) "The events described in this workplace scenario seem realistic" and (Item 2) "It would not be surprising if the events in this scenario actually happened in a workplace." Items were assessed on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*. Results suggest no significant differences on realistic rating across experimental conditions.

Table A4

Measurement Items

Trust (α = .76; 1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*)

- I would be willing to let Kim have complete control over my future in this company.
- I would be comfortable giving Kim a task or problem which was critical to me, even if I could not monitor her actions.
- I am fine with Kim having influence over issues that are important to me at work.

Trustworthiness

***Ability* (α = .90; 1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*)**

- Kim is very capable of performing her job.
- Kim is known to be successful at the things she tries to do.
- Kim has much knowledge about the work that needs to be done.
- I feel very confident about Kim's skills.
- Kim has specialized capabilities that can increase our performance.
- Kim is well-qualified.

***Benevolence* (α = .85; 1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*)**

- Kim is very concerned about my welfare.
- My needs and desires are very important to Kim.
- Kim would not knowingly do anything to hurt me.
- Kim really looks out for what is important to me.
- Kim will go out of her way to help me.

***Integrity* (α = .89; 1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*)**

- Kim has a strong sense of justice.
- I never have to wonder whether Kim will stick to her word.
- Kim tries hard to be fair in dealings with others.
- Kim's actions and behaviors are very consistent.
- I like Kim's values.
- Sound principles seem to guide Kim's behavior.

Note: To assess trust, given that there are some variations in measurement items across difference studies, we used three items clearly reflecting the definition of trust (i.e., willingness to be vulnerable to another party) used in the seminal studies (e.g., Mayer & Davis, 1999; Mayer & Gavin, 2005; Mayer et al., 1995).

Table A5

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) of Latent Dependent Variables

Model	Description	χ^2	*df*	$\Delta\chi^2$	RMSEA	CFI	TLI
Baseline model	All dependent variables treated as separate constructs.	333.291	164		0.076	0.922	0.910
Model 1	The correlation between Trust and Ability fixed to 1.	357.736	165	24.445(1)***	0.081	0.912	0.898
Model 2	The correlation between Trust and Benevolence fixed to 1.	429.624	165	96.333(1)***	0.095	0.879	0.860
Model 3	The correlation between Trust and Integrity fixed to 1.	382.528	165	49.237(1)***	0.086	0.900	0.885
Model 4	The correlation between Ability and Benevolence fixed to 1.	542.647	165	209.356(1)***	0.113	0.827	0.800
Model 5	The correlation between Ability and Integrity fixed to 1.	490.563	165	157.272(1)***	0.105	0.851	0.828
Model 6	The correlation between Benevolence and Integrity fixed to 1.	467.007	165	133.716(1)***	0.101	0.861	0.840
Model 7	All dependent variables treated as a single construct.	701.249	170	367.958(6)***	0.132	0.756	0.728

Note: N = 179. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed in Mplus to test the measurement model of all latent dependent variables. $\Delta\chi^2$ test was assessed using CHIDIST function in Excel. *Df* = degrees of freedom. RMSEA=root-mean-square error of approximation. CFI = comparative fit index. TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index.
***$p < 0.001$.

Table A6

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Study Variables

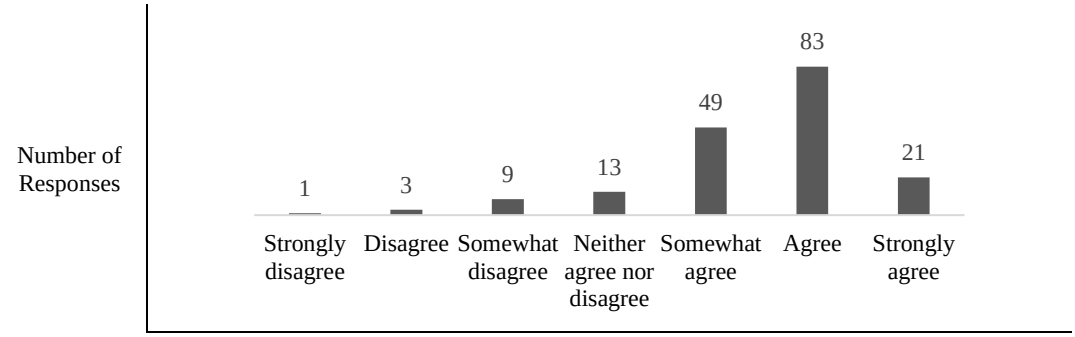
	M	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Dependent variables												
1. Trust	3.58	1.07	*(.76)*									
2. Ability	4.36	0.95	.71	*(.90)*								
3. Benevolence	4.42	0.85	.43	.51	*(.85)*							
4. Integrity	4.53	0.85	.61	.68	.62	*(.89)*						
Independent variables												
5. Accent	0.54	0.50	-.15	-.19	-.01	-.03						
6. Perspective taking	0.50	0.50	.12	.15	.09	.01	.02					
Participant characteristics												
7. Propensity to trust	4.83	1.24	.13	.14	.22	.15	-.03	-.01	*(.83)*			
8. Age	31.91	14.16	-.10	.04	-.07	.01	-.05	.02	.19			
9. Gender	0.72	0.45	-.11	.03	-.02	.01	-.03	.03	-.10	.06		
10. Race/ethnicity	0.08	0.27	.10	-.04	-.07	.01	.02	-.04	-.18	-.09	.05	
11. Nonnative English	0.07	0.25	.04	.04	.12	.13	.02	-.13	-.18	-.15	.12	.34

$N = 179$. Correlations $\geq |.15|$ significant at $p < .05$. Reliability coefficient of latent constructs listed in the diagonal in round brackets. Propensity to trust measured with a four-item scale from Frazier et al. (2013), including '*I usually trust people until they give me a reason not to trust them*,' '*Trusting another person is not difficult for me*,' '*My typical approach is to trust new acquaintances until they prove I should not trust them*,' and ' *My tendency to trust others is high*.' Age in years. Gender coded as 1 = female and 0 = male. Race/ethnicity coded as 1 = non-White/non-Caucasian and 0 = White/Caucasian. Nonnative English coded as 1 = nonnative English speaker and 0 = native English speaker.

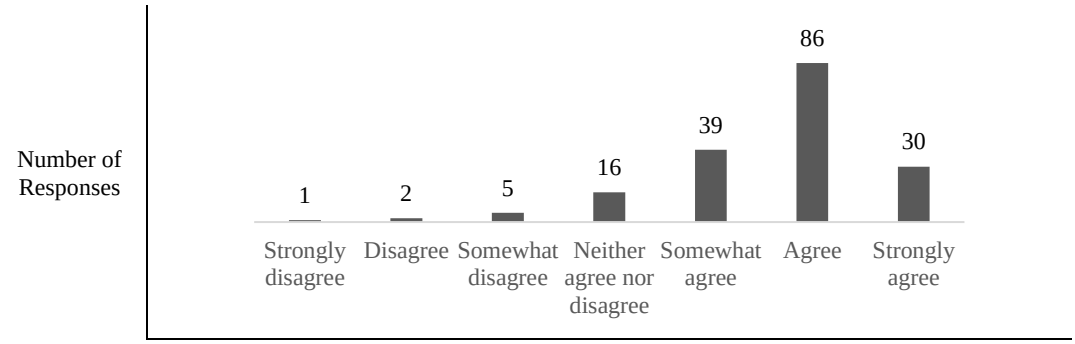
Figure A1

Check of a Realistic Vignette Scenario

Item 1: *The events described in this workplace scenario seem realistic*.



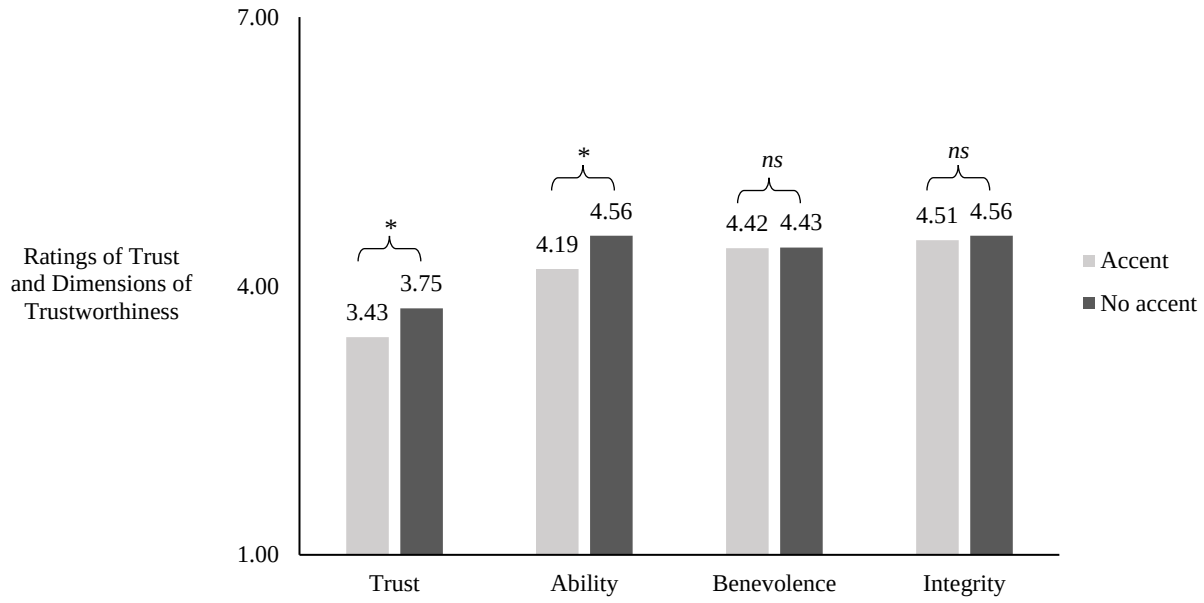
Item 2: *It would not be surprising if the events in this scenario actually happened in a workplace.*



N = 179. Rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree.

Figure A2

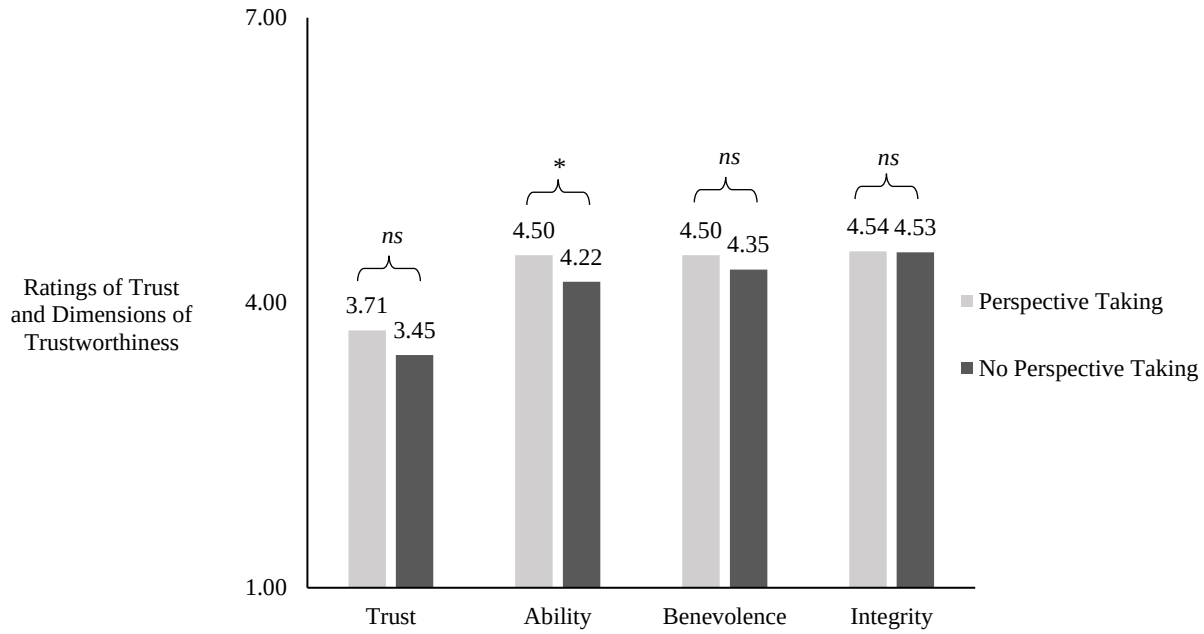
The Effect of Nonnative Accent on Trust and the Three Dimensions of Trustworthiness



Note: Ratings reflect a range of 1 (low degree of trust and trustworthiness) to 7 (high degree of trust and trustworthiness).
Post hoc power analysis of the effect of Nonnative Accent on Trust = .520 (52%).
Post hoc power analysis of the effect of Nonnative Accent on Ability = .739 (74%).
$N = 179$.
* = $p < .05$.
ns = not significant.

Figure A3

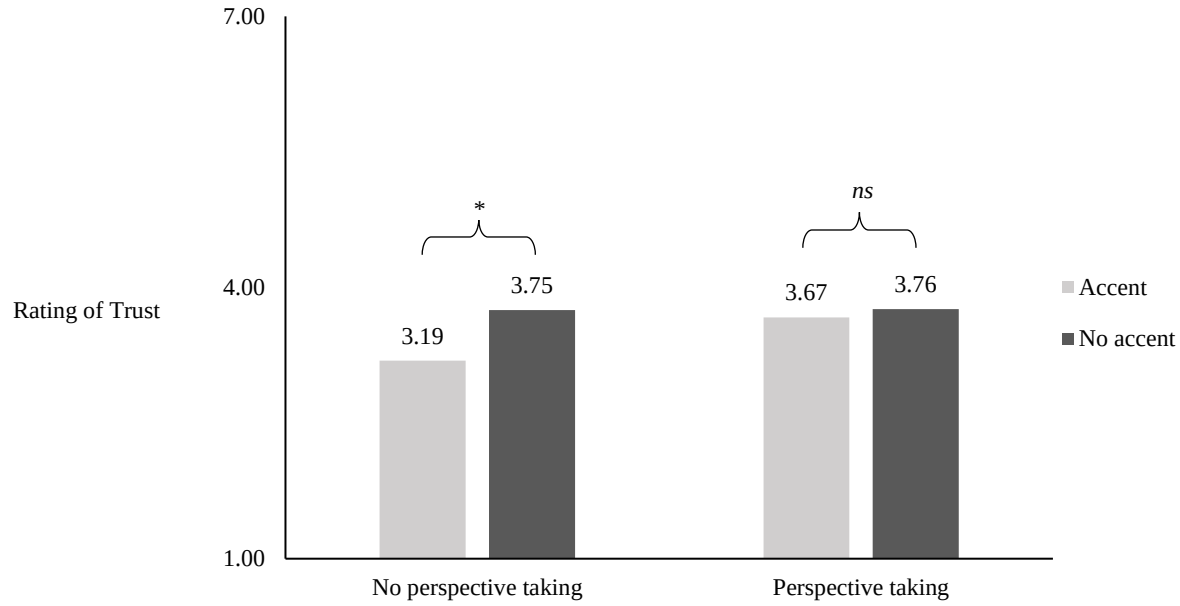
The Effect of Perspective Taking on Trust and the Three Dimensions of Trustworthiness



Note: Ratings reflect a range of 1 (low degree of trust and trustworthiness) to 7 (high degree of trust and trustworthiness).
Post hoc power analysis of the effect of Perspective Taking on Ability = .503 (50%)
N = 179.
* = $p < .05$.
ns = not significant.

Figure A4

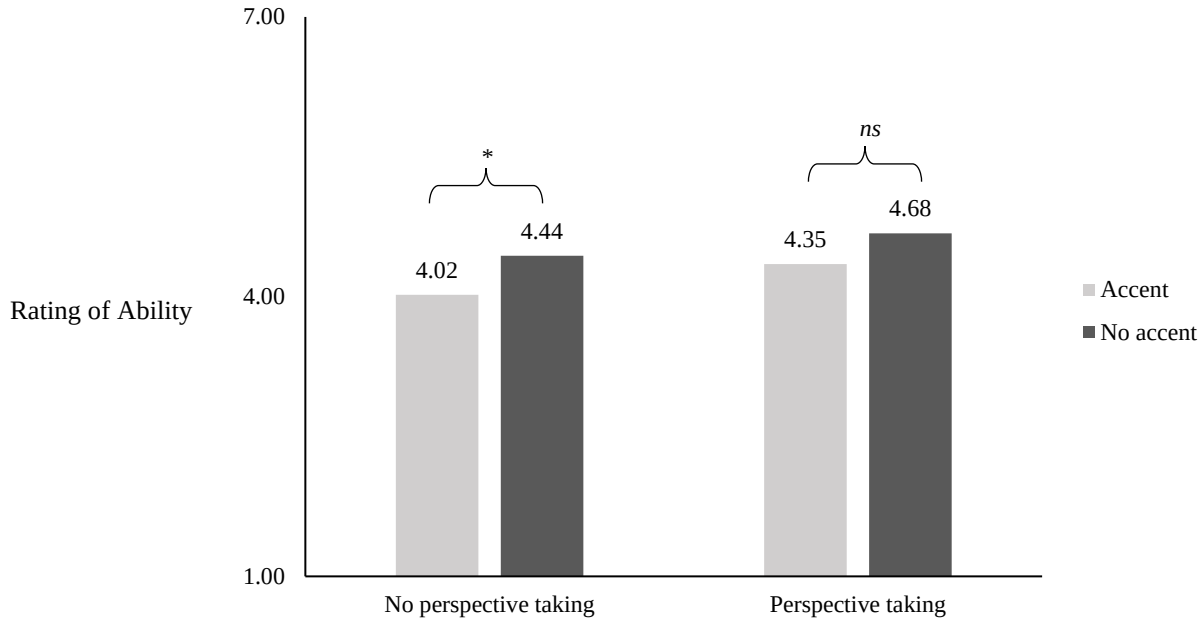
The Effect of Perspective Taking and Nonnative Accent on Trust Ratings



Note: Rating reflects a range of 1 (low degree of trust) to 7 (high degree of trust).
Post hoc power analysis of the effect of Nonnative Accent on Trust when there is no Perspective Taking = .661 (66%).
N = 179.
* = $p < .05$.
ns = not significant.

Figure A5

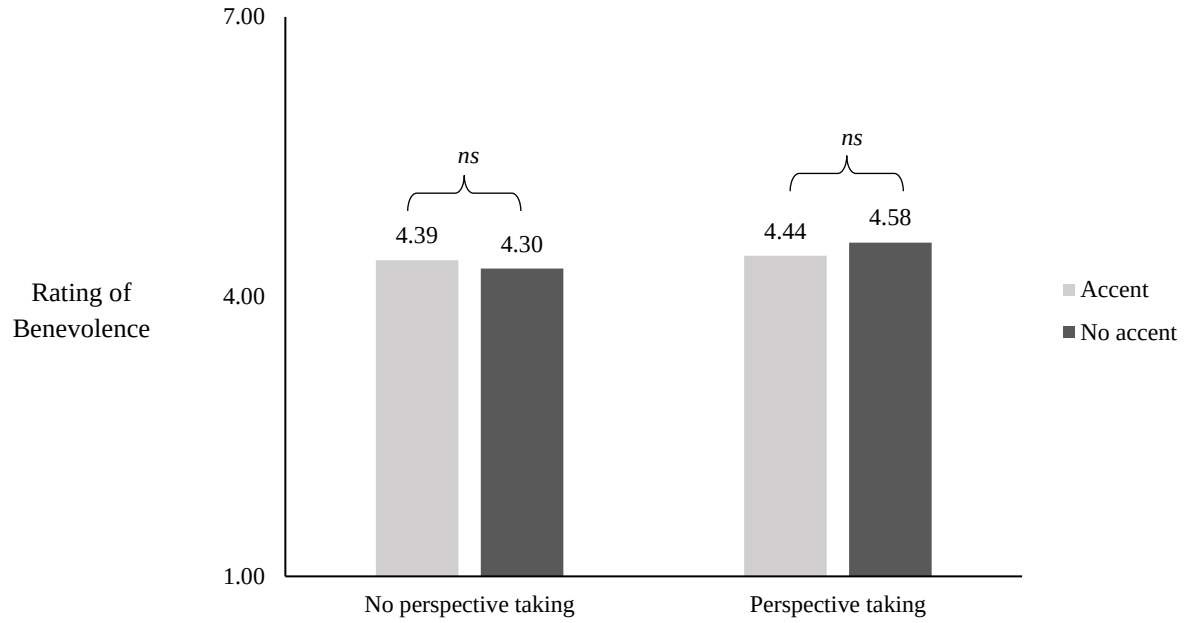
The Effect of Perspective Taking and Nonnative Accent on Ability Ratings



Note: Rating reflects a range of 1 (low degree of ability) to 7 (high degree of ability).
Post hoc power analysis of the effect of Nonnative Accent on Ability when there is no Perspective Taking = .527 (53%).
N = 179.
* = $p < .05$.
ns = not significant.

Figure A6

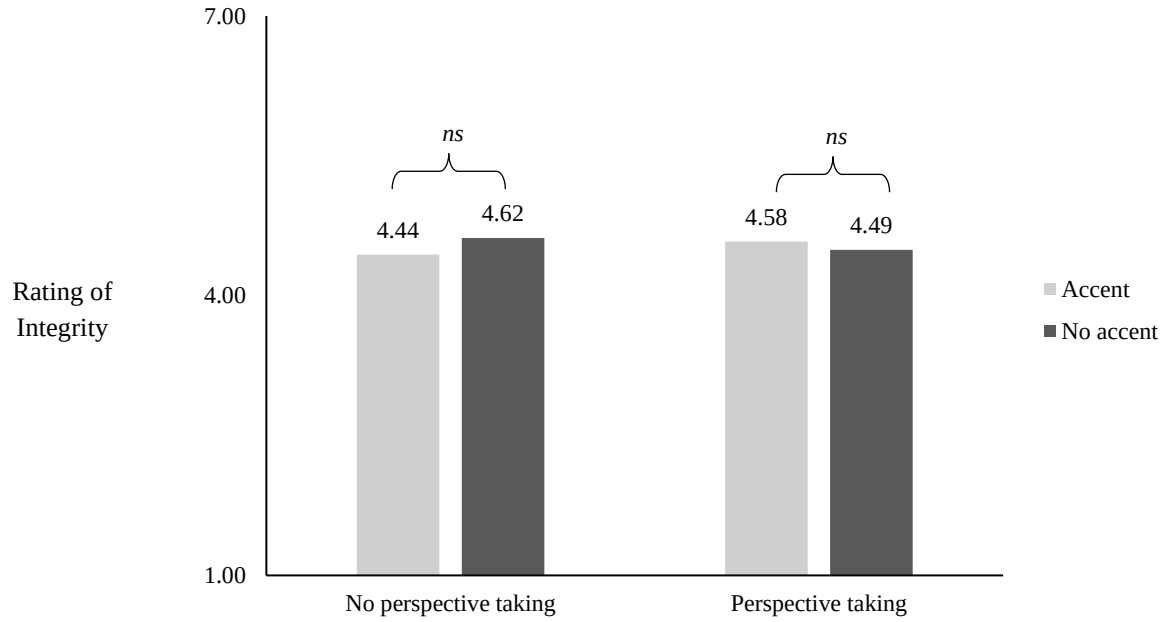
The Effect of Perspective Taking and Nonnative Accent on Benevolence Ratings



Note: Rating reflects a range of 1 (low degree of benevolence) to 7 (high degree of benevolence).
N = 179.
* = $p < .05$.
ns = not significant.

Figure A7

The Effect of Perspective Taking and Nonnative Accent on Integrity Ratings



Note: Rating reflects a range of 1 (low degree of integrity) to 7 (high degree of integrity).
N = 179.
* = $p < .05$.
ns = not significant.

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