Many Ways to Pronounce *Brötchen*: A Review of Nonnative Accent Discrimination Research in Germany

Chrystal L. Krichel

Buying fresh bread at the bakery is both the heartbeat of German culture and a common setting where nonnative speakers find themselves publicly saying the cherished but difficult to pronounce *Brötchen* (bread roll). Because a nonnative accent can be detected after hearing a single word (Park 2013), just saying the word *Brötchen* is enough to be perceived as foreign. Based on this quickly recognized accent, nonnative speakers have been rated as less intelligent, less loyal, less trustworthy, and less competent than native-accented speakers (Birney, Rabinovich et al. 2020: 496).

Nonnative accent discrimination is a form of language-based discrimination that produces unfair treatment of an individual or a group of individuals due to their accent and can serve as a stowaway for other forms of discrimination (Ng 2007: 106–108). A nonnative speaker is someone who learns a language as an adult and, as a result, most likely keeps an accent that is characterized by their native language/s (Lippi-Green 2012). A nonnative accent is a salient cue for ethnicity, perhaps even more so than other visual cues such as skin color (Birney, Roessel et al. 2020; Hansen & Dovidio 2016), and can mark one as foreign-born as soon as one begins talking. While one may wonder if someone is foreign-born based on visual cues, a nonnative accent works as a confirmation of foreignness.

After an increase of refugees to Germany in 2015, the country saw a resurgence of ethnic discrimination and racist acts of violence toward immigrants (Koehler 2018). In 2015, the PEGIDA[1] movement regained momentum, compelling thousands of people to take to the streets weekly to march in protest against immigrants from Muslim countries (Adam 2015). In 2016, the number of xenophobic hate crimes doubled from those reported in 2014 (Wagner et al. 2020). And in 2017, the AfD,[2] a right-wing political party with an anti-immigration platform, became the third

1 PEGIDA is an acronym for *Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes*, which translates to *Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the Occident* and is an organization known for its anti-immigrant views.

2 AfD is an acronym for *Alternative für Deutschland*, which translates to *Alternative for Germany* and is an organization known for its nationalistic platform.

largest in Germany. Renewed anti-immigrant sentiment in Germany is a cause for concern. In 2019, the most cited request for discrimination-related counseling in Germany was related to ethnicity (Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency 2020).

Since nonnative speakers are a natural companion to immigration, their increase in Germany can be expected (Roessel et al. 2020: 88). Germany has always experienced a steady flow of immigration (Bade 1992). Most evident of this German experience throughout the last 70 years is the defining role it has played in Germany's current language diversity. In the 1950s and 1960s, so-called ›Guest Workers‹ *(Gastarbeiter)* from Mediterranean countries (in the 1960s these workers were mainly of Turkish origin) were invited into Germany to work and ended up staying (Cindark & Devran 2020). Russian-speaking minorities include various immigration groups over the last 30 years. Among them, the most predominant subgroup comprises the 2.3 million who are commonly called (late) repatriates *([Spät-]Aussiedler)*, and whose highpoint of immigration was the mid-1990s after the fall of the Soviet Union (Dück 2020). Crises in different parts of the world—including civil war in Syria—have brought over 5.5 million refugees to Germany between 2015 and 2017 (Statista 2019). Also, foreign workers continue to arrive from within the European Union. In 2019, Germany hosted 13.1 million migrants, making it the second-largest destination country worldwide (McAuliffe et al. 2019). Germany is an immigrant nation.

However, the monolingual mindset of High German *(Hochdeutsch)* does not reflect the language reality of Germany (Rühlmann & McMonagle 2019). The fact that there are varieties in the way that German is spoken is neither new nor confined to immigrants. In just a short trip from one German town to another, one can hear the difference in the historically and widely used regional dialects. Regional dialects are traditional, local varieties of German that use different lexicons, phonologies, and syntaxes (Haas-Gebhard 2016). Along with immigrants, regional dialect speakers face language-based discrimination in Germany, which warrants its own distinguished research (Lameli 2013). While a regional dialect is subjected to negative bias, it is the distinction of the nonnative accent that carries associations of foreignness and disfluency and is, in general, perceived more negatively (Gluszek & Dovidio 2010).

A nonnative accent may be foreign, but not every foreign accent is nonnative (e.g., foreign German accents from Switzerland or Austria). Native speakers from other countries share a solidarity of natively speaking the same language, which is not the case for nonnative speakers (Fuertes et al. 2012). Therefore, nonnative speakers are a group clear-cut from both regional dialect and foreign-accented speakers (Gluszek & Dovidio 2010).

When someone learns German after puberty, some degree of a nonnative accent remains when speaking German, no matter how fluent one becomes or how long one lives in Germany (Moyer 2004). Therefore, how thick an accent is is not related to ›how hard‹ one works at mastering German. A nonnative speaker is a multicom-

petent language user, not a deficient native speaker (Cook 1999: 185). After an immigrant has accomplished the arduous task of learning German, being judged for not knowing German is no longer the issue; rather, how it is spoken and with *which* accent (Lippi-Green 2012) become the primary focal points of judgement.

In 2010, the influential review »The Way They Speak: A Social Psychological Perspective on the Stigma of Nonnative Accents in Communication« proposed that recognizing and better understanding the stigma associated with accents can inform both theory and interventions to improve intergroup relations (Gluszek & Dovidio 2010: 230). Since then, this discussion within discrimination and racism research has gained more insight. Interethnic language interaction is growing around the world, but the majority of this research is still carried out in English-speaking countries. However, a recent upsurge of studies in non-English-speaking countries with a large number of immigrants, such as Germany (e.g., Du Bois 2019; Roessel et al. 2018), requires attention, and thus is the focus of this review.

This review draws on empirical and theoretical studies in order to explore the implications of speaking German with a nonnative accent in Germany today. The main analysis is divided into three sections: Section 1 presents four social psychology studies in Germany that examine the associations that are attached to a nonnative accent. Section 2 focuses on field experiments that measure nonnative accent discrimination in various cities in Germany. Section 3 zooms out to current language attitudes in Germany and their impact on perceptions of nonnative accents. The concluding discussion summarizes the findings of the works presented as well as research limitations.

Section 1: Social Psychology Studies in Germany

The first study of this section found that nationality information about a speaker influenced intelligibility (Fiedler et al. 2019). In this study, 48 native German speakers were presented with audio recordings of a male speaking Arabic-accented German and were asked to write down what he said. The speaker read out 20 grammatically correct sentences with ambiguous information about his home country. The participants listened to the same recording in three separate groups. The first group was told that the speaker was from Syria. The second group was told that the speaker was from Portugal. And the third group was told that he came from another country, but not which one. When the listeners were told the speaker was from Syria, they had more difficulty in understanding what he said. However, when they were told that he came from Portugal or they did not know, they were able to understand the accent better.

The authors suggest that this is a result of Syria's daily presence in the media at the time of the experiment, with Syrians likely to be viewed as new immigrants

who had not yet mastered German. They also offer the explanation of Portugal being perceived as culturally less distant: it is a fellow EU member and a popular vacation destination for Germans (Fiedler et al. 2019). This experiment underscores that it is not solely the degree of an accent that determines intelligibility, but also *which* assumptions are associated with a particular accent. Separate research has concluded that where no nonnative accent exists, stereotype and discrimination can sometimes manufacture one in the mind of the listener (Lippi-Green 2012: 323).

The study of Fiedler et al. (2019) sheds light on how the intelligibility of a nonnative accent is influenced by knowing that an accent is specifically Arabic. These results support research showing that stigmatized accents carry with them particular social stereotypes or, in other words, that stigma depends on which nonnative accent one has (Birney, Rabinovich et al. 2020; Fuertes et al. 2012; Gluszek & Dovidio 2010: 218; Lippi-Green 2012; Skutnabb-Kangas 1994; Solms 2019). Knowing more about how intelligibility is influenced by knowledge of nationality is particularly applicable in discrimination research. Frustration and anger felt in perceived problems in communicating can contribute to negative associations when a nonnative accent is present (Gluszek & Dovidio 2010) and express themselves in racism toward the speaker.

The second study of this section focused on spontaneous associations with regard to the general category of nonnative accents (Roessel et al. 2018). The goal of the authors was to test their hypotheses that (1) a nonnative accent alone is enough to trigger spontaneous negative bias, and that (2) differing nationality information does not change these associations. To do this, the authors used implicit association tests (IATs), where controlled responses are weakened, therefore focusing on automatic responses in making associations (Project Implicit 2011). In one part of the study, auditory IATs were used in matching standard native German to four different nonnative German accents: French, Italian, Turkish, and Russian. Biases toward the general category of nonnative accent emerged irrespective of the accent types, which differed in attractiveness, recognizability of origin, and origin-linked national associations (Roessel et al. 2018). These results show that nonnative accents generally trigger spontaneous and negatively biased associations. Proven negative bias associations highlight that opinions about nonnative accents are deeply connected to opinions about the person speaking (Fuertes et al. 2012; Lippi-Green 2012).

In an independent study in the United States, Atagi and Bent (2017) found similar results when they detected a higher physical and emotional reaction between native and nonnative accents than among different nonnative accents. The study used spontaneous reactions as a means of focusing on the associations that participants made with regard to the general category of a nonnative accent and to different nonnative accents. Results that are produced by moving beyond a focus on spontaneous reactions tend to tell a different story concerning racism in relation to which nonnative accent is heard.

The third study of this section investigated how women in Germany are categorized based on accent and visual cues to the Muslim religion (Rakić et al. 2020). This was done using the memory confusion »Who said what?« (Taylor et al. 1978) method, which tests spontaneous categorization. At the beginning of the study, participants were asked to form impressions of eight women on the basis of individual audio extracts (speaking German with and without an Arabic accent) and photographs (wearing a headscarf or not). Afterwards, participants were asked to match written statements to a collection of the photographs (Klauer & Wegener 1998).

Findings showed that a combination of prototypical cues (i.e., no headscarf and native standard German or a headscarf and Arabic-accented German) were more individually remembered than non-prototypical targets (i.e., no headscarf and Arabic-accented German or a headscarf and native standard German). In fact, one non-prototypical target (no headscarf and Arabic-accented German) was not individually remembered at all (Rakić et al. 2020). While both accent and headscarf were depended on for how the women were individually remembered and categorized (Rakić et al. 2020: 487), the gravity of Arabic-accented German speakers not wearing a headscarf not being remembered at all reinforce the importance of accent in social categorizations (Rakić et al. 2020: 489).

Traditional research concludes that negative attitudes toward nonnative accents—unlike discrimination based on overt appearance such as skin color—is commonly accepted and freely expressed in society (Fuertes et al. 2012; Lippi-Green 1997; Moyer 2004). This supports the notion that those discriminating against someone based on an accent show less regret about doing something wrong compared to those expressing bias based on age or race (Lippi-Green 1997; Moyer 2004; Ng 2007). Yet, newer differing perspectives determine that nonnative accent discrimination is not as socially accepted and overtly expressed as previously thought (Goatley-Soan & Baldwin 2018; Hansen et al. 2014, 2017).

The fourth study presented is a theoretical article that bridges these contradictory findings about just how freely nonnative accent discrimination is expressed. The article suggests that nonnative speakers might not be minimized to a lower status in common first-impression interactions (Roessel et al. 2020: 88). This is explained by the need to respond ›correctly‹ to changing social norms. Many people in Germany are concerned with current social norms, in which discrimination against nonnative accented speakers is not freely tolerated (Roessel et al. 2020: 90).

The article goes on to explain that this leads to a conflict between a controlled and a spontaneous reaction to nonnative accented speakers. The authors then integrate modern forms of prejudice in conceptualizing the notion of accent-ism. Accent-ism predicts how forms of accent biases surface. Accent-ism results in two categories of prejudices. On the one hand, *modern prejudice* rationalizes expressions of spontaneous negative bias (e.g., rationalizing frustration in comprehending a foreign accent). And on the other hand, *aversive prejudice* recognizes this spontaneous negative

bias as being in conflict with personal values of not being prejudiced (Roessel et al. 2020: 93). In aversive prejudice, negative associations to a nonnative accent may express themselves in subtle ways, such as interaction avoidance or (over)correction (Roessel et al. 2020).

Expressions of (over)correction look to correct negative associations and may be exaggerated. For example, there may be a preference for the nonnative speaker over the native speaker (Pantos & Perkins 2013). While good intentions are at play, the nonnative speaker is still exposed to complex realities in which subtle forms of discrimination are more difficult to pinpoint (Pantos & Perkins 2013: 97).

What remains clear is that, in one form or another, negative attitudes toward nonnative accent speakers express themselves in discrimination and racism. Speaking German with a nonnative accent in Germany puts the speaker at a disadvantage. In further examining expressions of negative bias associations towards nonnative accented speakers, the next section looks to studies measuring expression of these associations: discrimination.

Section 2: Measuring Nonnative Accent Discrimination in Germany

German law clearly bans discrimination based on race or ethnic background, but language is not expressly protected and can only hint indirectly at discrimination based on ethnicity (Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency 2020: 53). While language-based discrimination is neither widely recognized as a basis for prejudice nor seen as taboo (Ura et al. 2015: 558), the lack of legal and social recognition of language-based discrimination can have real-life consequences for its speakers. Examples of this include influencing whether one can rent an apartment (Chakraborty 2017) and one's overall exposure to gatekeeping (Baugh 2020; Baumgarten & Du Bois 2019; Bavan 2007). A gatekeeper controls who can actively pursue benefits, even if the gatekeeper does not own these benefits, such as owning a home (Corra & Willer 2002). For example, in order to view an apartment for rent, a nonnative speaker most likely will have to be approved by a real estate agent (a gatekeeper). In this scenario, the nonnative speaker is exposed to gatekeeping in that an individual determines how likely the speaker is to receive housing, one of the most essential commodities.

The majority of field studies measuring gatekeeping for nonnative German speakers in Germany are performed within the housing market. Ethnic inequalities in the German housing market have been widely documented (Hinz & Auspurg 2017). In fact, every third immigrant or descendant of immigrants experiences discrimination while looking for an apartment (Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency 2020) and members of the immigrant community pay higher rents than ethnic Germans (Winke 2016). Also, it is not uncommon to ask about viewing an apartment via telephone. This provides researchers the ability to measure nonnative accent

discrimination more independently and accurately. Approaches that use phone conversations allow for study parameters, such as which ethnic cues are given, to be more easily manipulated than in face-to-face interactions.

This section focuses on three studies performed in Germany that measure the influence of a nonnative accent on who is invited to view an apartment for rent. All studies are similar in that they used multiple calls to a landlord or agent and manipulated the ethnic cues given. They largely differ according to the ethnic cues and supplemental information that they provide. These comparative findings, from the differential treatment of distinct nonnative accents to the influence of other determiners such as name and job status, proved valuable.

The first study—the landmark empirical research conducted by Klink & Wagner—analyzed a wide range of stranger interactions to find that negative attitudes toward foreigners are expressed in daily ethnic discrimination in Germany (Klink & Wagner 1999: 417). In a series of 14 field experiments, German recipients were confronted in stranger interactions with either a German or a seemingly ethnic minority. The interactions ranged from a stranger needing help to gatekeepers in the housing market. While nonnative accents were used in asking someone for directions, apartment-inquiry calls made it possible to measure nonnative accent discrimination in a more individual manner.

The first three field experiments of this study measured linguistic profiling (the audio equivalent of racial profiling) in the Ruhr-area housing market. They manipulated a combination of ethnic cues given from Polish, Turkish, and German callers. In the first field experiment, German-named and -accented speakers received invitations from 81.25 % of landlords while Turkish-named and -accented callers were asked to viewings just 43.75 % of the time. The second field experiment showed a similar but less significant difference, with German-named and -accented callers receiving an invite from 77.5 % of landlords, and Polish-named and -accented callers getting fewer viewing requests, at 55.0 %. In the third field experiment, where ethnicity was determined by name, but not accent, the rate of invites did not differ. German-named callers received an appointment with 93.75 % of the landlords and Turkish-named callers also got a positive response rate of 93.75 %. These combined findings confirm research assumptions that nonnative accent discrimination is a powerful factor in ethnic discrimination and racism.

The second study compared the impact that different nonnative accents and names had on one's likelihood to be invited to view an apartment in four different neighborhoods in Bremen (Du Bois, 2019). Turkish-German, U.S. American, and German callers, with corresponding names and accents, made 289 calls to 72 German real-estate agents asking to view an apartment. Turkish-German callers called first, U.S. American callers second, and German callers third, always on the same day. Their conversations were then analyzed using field notes, diaries, and indications of whether or not an apartment viewing was offered. Of all the calls made in

all four neighborhoods, German-accented callers had the highest rate of invites at 86.5 %. And U.S. American-accented callers received a higher invite rate at 76.1 % than Turkish-accented callers with a positive response rate of just 52.1 %. Since the Turkish-German callers always called first, these invite rates indicate that German- and U.S. American-accented callers got an invite after it was denied to Turkish callers. These results expose that U.S. American-accented callers have preferential treatment over Turkish-accented callers in the German housing market. Invitation rates did not significantly differ based on name and accent in every neighborhood, but in the affluent areas, Turkish-accented speakers received significantly fewer invites. This shows that callers were differently discriminated against depending on the neighborhood (Du Bois 2019).

From the same study, a second set of gathered data tested a Turkish name used with and without a Turkish accent (Du Bois 2019). The results found that in all four neighborhoods, callers with a Turkish name, but no accent, got more invites than callers with a Turkish name and accent. However, again in the more affluent neighborhood, a Turkish name regardless of accent still received significantly fewer invites when compared to German-named callers. This study shows the power of gatekeepers to segregate based on ethnicity. The more affluent the neighborhood, the more that social cues to ethnicity were used in determining who had the opportunity to view an apartment.

The third study of this section also focused on the influences of name and accent, but in correlation with information given about income (Horr et al. 2018). In this study—which took place in the cities of Mannheim and Ludwigshafen—10 trained callers who had either (1) a German name with a German accent, (2) a Turkish name with a German accent, or (3) both a Turkish name and accent made 1,605 calls to 851 landlords asking for apartment showings. In each of these categories, the caller did or did not disclose job-related information. Of the callers with a Turkish accent, 74 % were invited to view an apartment. These results read negatively when compared to the 89 % of those with a German name and accent who were asked to viewings and the 88 % who had a Turkish name but spoke native German. Therefore, a Turkish name alone was not enough to evidence discrimination, but a Turkish name coupled with a Turkish accent showed a strong effect (Horr et al. 2018: 142).

Horr et al. (2018) concluded that there was nonnative accent discrimination, but that there existed variances depending on whether a steady income was hinted at. The variability of employment information was chosen because gainful employment makes the applicant a more desirable renter. The Turkish-named and -accented callers with job-related reasons for moving received higher invite rates than callers with the same cues to ethnicity who did not refer to a job. Positive hints to job status reduced the disadvantages of Turkish-accented callers but did not eliminate them (Horr et al. 2018: 142).

The field studies in this section revealed the occurrence of nonnative accent discrimination through specific group associations and confirmed existing beliefs that a nonnative accent is used as a basis for both language-based and ethnic discrimination. This reaffirms that nonnative speakers from stigmatized ethnicities are discriminated against while looking for an apartment in Germany.

Section 3: Language Attitudes in Germany

In taking a glimpse at the broader context of nonnative accent discrimination, this section briefly zooms out to view current language attitudes in Germany and their impact on perceptions of nonnative accents. How people feel about and react to nonstandard accents is something that correlates to societal language norms (Freynet & Clément 2019). Belief in one true way to speak German can support a wide acceptance of negative attitudes toward nonnative accented speakers in Germany (Adler & Beyer 2018; Ellis et al. 2010; Piller 2016; Rühlmann & McMonagle 2019). While the German constitution does not state that High German *(Hochdeutsch)* is the official language, regulations on the whole ensure that it assumes a predominant status (Marten 2016; Rühlmann & McMonagle 2019).

Modern standard High German is so dominant in the public vernacular that the lack of a language policy has generally not been seen as a problem (Adler & Beyer 2018; Ellis et al. 2010).

As a result, resistance to languages that deviate from standard High German persists. For example, *Kiezdeutsch*, a newer dialect influenced by Turkish and spoken in urban areas, is not perceived as an individual way of speaking, but is – instead – held up against the socially prestigious standard German (Wiese 2015). The mindset that standard German is natural and normal (Dirim & Mecheril 2017; Ellis et al. 2010) makes deviations from this norm appear as problematic (Piller 2016). More examples are found in the battle being fought to officially and wholly recognize German sign language (Jaeger 2020) and the slow uptake of the gender-fair noun form (e.g., Sprecher*innen) (Stratton 2018).

One way to better understand how nonnative accents are perceived is to ask people in survey format. The Germany Survey, a representative household poll that was carried out in 2008 (with 2,004 respondents) and, following the same design, again in 2017 (with 5,778 respondents), asked about language attitudes toward accents/languages in Germany, both open- and close-ended question formats (Adler & Plewnia 2018). The results demonstrate a clear distinction of preferred accents and the need for urgent change in how languages are valued in differing political climates (Adler 2019). In the Germany Survey 2008, Arabic was barely mentioned. In 2017, it was the second-most disliked language (behind Russian) in the open-ended question and was first place in the close-ended question (Adler 2019: 241).

Understanding these attitudes is part of the process in understanding how native speakers of these languages are treated when speaking German. In Germany, migrant languages are more present in the consciousness of many groups of the population than are ethnic minority languages and they are – unfortunately – often perceived mainly as a problem (Marten 2016: 152). The three most disliked languages – Russian, Arabic, and Turkish – are also the three most widely spoken migrant languages. Speakers of German with a Russian accent are more likely to be subject to discrimination in Germany than are those who speak German with a French accent (Adler 2019: 247).

Linguistically, all spoken languages are equal (Lippi-Green 1997), yet their users conceive them as having differing values, status, and norms (Blommaert 2006: 241). An analysis of language attitudes in Germany showed a clear split in these values: Western European accents tend to be liked more than Eastern European and Middle Eastern languages (Adler 2019). How people in Germany differently value languages influences how people evaluate native speakers of these languages when speaking German. Languages spoken by groups that are disadvantaged in other ways—for example, according to legal status, gender, race, or class—are usually disliked more, putting native speakers of these languages at a disadvantage as well (Piller 2016).

Discussion and Conclusions

Associations made with regard to a nonnative accent, such as incompetence, lower intelligence, and untrustworthiness, manifest themselves in expressions of discrimination. Speaking German with a nonnative accent in Germany exposes one to language-based discrimination. Because a nonnative accent is such a powerful indicator of ethnicity, it is also likely to be used as a basis for ethnic discrimination and racism. Researchers in Germany explored associations made with regard to the general category of a nonnative accent and to differing nonnative accents (Adler 2019; Du Bois 2019; Fiedler et al. 2019; Horr et al. 2018; Roessel et al. 2018). An overlapping research question manifested: ›Are assumptions that express language- and ethnic-discrimination found primarily in association with specific nonnative accents, or with a general nonnative accent?‹

The majority of the studies highlighted here leaned toward the answer being specific nonnative accents. Most of the studies identified differential influences on assumptions about and treatment of speakers based on the nationality of accents heard (Adler 2019; Du Bois 2019; Fiedler et al. 2019; Horr et al. 2018; Klink & Wagner 1999; Rakić et al. 2020). Analysis of language attitudes in Germany reflected the unfavored treatment of ethnic accents in the experiments presented (Du Bois 2019; Fiedler et al. 2019; Horr et al. 2018; Klink & Wagner 1999; Rakić et al. 2020). The current overall research consensus in Germany points to stigmatized nonnative

accents being subject to more severe forms of discrimination and racism than so-called ›prestigious‹ nonnative accents. Research focusing on spontaneous bias reaction showed evidence that negative bias reactions were based on the general category of nonnative accent (Roessel et al. 2018).

While a nonnative accent is a powerful indicator of ethnicity, it rarely, if ever, stands alone. Research is beginning to examine more closely the significance of intersectionality and the role of a nonnative accent in ethnic categorization (Rakić et al. 2020). The results show that a nonnative accent still carries weight in forming impressions, but that researchers still need to consider it within an interaction of other cues to ethnicity, such as a headscarf or name.

Language norms in Germany were a critical point in the research investigating how nonnative accent discrimination is expressed. From a misrepresentative, monolingual High German to changing norms in prejudice toward nonnative speakers, national language norms were found to influence how people personally react to nonnative accents. In one direction, findings on current language norms proved to support overt acts of discrimination against nonnative speakers (Adler 2019). Language attitude findings in Germany echoed empirical findings of unfavored treatment to the same ethnic groups. Studies and reports highlighted that the misrepresentative monolingual norm in Germany and the lack of clear legal wording against language discrimination reinforce a social acceptance and free expression of nonnative accent discrimination (Adler 2019; Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency 2020; Rühlmann & McMonagle 2019). In another direction, one theoretical study proposed that an existing growth in social norms that disapprove of prejudice results in more subtle forms of nonnative accent discrimination (Roessel et al. 2020). Subtle forms can include physical cues such as frowning, avoiding longer interactions, and negative assumptions (Roessel et al. 2020: 100). These forms are harder to pinpoint and lead to larger implications such as increased segregation and an association of nonnative speaking with lower intelligence than native speakers. Overall, conclusions determined that language norms and attitudes do influence how native and nonnative speakers interact.

Three limitations presented themselves in reviewing the presented literature. First, because acts of nonnative accent and ethnic discrimination so commonly occur but so rarely get reported, investigating nonnative accent discrimination in real-life situations is essential to understanding how nonnative accented speakers are discriminated against in everyday life. Recent German field research was widely found in the housing market and in education; however, no studies outside of these two sectors exist. While the influential Klink and Wagner (1999) study shed light on the reality of daily ethnic discrimination in Germany, it has now been more than 20 years since this study took place. The language situation in Germany has changed in many ways since then, and learning more about how nonnative accented speakers are treated in Germany by putting interactions to the test outside of the labora-

tory would provide valuable data for making legislative changes that recognize language-based discrimination.

Second, in the Germany Survey 2017, the three most ›disliked‹ languages of the open-ended question were, in order of ranking: Russian, Arabic, and Turkish (Adler & Plewnia 2018). Yet in the studies presented, the Russian accent was only used in one part of one study (Roessel et al. 2018). Since Russian rated as most disliked on the close-ended language survey, it contributes useful information for understanding stigmatized accents in Germany and warrants further study.

Third, as Gluszek (2010) highlighted in the review presented in the introduction of this paper, a gap persists in accent research that focuses on the perspective of the speaker. There has been a slight increase in speaker-perspective research in English-speaking countries, but in Germany, there was to my knowledge no study that examined the social consequences of the lived experience of having a nonnative accent. Understanding how the speaker experiences racism based on a nonnative accent is critical to research in preventing racism. With the goal of equality, it is logical and just to also equally represent how the speaker is affected by the negative associations and social disadvantages found in the studies presented in this review.

The value of bringing the studies of the present review together is that it allows us to connect the dots of their results for further interpretation. Studies in the housing sector showed that when a caller with a Turkish name spoke native German, that caller's chances for getting invited to view an apartment were not significantly different from the chances of callers with a German name and accent. Separate studies have shown that in written correspondence a name alone is enough to be discriminated against when looking for an apartment in Germany (e.g., Auspurg et al. 2017). These varying results show that the influence of differing ethnic cues depends on the medium in which they are presented. Once someone speaks native standard German, one is less likely to be discriminated against based on name. The pendulum unfortunately also swings in the other direction: once a nonnative accent is heard, even positive factors such as steady income do not consistently change the differential treatment experienced (Horr et al. 2018). This highlights the power of inclusivity and exclusivity with regard to native and nonnative speakers of German in Germany.

Since research has identified and established the existence of nonnative accent discrimination as a form of language-based discrimination, further investigation warrants a deeper exploration of its function in expressing ethnic discrimination and racism. It is evident that whether overt or subtle, speakers of nonnative German are discriminated against in Germany. Because nonnative accent discrimination can be hard to pinpoint and is not explicitly legally protected, it works as a safeguard to enforce ethnic discrimination. People feel less regret about doing something wrong in when they discriminate against someone based on accent, as opposed to age or race. Since language and ethnic identity are two feathers of the same bird and so intertwined, accepting discrimination based on a nonnative

accent serves as a camouflage for ethnic discrimination and racism. To prevent an underestimation of language-based discrimination, legal wording needs to be changed and interethnic language interaction needs to increase, from where people live and work to simply spending positive time together.

»Laughter has no foreign accent.« —*Paul B. Lowney*

Positive communication among linguistically diverse people is predicated on people's willingness to communicate constructively (Kubota 2015: 470). We share a language of experience no matter how we communicate. So, let's break bread together, no matter how *Brötchen* is pronounced at the table.[3]

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