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Article abstract

The role of verbal communication in the transmission of prejudice has received much theoretical attention (Hecht, 1998; Le Couteur & Augoustinos, 2001), including the features of the linguistic intergroup bias (Maass, Salvi, Arcuri, & Semin, 1989), yet few studies have examined the acquisition of an out-group language as a factor in mitigating prejudicial speech. The conditions under which minority Canadian Francophones use linguistic bias when communicating about the in- and out-group (i.e., Canadian Anglophones) were investigated. Data was collected from 110 Francophone students. Predictions were confirmed but only when out-group identification was considered. Further, out-group identification and second language confidence were both related to a decrease in out-group derogation; however, the same factors appear to promote linguistically biased speech toward the in-group. Results are discussed within current intergroup communication theory.

Expressing Prejudice through the Linguistic Intergroup Bias: Second Language Confidence and Identity among Minority Group Members

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Abstract/Résumé

The role of verbal communication in the transmission of prejudice has received much theoretical attention (Hecht, 1998; Le Couteur & Augoustinos, 2001), including the features of the linguistic intergroup bias (Maass, Salvi, Arcuri, & Semin, 1989), yet few studies have examined the acquisition of an out-group language as a factor in mitigating prejudicial speech. The conditions under which minority Canadian Francophones use linguistic bias when communicating about the in- and out-group (i.e., Canadian Anglophones) were investigated. Data was collected from 110 Francophone students. Predictions were confirmed but only when out-group identification was considered. Further, out-group identification and second language confidence were both related to a decrease in out-group derogation; however, the same factors appear to promote linguistically biased speech toward the in-group. Results are discussed within current intergroup communication theory.

Le rôle de la communication verbale dans la transmission des préjugés a reçu une attention soutenue. Par l'application du paradigme du biais linguistique intergroupe (Maass, Salvi, Arcuri, & Semin, 1989), cette étude examine les conditions dans lesquelles des Canadiens français minoritaires font preuves de biais linguistique lorsqu'ils parlent de l'endo- et de l'exogroupe (les Canadiens anglais). Des données furent donc recueillies auprès de 110 étudiants francophones. Les résultats confirmèrent les prédictions, mais seulement lorsque l'identification à l'exogroupe était élevée. De plus, l'identification à l'exogroupe et la confiance langagière en langue seconde étaient toutes deux reliées à une diminution de la dérogation de l'autre groupe; cependant, ces mêmes facteurs semblent promouvoir des paroles biaisées à l'égard de l'endogroupe. Les résultats sont interprétés dans le cadre des théories de la communication intergroupe.

Keywords: Linguistic intergroup bias, ethnolinguistic identification, second language confidence.

Mots clés : Biais linguistique intergroupe, identité ethnolinguistique, confiance langagière en langue seconde.

Stereotypes and prejudicial beliefs continue to spread within North America through subtle, yet compelling means (Devine & Elliott, 2000). Although blatant intolerance and discrimination are prohibited by law, the expression of prejudice is perpetuated in covert ways. Theories on the role of language in the communication and preservation of social stereotypes are numerous (e.g., Fiedler & Schmid, 2001), and the problem of language as a discriminatory tool has been empirically examined by several investigators (e.g., Maass, Salvi, Arcuri, & Semin, 1989, 2000; von Hippel, Sekaquaptewa, & Vargas, 1997; Wigboldus, Spears, & Semin, 2005). From an alternative intergroup perspective, it has been proposed that the acquisition and usage of a second language has positive implications in the mitigation of cross-cultural conflict and the promotion of intergroup harmony (e.g., Rubenfeld et al., 2007; Wright & Tropp, 2005). Merging the two approaches, the primary goal of the present research is to assess the extent to which subtle prejudicial beliefs are communicated within a bilingual context, and to investigate the role of ethnolinguistic identity and second language confidence on the transmission of linguistic bias.

Linguistic Intergroup Bias

Because people may be unable to deliberately control certain linguistic features of speech, researchers have recently attempted to uncover the mechanisms through which covert biases are expressed (e.g., Fiedler & Schmid, 2001; Maass, 1999; Maass et al., 2000; von Hippel et al., 1997). An underlying goal of this research has been to identify people's "true sentiments toward social categories in a subtle manner that renders socially desirable or politically correct responses unlikely" (Franco & Maass, 1996, p. 338). This phenomenon can be explained by the linguistic intergroup bias (LIB) paradigm, grounded in Semin and Fiedler's (1988) linguistic category model. Its central premise posits that the degree of language abstraction used to describe the actions of others is related to social and intergroup appraisals. The implications of choosing to describe a person or situation using abstract rather than concrete terms involve ascribing temporal stability to the behaviour or enduring qualities to the person described, thus implying generalizability across situations (Fiedler & Schmid, 2001; Maass, 1999). The more abstract the statement, the stronger the inferences about a person's character and the more difficult it becomes to imagine disconfirming or contradictory evidence (Fiedler & Schmid, 2001; Semin & Fiedler, 1988). As such, prejudicial beliefs and cultural stereotypes may therefore become socially acceptable linguistic features, communicated from person to person, from one generation to the next (Maass, 1999; Bourhis & Maass, 2004).

According to Semin and Fiedler's model (1988), verbal expressions can be classified into four categories: 1) descriptive action verbs, 2) interpretative action verbs, 3) state verbs, and 4) adjectives. Each category represents a point along a continuum signifying sequential levels of language abstraction. As Maass et al. (2000) indicate, on the concrete end of the continuum are descriptive action verbs (DAVs), which represent objective descriptions of behaviour, for which no inference of responsibility is necessary. In other words, DAVs describe observable events, and are therefore easily verifiable (e.g., "Isabelle talks to Vincent"). Interpretive action verbs (IAVs) are likewise descriptive in nature; however, they do require a certain degree of personal interpretation and assignment of responsibility (e.g., "Isabelle helps Vincent"). The third category consists of state verbs (SVs) which refer to the enduring psychological states of a person (e.g., "Isabelle cares about Vincent"). In comparison with DAVs and IAVs, SVs are abstract, and their veracity is not easily verifiable by objective observers. The final and most abstract category, adjectives (ADJs), describes traits or dispositions that are generally inflexible across time and situation (e.g., "Isabelle is altruistic") (Maass, 1999; Maass et al., 2000).

On the basis of differential categories of descriptive abstractness, the LIB model describes a tendency to express desirable in-group and undesirable out-group behaviours in abstract terms (e.g., ADJs), and a tendency to describe unfavorable in-group and favorable out-group behaviours in concrete terms (e.g., SVs) (e.g., Maass, 1999, Maass et al., 2000, Maass, Karasawa, Politi, & Suga, 2006). According to Maass (1999), the prosocial behaviour of an in-group member may be described in a way which implies constancy across time and situation (e.g., helping a person in need is expressed as being "altruistic"). Moreover, an in-group member engaging in an antisocial act can be described in temporary terms (e.g., shoving a person may be described as "pushing"). In contrast, when describing an out-group member behaving in the exact same manner, the opposite is true. That is, an out-group member lending a hand to another may be described as "helping" thereby implying the transient nature of the behaviour, and the adverse action is expressed as being "aggressive," to convey the action in stable terms, thereby confirming negative perceptions or stereotypical beliefs about the out-group member (Maass, 1999). A number of empirical investigations provide evidence in support of the LIB phenomenon, which has been shown to function in intergroup situations, especially when both in-group identification and intergroup tensions are high, such as between rival athletic teams (Maass et al., 2000) and social collectivities in opposition (e.g., hunters and environmentalists) (Maass, Ceccarelli, & Rudin, 1996).

Combating Prejudice: The Role of Second Language Acquisition

Culturally diverse communities in which intergroup interaction is salient are also often characterized as bilingual or multilingual environments. In such contexts, residents of an ethnolinguistically diverse community may acquire ability in the second language (L2), along with an appreciation of the out-group culture and its members. With frequent contact and exposure, linguistic confidence, and enhanced intergroup understanding, an empathic attitude toward the L2 culture is likely to ensue (Irishnakova, Röcklinsberg, Ozolina, & Zaharia, 2004; Wright & Tropp, 2005). Such positive social appraisals may subsequently facilitate the development of subjective identification to the out-group, thereby hindering the likelihood of using subtly biased language when describing the actions, behaviours and dispositions of the L2 group members.

Subjective beliefs and attitudes toward an out-group have indeed been recognized as outcomes of the development and maintenance of positive intergroup relations. A recent study examined the correlates of intergroup cultural representations and revealed that, among both Canadian Francophones and Anglophones, greater identification with the L2 group led to more positive attitudes and accepting views toward the members of that group (Rubenfeld, Clément, Lussier, Lebrun, & Auger, 2006). Following Gardner and Lambert (1972), a strong line of research has consistently found evidence supporting the notion that attitudinal variables are associated with an integrative stance toward the out-group, or L2 community (e.g., Clément, Gardner, & Smythe, 1977; Rubenfeld et al., 2006). As such, positive social appraisals of the L2 group represent a fundamental component of harmonious intergroup relations.

Beyond the emergence of positive attitudes toward members of the second language group, interest in and acquisition of the L2 may also contribute to a learner's action tendencies, by influencing a desire to promote constructive intergroup interactions. For instance, Rubenfeld and her colleagues (2007) recently examined the role of language confidence in predicting one's tendency to intervene in cross-cultural conflict situations as a cultural intermediary. Findings revealed that L2 confidence was linked to the tendency to actively engage as a cultural mediator with the intention of promoting social harmony between distinct cultural groups. Within a bilingual context, where majority and minority language speakers frequently interact, one's L2 confidence, competence, and degree of anxiety experienced when speaking the L2 represent central variables in influencing intergroup relations. These variables

are therefore hypothesized to be related to the tendency to either communicate out-group bias or to use more neutral forms of expression. It is also expected that high L2 confidence will be related to a reduction in one's propensity to engage in linguistic bias, while those reporting low L2 confidence will demonstrate a tendency to engage in linguistic bias.

In terms of the operation of LIB, the specific issue of identification is of central concern to L2 acquisition. A number of authors contend that the development of an out-group identity may be an additional positive outcome of cross-cultural intergroup exposure. A long tradition of empirical research has revealed a link between cultural identity and patterns of linguistic behaviour (e.g., Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1990). Within a bilingual context, individuals are exposed to and become familiar with the L2 group. Over time, and in response to the immediate linguistic environment, one's profile of linguistic identification has been found to develop and adapt (Clément & Noels, 1992; Noels & Clément, 1996), with particular attention to differentials in the vitality of each language group (e.g., Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977). That is, members of a linguistic minority group may develop a subtractive profile of cultural identification, meaning that gains in incorporating the majority group language identity are made, to the detriment of the in-group identity (Lambert, 1978). In contrast, high vitality dominant majorities can afford to learn the language of the minority without undermining their own group identity, an additive form of cultural identification (Landry & Allard, 1990). Given their weaker group vitality, minority groups may experience much assimilation pressures from the power of attraction of the dominant language and culture.

The question of which identification profile may relate to the most positive intergroup behaviour, however, remains whole. In the Rubenfeld et al. (2007) study, a strong L1 identity was related to greater likelihood of a mediating intervention between antagonistic minority group members. Tajfel and Turner's (1986) Social Identity Theory, on the other hand, suggests that an individual's need for positive self-identity may be satisfied by identification with and membership in prestigious social groups. This need may therefore motivate a person to develop favourable behaviour toward the L2 group, thus enhancing positive attitudes to and identification with its group members. Finally, cross-cultural approaches to intergroup contact (e.g., Berry, 1990) would suggest that optimally harmonious intergroup relations follow from a double, integrated, identification to both L1 and L2 groups. Thus, another goal of the current study is to uncover which identity profile is linked to the tendency to engage in discriminatory linguistic devices such as the LIB.

The Present Study

The objectives of this research are twofold. The first is to determine whether individuals demonstrate variation in linguistic abstraction level (e.g., LIB), given their ethnolinguistic identification to either the in-group or the out-group, the category membership of the actor, and the social desirability of the actor's behaviour. In line with the LIB phenomenon, it is expected that participants will use a higher level of linguistic abstraction when describing the desirable behaviours of in-group actors and the undesirable behaviour of out-group actors. When describing the undesirable behaviour of in-group actors and the desirable behaviour of out-group actors, it is hypothesized that participants will use a lower level of linguistic abstraction.

A second research objective is to investigate whether L2 confidence is related to the tendency to use subtly discriminatory linguistic devices when communicating about the behaviours of the out-group. Specifically, L2 confidence is investigated as a contributing factor in determining one's propensity to engage in linguistic bias. It is expected that higher confidence in the L2 will decrease the likelihood of subtle linguistic bias use.

This research was conducted on the bilingual (e.g., French-English) campus of the University of Ottawa, located in the province of Ontario, Canada. Within this educational context, students are able to take courses in the language of their choice, and have numerous opportunities to interact with members of the second language group. Although this institution's charter includes the protection of the French language and culture, it evolves in a demographic context where Francophones constitute a clear minority.

Speakers of French in Ontario encounter high levels of contact with the English language. Recent demographics estimate that fewer than 5% of Ontarians speak French (Statistics Canada, 2001). At the municipal level, despite the City of Ottawa's policy on bilingualism, which affirms a commitment to offer services in both official languages, English is undoubtedly the dominant language, a pattern reflected both provincially and nationally (de Vries, 1994). Indeed, in relation to majority Anglophones, the ethnolinguistic vitality status of Francophones in the province of Ontario in general, and in the city of Ottawa in particular, is relatively low. In the face of community systems and institutions which favour the English language, Franco-Ontarians are significantly restricted in the use of the L1 (Mougeon & Beniak, 1991). Use of English in everyday life is common for Franco-Ontarians, many of whom are adept at code-switching to English

when conversing with their Anglophone peers. Further, given the precedence of English in the media, social institutions, and corporate life, it maintains some prestige, to the potential detriment of the development of a Francophone cultural identity among Franco-Ontarians. Taken together, these realities highlight the relative imbalance in social power between the two ethnolinguistic groups under study (Brauer & Bourhis, 2006).

Method

Participants

Participants were eligible to take part in the study if their mother tongue was French, if they have spent most of their lives in Canada, and if they were enrolled in an undergraduate psychology course at the University of Ottawa at the time of questionnaire completion. The original sample was composed of 111 Francophone students. One multivariate outlier was detected, and was eliminated from the sample, leaving 110 participants. The majority of respondents were female (77%), and ranged in age from 16 to 37 years (M = 19.11; SD = 2.59). While the majority of participants self-reported as Franco-Ontarians (70%), a number of participants were born in Quebec (25%), or in another province (5%). It may be argued that Québécois Francophones display a dominant majority group psychology in comparison to minority Franco-Ontarians, thus potentially influencing their attitudes toward the Anglophone majority of Ontario. However, the decision was made to include Québécois students in the present sample, given that a similar pattern of results was obtained when participants were separated by self-reported province of birth.

Materials

Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire package, in French, comprising a series of scales which examined their attitudes toward the L2 community, their confidence speaking English, and their degree of ethnolinguistic identification to both the in-group French minority and the out-group English Canadian majority. Additionally, participants were asked to complete a measure of linguistic abstraction to assess use of subtle linguistic bias. Specifically, the following scales were administered:

1. Attitude toward Anglophones

The Attitudes toward English Canadians scale (Clément & Baker, 2001), a 10-item self-report instrument, was used to measure participants' subjective

feelings regarding the ethnolinguistic out-group (e.g., "the Anglophone cultural heritage represents an important and precious part of our national identity"). The items are situated on a 7-point Likert-scale with options ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*, where a high score indicates more positive attitudes toward Anglophones. The internal reliability for this scale was found to be $\alpha = .83$.

2. Francophone and Anglophone identity

The Situated Ethnic Identity Measure (Clément & Noels, 1992) is a 10-item self-report instrument developed to assess the degree of participants' identification with their own language community, as well as the Anglophone language community. The measure describes a number of daily situations (e.g., at home, while participating in cultural activities, reading, or writing). For each situation, the items are situated on a 7-point Likert scale with options ranging from *not at all like a Francophone* to *very much like a Francophone* in the case of Francophone identity, and from *not at all like an Anglophone* to *very much like an Anglophone* in the case of Anglophone identity. The reliability coefficient for Francophone identity was calculated to be $\alpha = .82$, and $\alpha = .84$ for Anglophone identity.

3. Confidence with English

Participants were asked to report the extent to which they are confident in their English-speaking capability, by means of a four-item scale (Clément & Kruidenier, 1985), related to four aspects of language ability: 1) writing, 2) reading, 3) oral comprehension, and 4) speaking. Participants indicated their perceived competence in all four language abilities, ranging from *not at all fluent* to *completely fluent*, where higher scores indicate greater confidence in English. Cronbach's reliability coefficient for this scale was $\alpha = .93$.

4. Anxiety speaking English

The English Use Anxiety (Clément & Baker, 2001) scale was administered in order to assess participants' self-reported experienced anxiety in situations which call for the use of the second language (e.g., "when I make a telephone call, I get confused when I must speak English"). The eight items are situated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*, where a high score is indicative of greater anxiety. The reliability coefficient for this scale was $\alpha = .89$.

5. Linguistic intergroup bias

The tendency to use subtly biased language when describing members of the out-group was assessed by means of Maass and colleagues' linguistic intergroup bias (LIB) paradigm (e.g., Maass et al., 1989, 2000). Participants were presented with a series of four cartoon vignettes depicting actors engaged in either prosocial or antisocial behaviours, using two vignettes, respectively (Maass, personal communication, 1997). Four verbal descriptions accompanied each vignette, where each represented a distinct level of linguistic abstraction. Participants were asked to select the description which they believed best represented the story depicted in each of the four vignettes.

In order to denote ethnolinguistic membership of the characters, each actor was assigned a name which signifies their social category as either Anglophone or Francophone (e.g., Jennifer versus Marième). Questionnaires were randomly assigned to participants so that equal halves of the sample received surveys depicting Francophone (n = 55) and Anglophone (n = 55) actors.

Once completed and returned, participant responses were coded for language abstraction. For each participant, abstraction level was calculated according to Semin & Fiedler's (1988) linguistic category model. Accordingly, each statement was assigned a value of 1 to 4 to denote degree of language abstraction, where a higher score is indicative of greater linguistic abstraction.

Procedure

Participants were recruited from those undergraduate psychology courses participating in the School of Psychology Integrated System of Participation in Research (ISPR) at the University of Ottawa. Students who met the inclusion criteria of this study were granted access to online questionnaires and study descriptions provided by means of Sona Systems, an online participant management service. An integral aspect of the ISPR system is that students receive one percentage point toward their academic course for each hour they devote to research participation.

Volunteers indicated a date and time for their participation in the study which was conveyed electronically to the researchers. During the specified timeslot, participants obtained a questionnaire package from a private on-campus research laboratory. They were asked to complete the questionnaire package in the lab, or to complete it elsewhere and to return it once complete. Completion of all study materials took approximately 45 minutes.

Volunteers were informed that their participation was optional and that all responses were confidential. To further protect confidentiality, participants returned completed surveys to the researchers in sealed return-envelopes.

Results

The overall objective of the present research was to examine the contribution of language, attitudinal and identity variables on the communication of subtle linguistic bias. As presented in Table 1, mean scores are comparable across actor groups. In each group, those who reported high Anglophone identification held more positive out-group attitudes, identified less with the in-group, and had higher confidence, and less anxiety when speaking the L2. Francophone identification, on the other hand, was related to less positive attitudes toward the out-group, more English-speaking anxiety, and less L2 linguistic confidence.

Analysis of Variance

Prior to computing the analysis of variance, two independent variables were created by effecting median splits on the Francophone and Anglophone identity scores. Owing to the significant negative correlation between these two variables in the Anglophone actor condition, a log-linear analysis was computed on the three-way interaction between them and the group membership of the actor. This analysis produced a non-significant χ^2 (4) = 4.36, p = .36, and standardized residual frequencies smaller than 1.96. Therefore, it is concluded that the between-group factors were independent from one another.

To test the hypothesis that subtle linguistic bias use will vary as a function of one's ethnolinguistic group identity, a four-way, mixed-model, repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) with behaviour desirability (prosocial, antisocial) as the within-group factor, and Anglophone and Francophone identity (low, high) and ethnolinguistic group membership of actors (Francophone, Anglophone) as the between-group factors, was computed.

Results reveal a significant main effect of behaviour desirability, F (1, 102) = 10.62, p = .002. This finding indicates that the vignettes depicting prosocial behaviours were interpreted using more abstract terms (M = 2.89) than were the vignettes depicting antisocial behaviours (M = 2.61). A main effect was also obtained for Francophone identity, F (1,102) = 6.72, p =.01.

Table 1. Francophone participants (N=110) at the University of Ottawa: inter-correlations among variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Francophone Actor in the vignettes							
1. Attitude toward Anglophones	1.00						
2. Francophone Identification	-.170	1.00					
3. Anglophone Identification	.442**	-.220	1.00				
4. Confidence in English	.286*	-.294*	.474**	1.00			
5. Anxiety Speaking English	-.306	.162	-.387**	-.735**	1.00		
6. Prosocial Abstraction	-.149	.235	-.335*	-.191	.142	1.00	
7. Antisocial Abstraction	.006	-.248	.321*	.063	-.115	.144	1.00
Mean	4.28	5.15	3.89	6.01	2.73	2.91	2.60
Standard deviation	1.05	1.06	1.28	1.13	1.45	0.78	0.66
Anglophone Actor in the vignettes							
1. Attitude toward Anglophones	1.00						
2. Francophone Identification	-.449**	1.00					
3. Anglophone Identification	.414**	-.475**	1.00				
4. Confidence in English	.239	-.407**	.518**	1.00			
5. Anxiety Speaking English	-.299*	.301*	-.254	-.773**	1.00		
6. Prosocial Abstraction	-.123	.323*	-.125	-.105	-.054	1.00	
7. Antisocial Abstraction	-.018	.252	-.111	-.249	.261	.129	1.00
Mean	4.33	4.87	4.21	6.03	2.78	2.88	2.57
Standard deviation	0.80	1.23	1.21	1.01	1.41	0.82	0.66

**$p < .001$
*$p < .01$

Those who identify more strongly as Francophones ($M = 2.88$) tended to use more abstract depictions than those who identify less strongly ($M = 2.61$).

The ANOVA results also reveal a three-way interaction: desirability of actor's behaviour Anglophone identification ethnolinguistic group membership of the actor, F (1, 102) = 13.48, $p < .001$. The results of this analysis are presented in Figures 1 and 2; means were compared using Tukey's test of simple main effects. As seen in Figure 1, when the actor is a member of the Francophone in-group, and the participants do not identify with the Anglophone out-group, prosocial behaviour is described in more abstract terms than antisocial behaviour (i.e., the LIB effect). However, when the participants identify more strongly with the Anglophone out-group,

abstractness of the prosocial behaviour decreases significantly and abstractness of the antisocial behaviour increases significantly to the point where there is no difference between the two types of behaviour. As seen in Figure 2, when the actor is an Anglophone, greater identification with the Anglophone group results in more abstraction being expressed in the case of prosocial behaviour than in the case of antisocial behaviour (i.e., the LIB effect). No difference in abstractness rating is present when Francophones do not identify much as Anglophones.

Relations among Variables

The seven variables (e.g., Attitude toward Anglophones, Francophone Identity, Anglophone Identity, Confidence in English, Anxiety Speaking English, Prosocial Abstraction, and Antisocial Abstraction) were factor analyzed separately for the two questionnaire versions (e.g., Francophone versus Anglophone actors). For each sample, principal axis solutions with oblique rotation yielded three factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0.

Francophone Actor

Table 2 presents the factor matrix obtained for the participants who received questionnaires in which Francophones actors were depicted in the vignettes. These results can be found on the left side of Table 2.

Factor I receives appreciable loadings (e.g., greater than ± .30) from four of the seven variables. The composition of this factor suggests that the participants who are more confident in their English language abilities (Variable 4), and who experience less anxiety when speaking English (Variable 5), tend to identify more strongly with the Anglophone out-group (Variable 3), and hold more positive attitudes toward Anglophones (Variable 1). Due to the dominance of variables related to linguistic confidence in English, this factor appears to be best described as a *Confidence with English* factor.

Factor II receives appreciable loadings from two variables. This factor suggests that individuals are more likely to use subtly biased language when describing the antisocial actions of an in-group member (Variable 7), when they identify strongly with the Anglophone out-group (Variable 3). As such, this factor can be described as an *Antisocial Linguistic Bias* factor. Its composition links identification with the Anglophone out-group to more abstractness in describing antisocial behaviour committed by the Francophone actor.

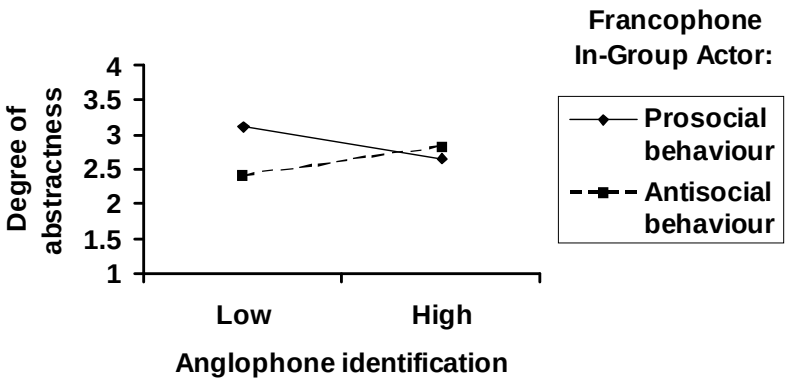

Figure 1. Perceived degree of abstraction (LIB) as a function of the prosocial versus antisocial behaviour of the in-group Francophone actor in the vignettes, as rated by Francophone participants whose identification as Anglophone is low versus high.

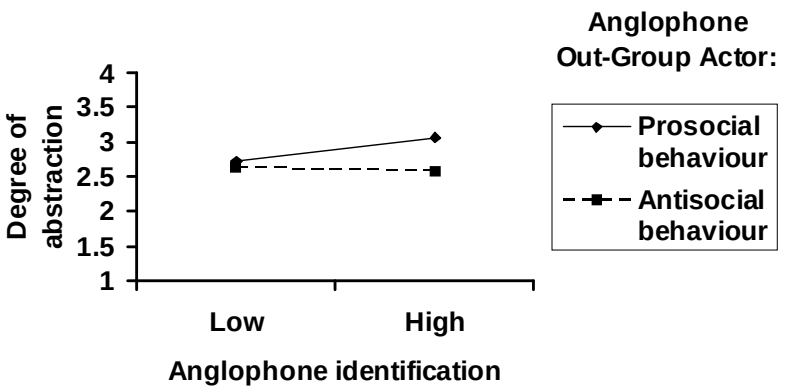

Figure 2. Perceived degree of abstraction (LIB) as a function of the prosocial versus antisocial behaviour of the out-group Anglophone actor in the vignettes, as rated by Francophone participants whose identification as Anglophone is low versus high.

Table 2. Francophone participants (N=110): Oblimin Rotated Factor Matrices for the variables in the study.

	Francophone Actor in the vignettes			Anglophone Actor in the vignettes		
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
1. Attitude to Anglophones	.35	.09	.47	.70	-.16	.22
2. Identification to Francophones	-.26	-.24	-.33	-.63	.67	-.38
3. Identification to Anglophones	.51	.38	.77	.59	-.31	.38
4. Confidence with English	.88	.16	.50	.41	-.28	.89
5. Anxiety Speaking English	-.84	-.18	-.39	-.32	.07	-.86
6. Prosocial Abstractness	-.19	.08	-.49	-.16	.46	-.04
7. Antisocial Abstractness	.15	.99	.03	-.03	.35	-.33

Factor III receives appreciable loadings from six variables. The pattern of findings reveals that participants who identify strongly with the Anglophone out-group (Variable 3), and who are confident in their English-speaking ability (Variable 4) tend to ascribe less temporal stability and cross-situational constancy to the prosocial behaviours of their Francophone peers (Variable 6), and have a more positive attitude toward the Anglophone out-group (Variable 1). These individuals also experience little anxiety when speaking the L2 (Variable 5), and tend to be less highly identified with the Francophone in-group (Variable 2). In view of these findings, Factor III can be understood as an *Anglophone Identification* factor, linking it to English confidence and less abstractness attributed to an in-group Francophone actor engaging in prosocial behaviour.

Anglophone Actor

The right side of Table 2 presents the factor matrix findings obtained for Francophone participants who received questionnaires in which the actors depicted in the vignettes were Anglophones.

Factor IV receives appreciable loadings from five of the seven variables. Specifically, participants who endorsed more positive attitudes toward Anglophones (Variable 1) were those who did not strongly identify as Francophones (Variable 2). Conversely, these individuals identified themselves more strongly with the Anglophone out-group (Variable 3). Moreover, these results indicate that L2 confidence (Variable 4), and an absence of anxiety when speaking English (Variable 5), were salient features of this factor. As such, this factor can be conceptualized as a *Subtractive Bilingualism* factor.

Factor V receives appreciable loadings from four variables. The pattern of results obtained indicate that those participants who identified more

strongly with the Francophone in-group (Variable 2), were more likely to describe both the prosocial (Variable 6) and antisocial behaviours (Variable 7) of out-group Anglophones using subtly biased language. Importantly, these individuals did not identify with the Anglophone out-group (Variable 3). These results suggest that this factor represents a *Francophone Identification* factor. In other words, participants who identified strongly with the Francophone ethnolinguistic in-group, tended to describe both the positive and negative actions of Anglophones using language which implies cross-situational and temporal constancy.

Factor VI receives appreciable loadings from five variables. In this case, those who demonstrated more confidence in their English-speaking abilities (Variable 4) also showed less anxiety when speaking English (Variable 5). These Francophones identified more strongly with the Anglophone out-group (Variable 3), and less strongly with the Francophone in-group (Variable 2). Moreover, these Francophones tended to use less discriminatory linguistic devices when asked to describe the antisocial behaviours of members of the Anglophone out-group (Variable 7), a finding linking second language abilities with the LIB. Factor VI can be conceptualized as a *L2 and LIB* factor.

As is evident from the description of the factors, usage of an oblique rotation to minimize cross-loadings nevertheless produced a solution where variables were shown to share variance with more than one factor. Such is the case, for example, for the variable "Anglophone Identity" which loads on all factors. We propose that while factors may represent relatively coherent latent tendencies, they may share common variables attesting to their multiple functional influences. This interpretation will be reflected in our discussion of the results.

Discussion

The linguistic intergroup bias (LIB) phenomenon has previously been examined by studying sharply polarized, if not antagonistic groups. In contrast, this study focuses on a minority group which, by virtue of its continued exposure to and contact with a high-power majority, shows a wide spectrum of identification across both Francophone and Anglophone groups. The investigation of the LIB effect as a function of ethnolinguistic identity is therefore an original aspect of the current research.

The results obtained in this study support, but with qualification, the LIB effect (e.g., Maass et al., 2000). As expected, the degree of linguistic

abstractness used in evaluating the behaviours of actors varies in relation to the actor's group membership and the social desirability of the behaviour. Importantly, this finding is observed as a function of the degree of identification with the dominant out-group.

Over and above the importance afforded to out-group identity, it is interesting to note that identification as a minority Francophone is related to a higher degree of abstractness in describing both prosocial and antisocial behaviours of out-group members, a finding observed in the ANOVA, and corroborated by the factor analysis (Factor V). This finding diverges from previous LIB research which has found that desirable behaviours by out-group actors tend to be described in concrete terms, while undesirable behaviours by such actors are likely described using abstract terms.

One possible explanation of this seemingly discrepant result stems from literature on the fundamental attribution error, which predicts a tendency for individuals to ascribe their own behaviours to fleeting, situational conditions, while the actions of others are explained in terms of enduring characteristics (e.g., Jones & Nisbett, 1972; Seta, Schmidt, & Bookhout, 2006). As Brauer and Bourhis (2006) contend, differentials in social power may also be seen as influencing the type of attribution made about members of high-power versus low-power groups. Specifically, members of high-power groups are often described using stable dispositional attributions, while members of low-power groups are likely to receive situational attributions (Overbeck, Tiendens, & Brion, 2006). Members of low-power groups, therefore, are more likely to evaluate and describe the behaviours of high-power group members using enduring attributes, regardless of the valence of the observed behaviour. It is possible that the LIB effect is limited by a pervasive tendency to attribute the behaviour of powerful out-group others to internal dispositional forces, and that this tendency is heightened the more one identifies with one's own, less powerful, ethnolinguistic group.

Tajfel and Turner's Social Identity Theory (SIT) may provide further explanation of the divergent finding obtained in the current study (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). According to SIT, group membership can contribute either positively or negatively to a person's concept of self. Given that individuals strive to achieve a satisfactory self-image in relation to the world, a person may be motivated to seek belonging within a positively appraised, high-power social group (Tajfel, 1981). Thus, minority Francophones living within the predominantly English-speaking province of Ontario may be motivated to perceive and evaluate members of the dominant

majority in a favourable light, accomplished in this study by describing their desirable behaviours using lasting dispositional terms. This observed trend may be understood as an identity-management strategy used to promote the positive aspects of social identity by enhancing affiliation to the more powerful out-group. Such an interpretation is in line with Lambert and colleagues' classic finding obtained in Quebec in the 1960s using the matched guise technique (Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner, & Fillenbaum, 1960). At this epoch, when the French majority was dominated economically by the elite English minority, matched guise results showed that Francophone respondents evaluated English-speaking guises more favourably than their own group French-speaking guises, a finding which may also be interpreted within a SIT framework. Namely, according to Bourhis and Maass (2004), "these unfavorable own-group stereotypes were interpreted as reflecting the negative social identity of French Canadians who had internalized the negative views English Canadians had of them as members of the low-status majority within Québec society" (p. 1589; see also Bourhis & Lepicq, 1993). Taken together, it would appear that dissociation from the in-group through social comparison and mobility is one consequence of a bilingual environment characterized by disequilibrium in social power between high and low vitality language groups.

Beyond investigating the circumstances under which prejudice is expressed, confidence speaking the out-group language was also examined as an integral aspect of intergroup interaction. The results obtained in this study corroborate prior research which reveals a strong relation between attitude, identity, and L2 confidence (see Factors I and IV). Furthermore, those who reported greater L2 confidence were less likely to use subtly biased language to describe out-group members (Factor VI). L2 acquisition may therefore be understood as a buffer against the propagation of prejudice toward an out-group.

In contrast to the apparent advantages of L2 acquisition is the potential consequence of in-group derision. Specifically, it was observed that those with less anxiety and more confidence speaking the L2 assigned less temporal stability to the positive behaviours of their Francophone peers (Factor III). Moreover, those who identified more strongly with the Anglophone than the Francophone group qualified the undesirable behaviour of in-group members in more permanent dispositional language (Factor II). For these minority Francophones, the seemingly counterintuitive consequence of frequent contact with Anglophones, including L2 confidence, is an increase in the communication of subtle linguistic bias toward their own ethnolinguistic minority group members.

The investigation of the LIB phenomenon within a sociolinguistic context characterized by an inherent disequilibrium in social power confirms its interdependence among a family of phenomena related to the erosion of the ethnolinguistic vitality of minority groups within majority group environments (e.g., Lambert, 1978; Landry & Allard, 1990; Noels, Pon, & Clément, 1996). Over and above the development of positive social representations toward the dominant L2 majority, the consequences of second language acquisition and confidence may also include the loss of first language and culture for minority group speakers. The findings obtained in the present study, therefore, expand upon previous research to include the linguistic aspects of prejudicial communication.

Conclusion

In providing insight into the expression of prejudice, this research extends existing educational orientations which portray L2 acquisition as acculturation into a diversified, integrative and open worldview. Beyond the strictly linguistic features of L2 confidence, the process of acquiring and using a second language may counteract the tendency to use language that transmits stereotypical beliefs about an out-group.

In a sociolinguistic context where English predominates, it is perhaps not altogether surprising that the members of low vitality minority groups, who encounter frequent exposure and contact, develop positive attitudes toward, and subsequent identification to members of the ethnolinguistic majority. The consequences, however, are viewed in the detrimental outcomes wrought on the judgments of one's own ethnolinguistic community members and an erosion of L1 culture and identity, a phenomenon described originally by Lambert (1978) as being related to subtractive bilingualism.

Undoubtedly, the LIB results obtained with minority Francophones are both startling and puzzling. They may be understood as an attempt by Francophones to mitigate intergroup tensions through adaptation and integration within a context which favours English use as the high-power majority language. While an attempt to preserve intergroup harmony on the part of minority Francophones is certainly commendable, it may be argued that there are significant costs to this type of communication orientation, particularly as it relates to in-group social appraisals, and the maintenance of a fortified and collective Francophone identity.

An important question which arises from the present study therefore remains unanswered. That is, how does one achieve a balance between

communicating respectfully toward out-group members while maintaining a positive self-concept, strong in-group cultural identification, and a sense of pride in one's heritage and linguistic traditions? Further analysis of this complex intergroup environment is undoubtedly required in order to fully resolve such a weighty, yet significant acculturation challenge (Berry, 1990; Bourhis, 2001). As such, directions for future research include exploring the factors which underlie the process of the expression of subtle linguistic bias toward members of the in-group, in an effort to mitigate the adverse consequences of ethnolinguistic identity erosion.

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