

What Is Said is more important than Who Says It

An experimental study of content and prestige biases in social learning

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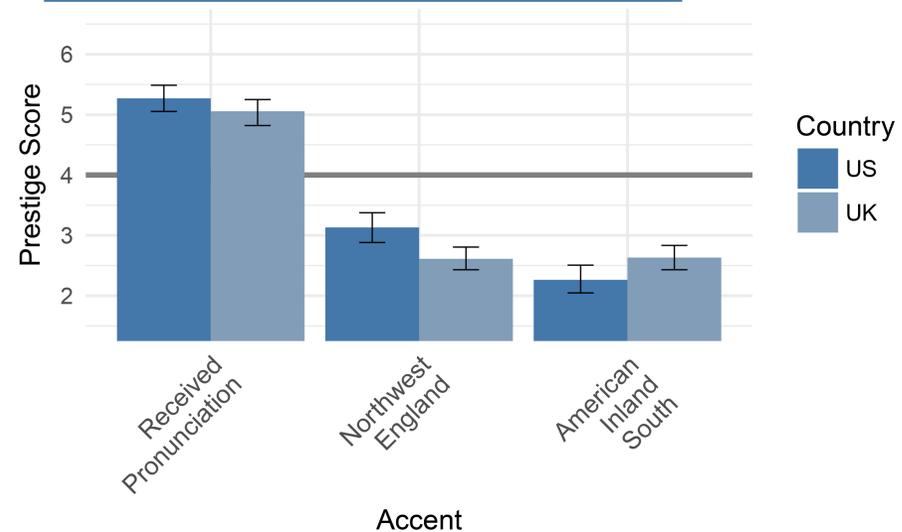
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Information holds distinct content types

-  **Social** (Mesoudi et al. 2006)
-  **Survival** (Nairne et al. 2007)
-  **Emotional** (Heath et al. 2001)
-  **Moral** (Heath et al. 2001)
-  **Rational** (Glenn 1980)



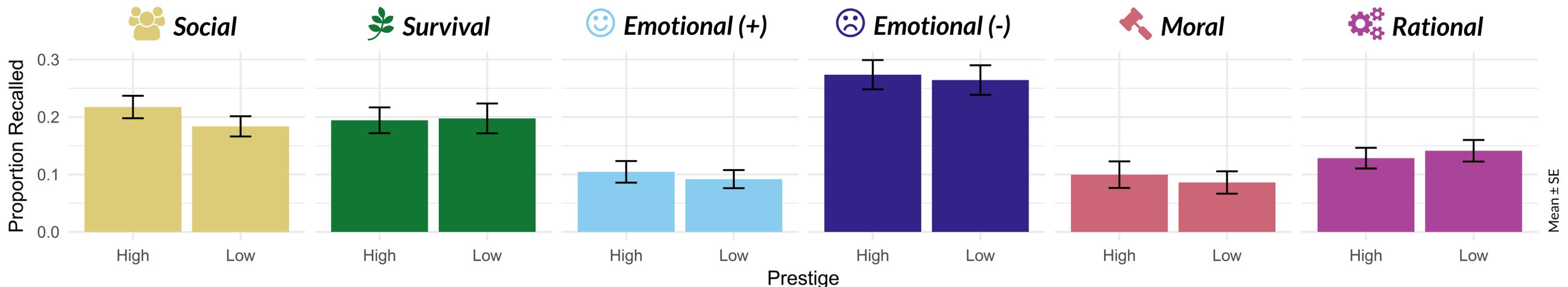
Accents signal prestige



The Methods Box

- Constructed artificial creation stories with content proportional to stories from real cultures, broken down using propositional analysis for coding
- Recruited participants in the US (n = 107) and UK (n = 101) using Amazon Mechanical Turk and Prolific Academic
- Each heard one story from a high-prestige speaker and one from a low-prestige speaker (randomized)
- Participants completed an unrelated distraction task to test their memory
- Participants were then asked to orally recall each story
- Responses were transcribed and coded for the number of and content type of propositions recalled

But... Which is more important in social learning?



Content matters more than prestige.