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I think your going to like me: Exploring the role of errors in email messages on assessments of potential housemates

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Abstract: Two experiments explored reader reaction to written errors that were either typographic or grammatical. Errors were embedded in short texts presented as email responses to a housemate ad. In the first experiment, readers evaluated the writer and message on several dimensions (e.g., Was the writer trustworthy? Did the email flow smoothly?). Those dimensions were divided into a "social" scale (e.g. "This student seems similar to me") and an "academic" scale (e.g. "This email reads well"). Both kinds of error correlated with lower ratings on the academic scale while only grammatical errors correlated with lower ratings on the social scale. In the second experiment, readers were asked to edit the emails. In Experiment 1, paragraphs with either typographical or grammatical errors were both evaluated more negatively than fully correct paragraphs and the cost was mitigated by high levels of electronic communication, such as texting and using Facebook. In Experiment 2, typos were more likely to be corrected than either homophonous grammatical forms or hypercorrected forms. These results suggest that written errors, when they are salient, contribute to the social meaning of text. Furthermore, this contribution is modulated by at least some characteristics of the reader.

Keywords: language attitudes, language variation, social meaning, email

1 Introduction

Anyone who spends much time looking at social media sites is familiar with the nearly ubiquitous presence of both written errors and strident comments about them. There seems to be an entire industry of "memes" and share-worthy images devoted to pointing out people's grammar errors. For the most part, the errors people focus on are those linked to word meaning, spelling, and punctuation, as illustrated by the 2014 summer hit, *Word Crimes* [www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Gv0H-vPoDc – live link] by Weird Al Yankovich. The "crimes" in *Word Crimes* represent a fairly limited set of possible errors; however, they are a useful set because they point out which kinds of errors capture the grammatical attention of non-linguists. While Yankovich relies on extreme invective to label word criminals, the actual word crimes he mentions are limited to eighteen specific issues. Of those, two are about shifts in word meaning ('ironic' to mean "sarcastic" and 'literal' to mean "figurative"). Six are linked to grammatical forms that have been undergoing shift for some time, including shifts between idiosyncratic adjectival and adverbial forms (using 'good' instead of 'well'), conjugations, and pronouns. The remaining ten crimes are about spelling, punctuation, and formal style. These include issues such as scare quotes, whether to use an apostrophe in the string of graphs <i>, <t>, <s>, using numbers for letters, and accurate spelling. In other words, these so-called crimes are primarily linked to the written representation of language.

The sentiments about these errors are those that linguists attribute to "peevers", "language mavens", and "grammar police." Linguists regularly decry these kinds of sentiments, which we refer to here as "peever errors", and seek to debunk the idea that making errors of this sort reveals something specific or insightful about the general intelligence (and sometimes worthiness) of the writer. Beyond deconstructing the indexical links made to properties of the writer, linguists otherwise dismiss peever comments as both linguistically uninformed and linguistically uninteresting (see however, Cameron 2005; Curzan 2015). While

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it is of course true that they are often linguistically uninformed, in this study we explore whether they are linguistically uninteresting. In so doing, we have two primary interests.

- Do people evaluate different types of errors differently?
- Are there properties of the perceiver that affect how errors are evaluated?

1.1 Background

These two interests arise from intersecting perspectives coming from sociolinguistics, studies of electronically mediated communication, and social psychology. While each of these has independently addressed topics related to variation in written language and prescriptivism more generally, it has been rare to see them brought together to explore how variation in the written form of electronic communication interacts with the reader's perception of the writer of the message. Thus, drawing on decades of research linking negative evaluations of the use of dialect and other non standard linguistic forms (Preston 1999; Lippi-Green 2012 among many others), this study explores whether actual errors in written representations evoke the same kinds of evaluations that are found for the use of dialect and other non standard language forms. In this sense, this study seeks to relate sociolinguistic production and perception within the context of electronically mediated communication. It also heeds Liberman's (2008) call for more experimental explorations of prescriptivism.

One of the central components of what Lippi-Green (2012: 67) calls the standard language ideology is that the standard language is inherently more correct and accurate than any variants on it, even though what constitutes the standard is difficult to determine. It is clear that this ideology permeates much of the discussion of peever errors, including a great deal of what Weird Al Yankovich considers word crimes. A second component of that ideology concerns the primacy of written forms of language as also more correct, accurate, and materially based than spoken forms. Indeed, many peever reactions to language are connected to written forms of language and the seeming assumptions of invariance linked to writing.

Based largely on her analysis of peever reactions to language variation (2012: 69), Lippi-Green presents a model of the processes through which the standard is promoted and other forms of language are subordinated, noting in particular the ways that users of the standard are presented as good models while those who don't use the standard are denigrated. The model provides a useful heuristic for how language subordination progresses; however, it focuses centrally on areas of the grammar where we know different varieties of English vary systematically and less on the presence of actual errors in the written standard. The model suggests that writers who produce fewer errors are likely to be assessed more positively overall. It makes no predictions about different types of errors, however.

As Liberman points out, there has been ample discussion of matters of language style and usage and, indeed, linguists have been a part of discussions about standardization and prescriptivism for some time (Cameron 2005; Milroy and Milroy 2013; Curzan 2015). Several studies have looked at the relationship between prescriptive "rules" and actual usage patterns (for instance, Sanford and Filik 2007 on singular 'they'; Perales-Escudero 2011 on split infinitives; Pullum 2014 on passives; and Hinrichs et al. 2015 on relative pronouns). Linguists have written linguistically informed accounts of style and formal grammar for the lay public in an effort to provide a more scientifically grounded perspective on language (see for instance, Huddleston and Pullum 2005; Pinker 2014). Yet others such as Gretchen McCulloch, Arika Okrent, Neal Whitman, and Ben Zimmer engage in regular online discussion of various forms of prescriptivism. Finally, nearly three decades of work on language ideologies has demonstrated many of the ways that our beliefs about language circulate culturally through prescriptivism (Silverstein 1979; Agha 2007; Lippi-Green 2012). Despite these bodies of work, there remains very little research that has directly probed the degree to which prescriptivism affects assessments of language use and language users, especially in the case of actual errors.

Yet, a focus on written errors proves especially interesting because of the opportunity to explore the potential effects of prescriptivism more directly. Additionally, such a focus allows for the comparison of

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different types of errors because of the increasingly meaningful variability in written English that has begun to emerge in electronically mediated communication.

Electronic channels of communication have made new avenues available for the creation and circulation of linguistic variation and these often then become connected in complex ways to peever reactions (Squires 2010). Within such channels, variation in written forms fulfills many of the same functions tied to delineating different styles just as is true of spoken forms of language. As an example, the lexical item 'pwn' is a term familiar to those involved in different types of electronic gaming. It means something similar to "dominate in the context of the game or activity being played." It is almost certainly the result of a typographic "error" of the lexical item 'own' and yet, it has taken on its own meaning and is no longer a clear typographic mistake. For people unfamiliar with this form, however, it may nonetheless be perceived as one. Much like in spoken language, the distinction between what people perceive as errors may thus itself be variable, depending on properties of the perceiver as much as on properties of the linguistic material. Consequently, it should come as no surprise that the reactions we find to written variation have much in common with those we find toward spoken variation. Indeed, three of Yankovich's word crimes are specifically linked to electronic modes of communication, including using numbers for letters, emoji, and single graphs for full words such as <u> for *you*.

While linguists haven't really had much interest in the actual details of how people evaluate written errors, social psychologists and scholars of marketing have explored those evaluations, particularly in cases such as written product reviews. Several studies have illustrated that assessments of trust, believability, and consumer purchasing decisions are affected by whether or not written copy contains peever errors (Ghose and Ipeirotis 2011; Stiff 2012; Hucks 2015). The effects hold even when pre-existing knowledge of the item being reviewed and both demographic and personality factors associated with those doing the assessing are controlled for. These studies do little to explore how the specific details of the written variation may matter. Hucks (2015), for instance, finds that the presence of typos in online lending requests decreases the likelihood that the loan will be funded but does not control for standard variation in spelling (for instance between British and American standard spellings). Similarly, Stiff (2012) finds no difference between keyboarding errors (such as <throuhg> for <through>) and grammatical errors. However, while his stimuli included several different words with keyboarding errors, his only grammatical item was invariant 'be', a form that has such complexities of use and evaluation that it is difficult to truly compare it to something like a keyboarding mistake.

Additionally, the research coming from social psychology and marketing does not explore the evaluation of writers themselves, focusing instead on the message as an independent predictor of the behavior of study participants and relying on common sense notions of "correct" and "incorrect." In this paper, we expand Stiff's (2012) work to ask whether people's assessments of writers (as compared to messages themselves) are affected differently when different kinds of errors are present and the mood of the message is relatively constant (e.g. not a negative or positive product review). Further, we constructed the study to disentangle different ideological positions concerning written variation.

2 Overview of this study

We look at three types of errors: mechanical errors linked to keyboarding ("typos", for instance <abuot> for <about>); traditional peever errors that are only relevant in written language ("grammos", for instance selecting the wrong *to*/*two*/*too*); and errors that are not unique to written language and are generally not stigmatized (hypercorrections, or "hypos", for instance using pronouns marked for nominal case in non-nominal positions). We selected these types of errors specifically to balance competing pressures toward conformity to the standard language and different levels of awareness we perceive to circulate around "errors."

Both grammos and typos can be considered spelling errors, and in both cases the actual output is similar in orthography to the intended output. However, there are also important differences. Grammos violate

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syntactic constraints, producing a sentence that is ungrammatical in its written form, whereas typos violate lexicality constraints, producing a non-word. Furthermore, our grammos were always pronounceable whereas many of the typos violated English phonotactic constraints. Hypos differ from both grammos and typos in that they are not spelling errors. They are similar to grammos in that they typically violate syntactic constraints; however, they differ significantly in that they do not generally led to negative reactions. Indeed, in many cases, they seem to indicate increased formality. This is particular the case for first person singular nominal pronouns in non-nominal positions, for instance, *They gave a benefit for Michelle and I* seems more standard to many users of English than the grammatically "correct" form *They gave a benefit for Michelle and me*. In Experiment 1, we compare typos to grammos and in Experiment 2, we compare the three together to evaluate whether grammos pattern more like typos (as spelling errors) or hypos (as grammatical errors). A third experiment, similar in form to Experiment 1, but comparing just grammos and hypos, was conducted. However, the results were not interpretable and will not be reported here.

In designing our stimuli, we sought to create typos, grammos, and hypos that seemed "natural." That is, the stimuli we used were similar to typos, grammos, and hypos we have actually encountered. In the case of grammos and typos, however, it is not possible to equate the frequency of the letter-strings comprising the typos and grammos because of the lexicality difference: words will always be more frequent than non-words. Because the letter strings in the typos were less frequent and more likely to violate phonotactic constraints than the grammos, we predict that typos may be more noticeable to readers. Similarly, because hypos are not linked to spelling variation, they are likely to be more frequent than typos and thus less noticeable. Because they have become conventionally connected to more formal styles, we predict that hypos will also be less noticeable than grammos.

There are also differences in the attributions associated with grammos, typos, and hypos. Typos are often attributed to carelessness and clumsy or hurried typing, rather than ignorance of spelling conventions. Consider the common typo <teh> for <the>. When we encounter this typo, it doesn't occur to us that the writer doesn't know how to spell 'the'; instead we assume that mistake was caused by a mechanical problem. In contrast, when we encounter a grammo, like 'to' for 'too', we may be less likely to attribute the mistake to mechanical sources. Instead, we may assume that the writer was ignorant of the 'to'/'too' distinction or failed to fully engage his/her linguistic knowledge. If we are correct, the attributions associated with grammos are more personalized and may thus be more likely to impact other unrelated assessments of the writer (such as trustworthiness), compared with the more neutral attributions associated with typos. Hypos, in contrast to both typos and grammos, are typically not assessed as errors at all and indeed may be the preferred choice over the syntactically grammatical option. Our primary hypothesis is that grammos will impact assessments of the message and the writer more strongly than typos or hypos. We also predict that certain characteristics of the participants will affect assessments. Specifically, we predict that having a strong preference for "good grammar" will inversely affect ratings of writers, that higher engagement with electronic media will positively affect ratings, and that the likelihood of producing typos and grammos will positively affect ratings (see Boland and Queen in prep for influences of additional participant characteristics).

3 Experiment 1: Typos vs. Grammos

3.1 Method

3.1.1 Participants

Thirty University of Michigan undergraduates were recruited through the Psychology Subject Pool. All were native speakers of English with normal or corrected-to-normal vision. The mean age of the participants was 18.5; eighteen were women.

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3.1.2 Materials and procedure

First, a transcription task was used to determine the participant's own tendency to produce typos and grammatical errors. Participants listened to a pre-recorded monologue [associated audio-1-queenboland.wav] describing a student's decision to attend the University of Michigan. The experimenter played the monologue once, while the participant listened without typing anything. Then, the participant transcribed the monologue word for word. Participants were allowed to rewind and fast-forward as often as they wished.

For the second task, email messages responding to an ad for a housemate were presented in one of three conditions: without errors, with grammos only, or with typos only. The words that created the grammos were always homophonous with the correct word (e.g., replacing 'you're' and 'your'). The condition was rotated so that each participant read four paragraphs in each condition and each of 12 paragraphs was read by 10 participants in each condition. Following each paragraph, participants completed a short, 12-item questionnaire about the paragraph and the respondent. The scale was a continuous Likert-style scale, with the primarily difference from a typical Likert scale being that only the two end points had evaluative labels. The final task was the completion of a participant questionnaire to obtain information about participant demographics, literacy behaviors, and attitudes about grammar. (A version of the survey can be accessed anonymously and experimented with at https://umich.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_7U47QrREuYBVQRD).

3.2 Results

3.2.1 Transcriptions and questionnaire

The transcription and participant data were collected to use as predictor variables for the effect of errors on the assessment scale of potential housemates. The number of grammatical errors and non-word misspellings in the transcription files ranged from 0 to 15, with a mean of 4.7. Participants also varied in their attitudes about the importance of good grammar. Ratings on the 7-point scale ranged from 2 (not very important) to 7 (very important). The average rating was toward the prescriptive end of the scale, at 5.5. The electronic communication measures were combined into a single measure with scores ranging from 2 (low participation) to 6 (high participation), with a mean of 4.2. The number of errors in the transcription was negatively correlated with grammar attitude ($R = -0.49$), suggesting that participants who felt grammar was more important were more vigilant in typing their transcriptions.

3.2.2 Participant assessments of paragraphs

The Housemate Scale was divided into 2 6-item subscales, a social scale and an academic scale. Cronbach's alpha for the full Housemate Scale was 0.876, for the social scale was 0.847 and for the academic scale was 0.802, indicating strong internal consistency among items. The average inter-subscale correlation was 0.32; the average intra-subscale correlation was 0.48 on the social scale and 0.40 on the academic scale. Figure 1 below shows the mean rating for each of the three email conditions on each subscale.

A linear mixed effects model was created for each evaluation scale using the lmer function in the lme4 package of R. Each model included participants and items as random effects, with intercepts and slopes for the number of grammatical mistakes in the paragraphs included. The number of typos in the paragraph and the number of grammos in the paragraph were entered as fixed effects, and three individual difference predictor variables (E-communication, pleasure reading, and grammar attitude) were first centered and then entered as interactions with each of the primary fixed effects. (Transciption errors was not used in the model because centering the variables did not decrease its correlation with grammar attitude.) Effects were considered statistically significant if the absolute value of t was greater than 2. Confidence intervals (95%)

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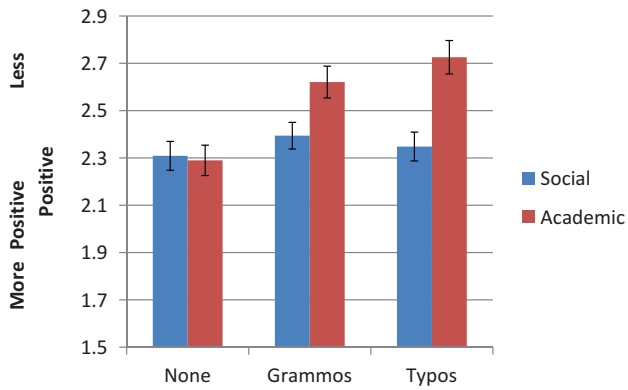

Figure 1: Mean ratings on the social scale and the academic scale for emails with no errors, grammos, or typos.

were generated used the confint function, "wald" method. The amount of variance explained by each model was evaluated using the r.squaredGLMM function from the MuMIn package. The primary results are summarized in Table 1 and discussed below. Only significant interactions are reported.

Table 1: Statistical analysis for experiment 1. For each model, the conditional r^2 (combining both fixed and random effects) and marginal r^2 (fixed effects only) is provided as an estimate of model fit. Only significant effects are reported.

Effect	t	Estimate	95% Confidence intervals	
			Low	High
Complete 12-item [R2c =0.36, R2m = 0.14]				
Typos	3.863	0.12	0.06	0.18
Grammos	3.543	0.09	0.04	0.13
E-communication	−2.107	−0.14	−0.28	−0.01
Typos*E-Communication	2.056	0.06	0.00	0.13
Grammos*E-communication	2.996	0.07	0.02	0.12
6-item Social [R2c = 0.35, R2m = 0.14]				
Grammos	2.058	0.06	0.00	0.11
Typos*E-communication	2.038	0.07	0.00	0.14
Grammos*E-communication	2.754	0.07	0.02	0.13
6-item Academic [R2c=0.32, R2m = 0.12]				
Typos	5.177	0.19	0.11	0.26
Grammos	4.131	0.11	0.06	0.17
E-communication	−2.01	−0.15	−0.31	−0.00
Grammos*E-communication	2.510	0.07	0.02	0.12

Both the number of grammos and the number of typos in a paragraph influenced the overall ratings, with more negative assessments (i.e., higher scores on the rating scale) for higher numbers of both error types. As illustrated in Figure 2 and Table 1, each typo shifted assessments about 0.12 points on the 5-point scale,

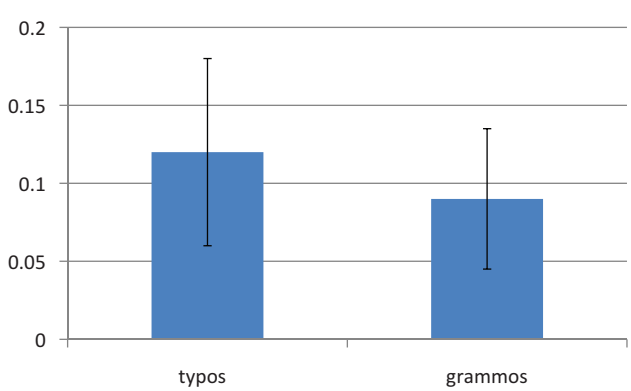

Figure 2: The cost per error for typos and grammos on the complete Housemate Scale. Error bars illustrate 95% confidence intervals.

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so a typical 3-typo trial was rated about 0.36 points higher (i.e., more negatively) than trials without typos. Correspondingly, a typical grammo trial was rated about 0.27 points higher.

The overlapping confidence intervals in Figure 2 indicate that the per-error cost of grammos and typos were essentially the same. We found the same result at the trial level: grammo trials and typo trials were both rated more negatively than correct trials, but did not differ from each other in two-tailed t-tests, with alpha at 0.05. The impact of typos was reduced on the social subscale (see Table 1), which produced a main effect of grammos, but not typos.

Both the complete scale and the academic subscale revealed a main effect of E-communication, with participants who were more electronically active rating the authors more positively. However, as shown in Figure 3, the effect of E-communication was moderated by the presence of errors in a surprising way: engagement level in E-communication had the most impact on the ratings of error-free paragraphs (as opposed to affecting one's tolerance for typos and grammos). The predicted effects of grammar attitude and time spent pleasure reading were not found.

Figure 3: The cost of typos and grammos on the complete Housemate Scale as a function of E-Communication engagement. For this figure, participants were divided into low and high E-Comm groups using a median split procedure.

More concise statistical models, eliminating grammar attitude and pleasure reading, did not decrease the fit of the models significantly (model comparison was evaluated with the ANOVA function), although the amount of variance explained by the fixed variables was reduced (complete scale $R^2m = 0.07$, social R2m = 0.04, academic R2m = 0.09).

4 Experiment 2: Editing task and mistake salience

The goal of this experiment was to collect data on the salience of the mistake categories investigated in Experiment 1 and to evaluate whether grammos were more similar to typos as spelling errors or more similar to hypos as errors that led to a technically ungrammatical sentence. An editing task was used to evaluate the salience of the errors.

4.1 Method

4.1.1 Participants

Twenty participants from the same subject pool as Experiments 1 and 2 were recruited for the editing task. The data for one participant were dropped for not completing the task.

4.1.2 Materials and procedure

The stimuli for this experiment were 12 paragraphs similar to those used in Experiment 1, except that all paragraphs contained 5–9 errors of more than one type (typos, hypos, and grammos). In all, there were 24

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typos, 31 hypos, and 31 grammos. The errors in each paragraph were not varied. Participants were asked to correct any errors they noticed without changing the tone of the message. After completing the editing task, participants filled out the participant questionnaire used in Experiment 1.

4.2 Results

For each mistake category, we computed the proportion of errors that were corrected by each participant. Typos were corrected 66% of the time; grammos were corrected 46% of the time; and hypos were corrected 45% of the time. In paired, 2-tailed t-tests on participant proportions, typos were corrected more frequently than either grammos or hypos and there was no difference between correcting grammos and correcting hypos. Thus, typos were more salient than either grammos or hypos, likely because they are mechanical, spelling-based errors. Grammos, on the other hand, were treated more like grammatical errors than spelling errors.

5 General discussion

In this paper, we sought to explore whether people evaluated different kinds of written errors differently, focusing specifically on mechanical errors (typos) and peever errors (grammos). We also sought to explore whether specific characteristics of the participants, chiefly grammar attitude, engagement with electronic channels of communication, and literacy behaviors affected the influence of written errors. Our results suggest that while typos and grammos affect the evaluation of speakers similarly, some interesting variation in those assessments also exists. In general the findings of our study offer broad support to models such as the language subordination model (Lippi-Green 2012), which suggest that adherence to prescriptive orientations confers general evaluative benefits. This benefit was particularly apparent among study participants who engaged in high levels of electronic engagement.

Overall in Experiment 1, typos and grammos had similarly negative effects on evaluations, contrary to our overall hypothesis. However, this result was refined further in light of the differences on the two subscales in Experiment 1 and from the findings of Experiment 2. In Experiment 1, both grammos and typos had a cost on the evaluations that were academic in nature but only grammos had a cost on the evaluations that were social in nature. The results of Experiment 2 offer further clarification. Whereas typos seem to be relatively salient and are more likely to be corrected–perhaps because it is clear that they are spelling errors–grammos are not as readily corrected. We know from Experiment 1 that grammos carry greater social costs and we surmise from Experiment 2 that those costs are not tied to the fact that grammos are spelling errors. Rather, grammos are a different type of mistake. We suspect that grammos, but not typos, engage more strongly with the mechanisms of social cognition influenced by ideologies of the standard language and this accounts for their outsized role in the kinds of social evaluations of "bad grammar" that circulate popularly. In this sense, our findings provide more detail about the mechanisms linking prescriptivism and language subordination.

In terms of our second primary interest, we found that one behavioral characteristic of participants, degrees of engagement with electronic forms of communication, influenced the perception of writers who produced errors. Surprisingly, in Experiment 1, higher degrees of electronic communication resulted in better ratings for paragraphs containing no errors at all. We also found that participants who were less engaged in electronic forms of communication generally assessed writers more negatively and this was as true for paragraphs containing no errors as it was for those containing errors. We interpret the pattern illustrated in Figure 3 in the context of our participant population of college-aged students. For those participants who are highly engaged with electronic forms of media, and who thus likely encounter higher levels of variation in written forms, the benefit they assess for adhering to prescriptive norms is actually

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higher than it is for participants who are less engaged with electronic forms of media. This suggests that experience with variation may strengthen rather than weaken processes of language subordination.

Contrary to our predictions, self-assessed grammar attitudes did not show any effect on the ratings of writers. This finding is surprising given the vast literature on the effects of language ideologies on perceptions of language users. One explanation for this finding, especially in connection with the findings from Experiment 1, may be that the bulk of the literature on language ideologies has not tried to directly correlate specific language attitudes with perceptions of speakers using an experimental approach and thus the links found are of a more qualitative than quantitative nature. Of the work on language ideologies that is experimentally oriented, most focuses on the relationship of language attitudes and a speaker's own production of a given variant (much like our transcription task did) or experimentally manipulates specific properties of the speaker within the stimuli (for instance, manipulating where the listener believes the speaker is from). In contrast, our findings point to the possibility that experience with variation and different types of variation, rather than beliefs alone, influence assessments. Of course, our measure was limited to a single question, which may not have adequately probed participants' attitudes (see for instance McGowan 2015 for a somewhat more nuanced measure of participant attitudes). Further, the testing environment of an academic laboratory might have led participants (all of whom were college students) to respond differently, in this case more positively, than they might in other settings.

The findings from the two experiments point to the importance of research on prescriptivism that takes both variation in linguistic form and behavioral characteristics of raters into account. Such research allows for more direct as well as nuanced exploration of the relationships between language ideologies, prescriptivism, various properties of perceivers, and the assessment of people who exhibit different types of linguistic variation. They also point to the need within both sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic theories for more serious exploration of written variation and the responses it elicits.

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Supplemental Material: The online version of this article (DOI: 10.1515/LINGVAN-2015-0011) offers supplementary material, available to authorized users.

Appendix A: Transcription (Experiment 1)

The text of the audio recording is given below. Likely grammatical mistake opportunities are identified with boldface type and the potential mistake is given in parentheses.

It's (its) complicated. I **could have** (could of) applied to Michigan, or I **could have** (could of) applied to Ohio State. **They're** (their, there) both good schools and I think I **would have (**would of) gotten into either one. Both my sister and my father went to Michigan, and **they're** (their, there) big Michigan fans, but my brother and my mom went to Ohio State, and **they're** (their, there) big OSU fans. So **it's** (its) kind of a family tradition to go to Michigan, but **there's** (theirs) also this rivalry right within my own family. **They're** (their, there) all driving me crazy. You know how **you're** (your) trying to please both **your** (you're) mom and **your** (you're) dad, but **you're** (your) caught in the middle? Last fall we watched the Michigan/OSU game on television, and my brother was like, "**You're** (your) going to OSU, you have to go to Ohio State," and my sister was like, "No, **you're** (your) going to Michigan. He **would have** (would of) gone **there** (their) too but he didn't get accepted." Good grief. They **could have** (could of) been a little more supportive, but that's my family for you. And then I did some soul searching and I said to myself, "Hey, **you're** (your) not choosing a school based on **its** (it's) football team or where **your** (you're) family went." And I realized that **it's** (its) my dream to go to Michigan. Ohio State has **its** (it's) pros and cons, but Michigan is a much better school, even if **their** (there) football team is worse than OSU's. Academically, **it's** (its) the best, and I really like the Psychology Department. I **could have** (could of) agonized forever, but it felt good to make up my mind. Once I made the decision, both of my parents gave me **their** (there) support. Even my mom said, "I think **you're** (your) going to be really happy **there** (their)." Thank goodness! I was worried that she **would have** (would of) been disappointed.

Appendix B: Sample email paragraph

There were three versions of each email. One version contained 2–4 grammos (underlined), one version contained 2–4 typos (in boldface), and one version was fully correct (in parentheses).

From Experiment 1 (typos vs grammo)
Hey! My name is Pat and I'm interested in sharing a house with other students who are serious **abuot (about)** <u>there (their)</u> schoolwork but who also know how to relax and have fun. I like to play tennis and love old school rap. If <u>your (you're)</u> someone who likes that kind of thing too, maybe we would **mkae (make)** good housemates.

Appendix C: Editing task (Experiment 2)

Sample paragraph used for the editing task. Typos are in bold; potential and actual grammos are underlined and potential and actual hypos are in italics

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My name is Chris and I'm **lookign** for housemates. It sounds like there's some common ground between you and *I* then. I'm a junior and am involved in an *awfully* lot of different activities. It's hard to keep them all straight sometimes and I wonder if I should've focused more on one or two. Then, my school work wouldn't of suffered like it did last year. But no big deal – I don't feel *badly* about it. I've pulled my GPA up and gotten my professors to help my buddy and *myself* out. Their really **hepling** us to do better this term. My buddy hangs out with me a lot, but I think you're going to like both him and *me*.

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