two variations on the social psychology of bilinguality: context effects in motivation, usage and identity

---

Richard Clément, Kimberly A. Noels and Peter D. MacIntyre

For most humans, bilinguality is a fact of life. It has been estimated that there are over 6,000 languages spoken in the 193 countries of the world (Anderson, 2005). Given that there are 30 times the number of languages than there are nation states to house them (Sadlak, 2000; Valdes, 2005), it follows that persons in many nations must negotiate their daily interactions with others in multiple languages. Indeed, it has been estimated that approximately two-thirds of the world’s population is bi- or multilingual (Sadlak, 2000).

Bilingualism is, therefore, the normative state of affairs for many people on the planet. There is, however, much variation in terms of its distribution across nations. This heterogeneity introduces, in our view, a new class of variables moderating the relationship between individual characteristics and bilingualism. Specifically, how do social and cultural characteristics of communities affect how bilingualism is played? The specific purpose of this chapter is to highlight some recent developments in social psychological research on bilingualism in different social contexts, with a focus on the social psychology of developing bilingual competence (particularly the role of motivation), the willingness to use one’s bilingual capacity, and some potential implications of bilingualism for ethnic identity and adjustment.

motivational aspects of developing bilingual competence

While many factors determine the eventual level of bilingualism that a learner will attain, including aptitude, opportunity to use the language,
educational experience, and so on, a construct that has captured the attention of many social psychologists is motivation (see Dörnyei & Schmidt, 2001, for overview). Motivation has been shown to be at least as important as language aptitude in predicting linguistic competence in a second language (Gardner, 1985), but unlike aptitude, motivation is hypothesized to be influenced by the social environment. Hence, by better understanding the social dynamics of language learning motivation, it may be possible to strengthen learners’ bilinguality.

**intergroup attitudes and motivation**

Historically, models of language learning motivation have defined the social context in terms of relations between ethnonlinguistic groups, and scholars have pointed out that this influence from outside the immediate classroom context makes learning another language unique from learning other academic subjects (e.g., Giles & Byrne, 1982; Leets & Giles, 1995). The most prominent of these models is Gardner’s (1985) socio-educational model of language learning. The model posits that integrativeness, corresponding to positive attitudes towards the language community and towards learning the language, along with a desire to learn the second language in order to have contact and possibly identify with members of the second language group, are important predictors of the amount of effort (motivational intensity) that a learner will exert. This notion of integrativeness (and its opponent process, fear of assimilation) is also evident in Clément’s (1980; Clément & Gardner, 2001) socio-contextual model of motivation and in Schumann’s (1978a; 1978b; 1986) acculturation model of language learning.

Despite the similarities in terminology, subtle differences between scholars’ definitions of integrativeness must be noted (cf., Noels, 2005a). While Gardner (1985) emphasizes positive contact and increased cultural understanding of the second language community, Clément (1988) stresses understanding and behaving like (even acculturating towards) members of that community. Although each of these terms reflects an underlying concern with intergroup relations, their nuances render their use more or less appropriate depending upon the intergroup context in which they are applied.

Considerable empirical research supports the idea that intergroup attitudes and motives play an important part in sustaining motivated effort. By way of example, the integrative motivation has been shown to predict language classroom behaviour (Gliksman, Gardner & Smythe, 1982), motivational intensity (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996), language class dropout (Gardner, 1983), and the rate of learning (Gardner, Lalonde &
Moorcroft, 1985; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991; see Masgoret & Gardner, 2003, for a meta-analytic overview of this research programme). Yashima (2002) demonstrated that international posture predicts not only Japanese students’ motivation to learn English but also their willingness to communicate in the English language.

While continuing to recognize the significant role of intergroup attitudes in second language learning and use, since the 1990s there has been a shift to considering how other motivational models might inform understanding of language learning and bilingualism (see Dörnyei, 2003, for overview); specifically a call for models that could at once reflect both the classroom and the wider societal context of L2 acquisition.

**Self-determination and language learning**

In one such model, Noels and her colleagues (e.g., Noels, 2001a, 2001b, 2005a, 2005b; Noels, Clément & Pelletier, 2001) have argued that an understanding of language learning motivation is enhanced by incorporating tenets of Deci and Ryan’s self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2002; Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan, 1991) into a model alongside intergroup processes. This approach maintains that motivation can be broadly categorized in terms of three types of orientations: amotivation, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, following a self-determination continuum. Amotivation refers to the lack of any intention to act (Deci & Ryan, 2002), either because individuals feel that their behaviour has no systematic way of influencing the outcome, because of feelings of low competence, or because the activity and/or its outcomes are not valued. Intrinsic motivation refers to the desire to perform an activity because of the inherent interest and enjoyment of performing the behaviour for its own sake. These feelings of pleasure are proposed to derive from the fulfilment of three basic needs – autonomy, competence and relatedness. Thus, intrinsic motivation is sustained when individuals perceive that they have voluntarily chosen to perform an activity in which they can exercise and express their capacities, and that they and their decision to engage in the activity is securely supported by others.

In contrast to intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation refers to the state in which a goal external to the activity itself serves as the rationale for performing the activity. Deci and Ryan (1985) suggest that there are several types of extrinsic motivation that vary in the extent to which the goal is controlled by the self or by external contingencies. The least self-determined form of extrinsic motivation is external regulation, in which the person performs the activity to achieve some instrumental end,
such as to gain a reward or to avoid punishment. Externally regulated students have not chosen the activity of their own free will, and hence are unlikely to incorporate second language learning into their identities. A second type of extrinsic motivation, somewhat more internally regulated, is introjected regulation. A student whose motivational orientation is described as introjected performs an activity because of a self-induced pressure, such as a desire to avoid guilt or for ego-enhancement reasons. Somewhat more self-governed is identified regulation, which refers to carrying out an activity because it is important to attaining a goal valued by the individual. The activity is not, in itself, particularly important, but it will help to achieve some goal that is highly desired. Finally, the most internally regulated form of extrinsic motivation is integrated regulation. At this point, the behaviour fits in with the rest of the person’s values and aspirations, and the performance of the activity is an expression of who that individual is. Although integrated regulation is posited to be similar to intrinsic motivation in that it is associated with positive emotions, increased engagement, and creative productivity, it is distinct from intrinsic motivation because the reason for performing the activity remains external to the activity per se.

An important claim of this theory is that, over time, an externally regulated activity may become more internally regulated to the extent that students feel that they have freely chosen to participate in the learning process, that their skills and competence are improving, and that they are supported in these activities by significant others. Although highly self-determined students remain extrinsically motivated, they are similar to intrinsically motivated students in that they are likely to engage in the activity longer and more productively, because their needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness are fulfilled.

A growing body of research supports the claim that self-determined and intrinsic motivations are associated with a variety of language learning outcomes. More self-determined and/or intrinsically oriented language learners are more persistent and exhibit greater motivational intensity (Noels, Clément & Pelletier, 1999; Noels, 2001; Ramage, 1990), use the language more often, and have greater speaking and reading proficiency (Ehrman, 1996; Noels et al., 1999, 2001; Tachibana, Matsukawa & Zhong, 1996). In addition, these learners have greater grammatical sensitivity and better language learning strategy preferences (Ramage, 1990), feel less anxiety, and have more positive attitudes towards language learning and increased feelings of self-efficacy (Ehrman, 1996; Schmidt, Boraie & Kassabgy, 1996). Finally, they are more likely to pursue post-secondary
education in the second language and to identify with the second language community (Goldberg & Noels, 2005).

It would seem that these motivational orientations are relatively independent of those associated with intergroup processes. Noels and her colleagues (Noels, 2001a, 2005b; Noels et al., 2001) demonstrated that although the integrative orientation (e.g., learning L2 to befriend members of the L2 group) is correlated with intrinsic and self-determined orientations, these two categories of variables predict different language learning-related variables. The integrative orientation predicts intergroup variables, such as contact with the second language group and ethnic identity, whereas intrinsic/self-determined orientations more strongly predict immediate outcomes, including motivational intensity, persistence in language learning and attitudes towards learning the language. Noels (2005a) further showed that while intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations reflected a motivational substrate common to both heritage and non-heritage language learners, an intergroup substrate which included identified regulation and the integrative orientation was unique to heritage language learners. There is, therefore, evidence that the influence of motivational predispositions of the type discussed above may be modulated by context.

**the context of self-determination**

Self-determination theory claims that intrinsic and self-determined motivation are sustained to the extent that significant others foster a sense of autonomy, competence and relatedness, by providing choice, informative feedback, and a warm and caring environment. We will consider this hypothesis at three levels of social context which have been shown to influence the language learning experience.

The first level of social context involves interpersonal interactions with many significant others in the learners’ social network. The most obvious person is the instructor, who is employed to structure and provide feedback on the learning process. Some research has pointed out that perceptions of the language teacher are related to language learners’ motivation (see Gardner, 1985, for review), and particularly that the teacher can foster feelings of intrinsic and self-determined motivation by supporting a sense of autonomy and competence in the learner (Noels et al., 1999; Noels, Pelletier, Clément & Vallerand, 2000; see also Schmidt et al., 1996).

Perceptions of parents’ and other family members’ attitudes and behaviours regarding language learning have also been linked, generally positively, with learners’ motivation (e.g. Gardner, Tremblay & Masgoret,
language, accommodation and intercultural encounters

1997; Gardner, 1985; Vijchulata & Lee, 1985 for review). Some results, however, have been more complex. For instance, Colletta, Clément, and Edwards (1983) found weak negative correlations between parents’ active encouragement of their children’s involvement in language learning and the children’s attitudes towards language learning. They suggest that active involvement may be perceived as pressure, which may cause the child to feel less favourable about the learning experience and the L2 group, consistent with the notion that a perceived lack of control can dampen intrinsic motivation.

Finally, members of the second language community may affect learners’ motivation and eventual L2 achievement. Genesee, Rogers and Holobow (1983) suggest that the learner’s perception of the L2 community’s support of language learning, in addition to the learner’s motivation, accounts for a significant amount of the variance in linguistic competence, use, and social affiliation with the target language group (see also Leets & Giles, 1992). In their investigation of English learners of Spanish, Noels and Rollin (1998) found that perceptions of criticism and uninvolve from the Spanish community were associated with decreased feelings of self-determined motivation, and perceptions of pressure to learn the language increased external and introjected regulation.

The second level of social context, the intergroup level, pertains to the nature of the relationship between the learner’s ethnolinguistic group and the target language group. Clément and Kruidenier (1983) identified two aspects of context that affect the emergence and predictive power of motivational orientations. The first is the opportunity for immediate contact with members of the target language community. The second is the relative dominance or nondominance of the language learner’s group in comparison to that of the target language group (cf. ’ethnolinguistic vitality’: Harwood, Giles & Bourhis, 1994). A third aspect of context is the ethnolinguistic background of the learner (cf. Noels, 2005a; Noels & Clément, 1989). In some cases, learners desire to learn an ancestral language which is not the language of the dominant society, including indigenous, colonial, and immigrant languages (Cummins, 1998; Cummins & Danesi, 1990). These heritage language learners may or may not use the language regularly in the home and the community (Fishman, 2001), but the language has some personal relevance to them.

It might further be suggested that the first and second levels of social context interact, such that certain individuals play a stronger role in certain intergroup contexts than in others. For instance, while the teacher may play a strong role in motivational support for learners of foreign languages, second language community members may be more
influential for students who have more immediate access to that language community (e.g., Asian ESL students in Australia, French Canadians outside Quebec). Consistent with this hypothesis, Noels (2005a) found that the autonomy, competence and relatedness needs of non-heritage learners of German were supported most by their language instructor, but these needs in heritage learners of German were supported most by members of the German community. Moreover, the fundamental needs were differentially linked to intrinsic/self-determined motivation depending upon the background of the student. Whereas autonomy needs most strongly predicted intrinsic/self-determined motivation for non-heritage learners, relatedness needs most strongly predicted this type of motivational orientation for heritage learners.

The third, less well examined, level of social context posited to have a bearing on motivational experience is the cultural origin of the learner. Much of the scholarship on motivation to date has focused on Western nations (e.g., Canada, USA, Western Europe) and failed to consider learners in other cultural contexts. According to cross-cultural psychologists (e.g., Hofstede, 1984), people in Western cultures tend to hold relatively individualistic values which emphasize the importance of personal aspirations over interpersonal and group relationships. In other cultures, people are suggested to hold more collectivistic values, which prioritize the harmony and structure of interpersonal and group relationships over individualistic goals. While the distinction between individualistic and collectivistic tendencies has been linked to many social and educational variables (see Kagitcibasi, 1997, for an overview), only recently has the relation between cultural values and language learning motivation been addressed.

Although they do not necessarily address self-determination theory per se, some accounts of teaching styles in many East Asian nations suggest that the support of autonomy is not a central concern in the classroom. In many nations (e.g., People's Republic of China, Japan, Hong Kong, and until very recently Taiwan), English is a requirement for university entrance examinations and courses are often oriented to ensuring good success on these exams, often using decontextualized grammar-translation approaches that are relatively teacher-centred and authoritarian, rather than communication-oriented approaches that can be more learner-centred (Campbell & Yong, 1993; Ho, 1998; Kohayashi, 2001; Warden & Lin, 2000). Some scholars working with students in East Asia argue that authoritarian education systems and stringent assessment criteria are detrimental to students' sense of competence, and maintain that emphasizing learner autonomy would improve learning (e.g., Wen
& Clément, 2003; Yang, 1998). Others claim that autonomy may be incompatible with certain cultural values (cf. Farmer, 1994; Ho & Crookall, 1995; Jones, 1995; Riley, 1998a). Still others argue that autonomy in non-Western cultures need not entail an individualistic orientation, but rather can be developed from pedagogical approaches that stress collaboration and interdependent learning (Aoki, 1999; Aoki & Smith, 1999).

In sum, research on the social psychology of developing bilingualism has evolved from a focus on how intergroup attitudes influence linguistic and nonlinguistic outcomes to a broader incorporation of motivational processes. As researchers move beyond the second language context to consider foreign language learning and the learning of English as a global language, cultural differences in the construction and dynamics of motivation become a central issue. Attention to the social context, on several levels, does not imply that individual differences between learners are not important determinants of language behaviour. Rather the interactions among such intergroup and individual differences factors create a set of dynamics in the immediate situation that affects intergroup processes at the ethnolinguistic level, interpersonal processes between second language communicators, and activities within language classrooms.

**using the second language**

Modern language pedagogy places strong emphasis on communicative approaches to instruction on the basis that language acquisition is determined by language usage. The above considerations regarding the role of motivation can, therefore, be placed within the wider context of defining the condition leading to language usage. Indeed, many of the factors evoked in the context of our discussion of motivation are also relevant to the willingness to engage in communication using the second language. The concept of willingness to communicate (WTC) has been a recent addition to the literature on second language learning. WTC has been defined as the intention to initiate communication, specifically talk, when given the opportunity (McCroskey & Baer, 1985), and was originally developed with reference to native language use. The WTC concept captures the predisposition to approach or avoid oral communication across situations (McCroskey & Richmond, 1991). Whereas WTC has been viewed as a stable characteristic of a person, other researchers view it as a situationally-determined volitional choice to speak at a particular time with a specific person or group (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei & Noels, 1998). The trait level conceptualization has been advanced in studies of
both native and second language use, with the situational conceptualization discussed most often with respect to second language use, where the range of factors affecting communication is more diverse. Conceptualizing WTC as a state of readiness to speak allows for both an examination of its effects on the language learning process and an examination of WTC as a non-linguistic language learning outcome.

In this section, we will first consider how WTC was adapted to second language contexts. We will next review the fairly consistent pattern of correlations with WTC obtained for its two key antecedents, perceived competence and anxiety. Finally, the section concludes with a broad look at WTC in social contexts.

the ‘pyramid’ model of L2 WTC

The origins of the concept of WTC lie in the interpersonal communication literature, most directly the work by Burgoon (1976) on unwillingness to communicate, and McCroskey and Richmond (1987; McCroskey & Richmond 1991) who hypothesized that a regular pattern whereby a person avoids or devalues communication is related to both social and individual factors. In adapting the concept to second language communication, MacIntyre et al. (1998) provided a more comprehensive, heuristic model that organizes the diversity of influences on second language WTC. That model, nicknamed the pyramid model (Figure 2.1), captures a wide range of intergroup, interpersonal, intrapersonal, linguistic, communication, and situational factors that culminate in the decision to initiate or not L2 communication.

At the base of the pyramid are intergroup climate and the personality of the speaker, contextual variables that are handed down to the individual over which they have little influence. Moving to a more proximal level, the next layer of the pyramid captures the individual’s usual affective and cognitive context. Setting the tone for motivation to learn the second language is the tension between a desire to approach the target language group and a sense of hesitation or fear of the implications of doing so. The final layer of enduring influences are specifically related to language learning, including specific motives for acquiring the language and cognition about oneself as a language learner. These foundational layers capture intergroup motives that stem from membership in a particular social group and interpersonal motives stem from the social roles one plays within the group. Issues of affiliation and control are the most basic of motives. Roles and motives combine with L2 self-confidence; perceptions of communicative competence coupled with a lack of anxiety.
When moving to the next layer of the pyramid, a transition is made from enduring influences to situational ones. The sense of time is coming to focus on the here-and-now. At this level of the pyramid model is the desire to communicate with a specific person, as well as a state of self-confidence. The culmination of the processes described thus far is the willingness to communicate, to initiate second language discourse on a specific occasion with a specific person. This represents the level of behavioural intention (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) to speak if one has the opportunity. Dörnyei and Ottó (1998) have likened this to ‘crossing the Rubicon’, a point of no return where one commits to act in the L2. There are times when one crosses such a threshold in the flow of conversation mindlessly without hesitation or concern; at other times L2 communication is initiated with reluctance, hesitation, even trepidation.

**The empirical evidence**

The empirical evidence pertaining to the pyramid model has been consistent in supporting its key tenets. Theoretically, the most immediate influences on WTC are perceived competence and anxiety, and both have shown consistent relationships with WTC across several studies.
MacIntyre and Charos (1996), who studied a group of Anglophone adults taking an evening course in conversational French, were the first to report a significant correlation between WTC and perceived competence in the second language ($r = .56$). A subsequent study (MacIntyre, MacMaster & Baker, 2001) of high school students taking French-as-a-second-language courses found a similar relationship between WTC and perceived competence in the second language ($r = .56$). In a cross-sectional study of late French immersion students, correlations between WTC and perceived competence of .34, .56 and .40 were obtained in grades 7, 8 and 9 respectively (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément & Donovan, 2002). Baker and MacIntyre (2000) reported a non-significant correlation between WTC and perceived competence among high school immersion students ($r = .17$), but a strong correlation among non-immersion students ($r = .72$) in the same school. Yashima, Zenui-Nishide & Shimizu (2004) reported a correlation of .53 in a sample of Japanese students learning English.

Overall, the results consistently point to perceived competence as a significant source of impetus for WTC.

Given that WTC is an internal psychological state, the speaker's self-perception of competence is considered more relevant than objective measures of linguistic skill, for two major reasons. First, the specific linguistic skills we might test (vocabulary, grammar, comprehension, sentence construction, etc.) are subordinated to the interpersonal goal of making oneself understood in situ. Whereas assessment of second language proficiency usually requires specific tests of pre-selected ability, the pyramid model recognizes that nonverbal cues, conversational management strategies, etc., exert a substantial influence on communication behaviour. Therefore, the specific 'objective' ability to be tested is so closely tied to the situation that traditional tests of competence do not seem particularly useful. A second concern is for systematic biases in the perception of competence that leads to either overestimating or underestimating one's ability, as demonstrated by MacIntyre, Noels and Clément (1997). Being ‘able’ and ‘willing’ to communicate are two different issues. Even in the native language, McCroskey and Richmond (1991, p.27) acknowledge the importance of communication skills, but emphasize the importance of the individual’s perception of her or his skill level. ‘Since the choice of whether to communicate is a cognitive one, it is likely to be more influenced by one’s perceptions of competence (of which one usually is aware) than one’s actual competence (of which one may be totally unaware).’

A second consistent finding in studies of WTC is that anxiety has a negative effect. Baker and MacIntyre (2000) found negative correlations
for non-immersion students \((r = -0.29)\) and among immersion students \((r = -0.44)\). MacIntyre et al. (2001), who tested junior high school immersion students found correlations ranging between \(-0.22\) and \(-0.45\). MacIntyre and Charos (1996) found a correlation of \(-0.46\) between WTC and anxiety. Yashima et al. (2004) found that anxiety about communicating correlated negatively with WTC in the second language \((-0.25)\).

Anxiety works primarily as a restraining force on L2 communication. Previous research on language anxiety has demonstrated its pervasive and subtle effects on both language use (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986) and language learning (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994a, 1994b). The emotional arousal that accompanies high levels of anxiety can distract attention from the cognitive demands of the task at hand. Anxiety is especially disruptive when the speaker has little experience in the L2 and can lead to an unwillingness to take on communicative tasks or to abandon them after they begin (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994a, 1994b; MacIntyre, Noels & Clément, 1997).

The decision to take on or abandon ongoing communication plays out naturally during conversations. If we consider that each turn taken in conversation is another point at which one initiates action, then WTC may operate on both the choices made within the situation as well as the choice to enter situations in the first place. Dörnyei and Kormos (2000) predicted that task engagement would be necessary for speech to be produced in the L2 in a structured conversation task. They studied 46 Hungarian students in intermediate English courses at Budapest secondary schools. Participants were paired off and given a school-related communication task to complete, first in the L2 and then in the L1. Performance was assessed by the number of words produced and the number of turns taken. WTC significantly correlated with the number of turns that were taken, but not with the number of words that were produced. Similar results were obtained by MacIntyre, Babin and Clément (1999) using only L1 tasks. WTC has been shown to affect conversations by increasing the likelihood that one speaks more frequently (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; Yashima, 2002), and it is therefore relevant to setting the interpersonal social context in which L2 interactions take place.

WTC in context

Both variations and consistencies are observed in the effects of social context and culture on WTC. Given the intricate relationship between language learning and language usage, the pyramid model allows for WTC to be seen as both a facilitator and an outcome of learning. This
duality is clear in the context of educational programmes that emphasize linguistic and cultural immersion as a pedagogical tool.

In Canada, where the intergroup climate has been a prominent social and educational issue for decades, second language immersion programmes have been introduced with the broad purpose of increasing intercultural contact and intergroup harmony (Clément, 1994). MacIntyre et al. (1998) questioned whether engendering WTC might be the ultimate but often unstated goal of language learning. If that notion has validity, it would appear that second language communication should be given centre stage in the evaluation of the effectiveness of immersion, especially given the broad view of the bilingual person we have advocated above.

A handful of studies emphasize the communicative outcomes of second language learning in French immersion programmes among Anglophone Canadian students. Within this context, the students are coming from a majority group learning the language of a minority group. One such study (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément & Donovan, 2002) found that WTC was substantially higher among students in their second and third year (grades 8 and 9) of a late immersion programme, as compared to students in their first year (grade 7). Differences in perceived competence that mirrored the pattern of WTC differences also were observed. Language anxiety showed a more complex pattern of results (girls’ anxiety levels decreased but boys’ anxiety levels remained constant) that the authors attribute to gender differences in the timing of psychological and physical maturation during adolescence. In addition to the group comparisons, correlations within the three grade levels showed that students higher in WTC communicated more frequently in the L2 (see also MacIntyre, Baker, Clément & Conrod, 2001). There is also some evidence that the positive communicative effects of immersion education are maintained after the programme is completed (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément & Donovan, 2003). This collection of studies, therefore, shows the influence of the context on the development of WTC, namely that more intensive programmes, more advanced courses and maturation are influential factors.

Reliable variations in WTC observed across cultures (Sallinen-Kuparinen, McCroskey & Richmond, 1991), further attest to their strong impact. Wen and Clément (2003) propose that among many Chinese persons, a willingness to communicate is not necessarily sufficient to initiate action at the first available opportunity. Based on Confucian philosophy, issues of face and connectedness intervene between willingness to communicate and the initiation of speech. For Chinese speakers in this tradition, the responsibility to the group and fear of losing face converge to create an atmosphere that promotes silence over talk, a preference for mindful
quiet over mindless conversation. In contrast, Daly and McCroskey (1975) have noted that unwillingness to communicate leads to negative attributions about the reluctant speaker in American culture (see also Miczo, 2004). Such differences between cultures highlight the operation of various motives underlying communication, the forceful impact of social and psychological processes, and the omnipresent effect of social contexts that must be negotiated by bilingual speakers.

Normative constraints are one aspect through which contextual effects operate. Clément, Baker and MacIntyre (2003) examined the effects of context, norms and ethnonlinguistic vitality on WTC in Ottawa, Canada, in a bilingual (French–English) institution where both groups have equal status and where bilingual contact is frequent. In this context, Anglophones show higher ethnonlinguistic vitality than Francophones. Surprisingly, in both groups, the expected effect of normative pressure for L2 communication did not emerge as a predictor of L2 WTC, but L2 WTC did significantly predict the frequency of L2 communication. Further, in both groups, L2 confidence, which is defined by a lack of anxiety and high perceived competence, predicted L2 communication independently of WTC. The impact of L2 confidence on WTC was, however, much stronger for majority than for minority group members. In the latter case, a minority status implies more frequent and pleasant contact with the other group and generally a much better command of the other language. In these circumstances, willingness to communicate may no longer hinge on linguistic factors. Furthermore, an institutional context imposing equal status norms may limit the extent to which WTC will directly impact L2 usage. Both societal and institutional status of the language groups can, therefore, influence the ways in which WTC influences communicative action. Furthermore, the normative constraints imposed by an institution contribute to a climate that promotes extrinsic as opposed to intrinsic orientations to the learning of the second language.

In sum, studies of WTC have demonstrated its applicability to both native and second language communication situations, making it a useful construct in the study of bilingualism. Beyond that, in the process of developing second language, WTC draws upon a number of social, psychological and linguistic features that operate whenever a person chooses to act in the second language. The pyramid model organizes these influences in a time-sensitive, layered approach that emphasizes the background and foreground processes that affect the decision to speak up or be silent. This development has improved our understanding of the decision-making process undertaken when a person has the opportunity to use a second language. Consistent with the model, enduring factors
located at the lower levels of the pyramid – which include intergroup climate and motives for contact, individual difference factors, and the development of linguistic competence with the accompanying changes in self-confidence – combine to influence the communication context. By understanding the dynamics underlying these moment-by-moment actions, we can get a better handle on the larger processes that help to define the ways in which culture itself is enacted when groups come into contact.

L2 learning and use as cultural appropriation

Research and theorizing bearing on issues of self-determined motivation and willingness to communicate underline the eminently social nature of these phenomena. As shown above, motivation to learn a second language and its usage are rooted in the factors affecting socialization, interpersonal, and intergroup relations, as well as personal predispositions. What then might be some social consequences of motivation and usage? We contend that they are important vectors of cultural definition and development affecting self-identification.

ethnic identity

There is little consensus about what constitutes ethnic belonging (Leets, Giles & Clément, 1996) or ethnic identity (Phinney, 1990; Ross, 1979). Since Barth’s (1969) analysis, a definition corresponding to subjective feelings of belonging has been used by researchers. Furthermore, after Isajiw (1985, see also Berry, 1990) ethnic identity has been defined according to multiple dimensions: with reference to one’s own group and with reference to at least one other significant group (Clément, Singh & Gaudet, in press). As an added feature of this definition of ethnic identity, it is assumed to be situationally variable. Hraba and Hoiberg (1983) suggest that ethnic identity is an attitude which may cue identification behaviour. The manifest display of ethnic identity will only occur in certain situations, during intergroup contact, for example. The motivation to show or conceal an ethnic identity is rooted in the desire to maintain a positive self-image either through intergroup comparisons (Tajfel, 1978) or through the adherence to contextually defined norms (Alexander & Beggs, 1986). Ethnic identity is, therefore, highly variable and responds to contingencies of the situation in which it is played.

Our first attempt at assessing situational effects was in a Canadian university context defined by the presence of two linguistic groups (French and English), each originating from settings in which they
constituted either a majority or a minority (Clément & Noels, 1992). Among other things, the results show that profiles of identification are linked to the status of the groups, with majority Anglophones showing the greatest difference between their French and English identity and the minority Francophones showing the least difference. Furthermore, the majority Francophones’ results resembled those of the minority Francophones more than those of the majority Anglophones, attesting to the North American prevalence of English. These results hark back to those evoked in our earlier discussion of motivation and WTC. They foster the expectation that the relation between language and language-related outcomes may be subject to variations attributable to the relative status of language groups.

The consequences of bilingualism

These outcomes were not unforeseen by social psychologists dealing with bilingualism. As early as 1974, Lambert proposed a distinction between additive and subtractive bilingualism. Originally defined from a cognitive point of view, additive bilingualism corresponds to the capacity to use two languages as cognitive tools, whereas subtractive bilingualism corresponds to the loss of the first language as a result of the acquisition of the second language. Subtractive bilingualism would occur in the cases where minority group members would learn the language of a dominant group, whereas additive bilingualism would result when majority group members would learn the language of a minority.

Our development of the social corollary of this hypothesis (e.g., Clément, 1980, 1984; Clément & Noels, 1991) applies the same construct to the maintenance or loss of ethnic identity. Following the original model (Clément, 1980; Clément & Kruidenier, 1985), second language confidence developed through frequent and positive contacts with outgroup members is hypothesized to mediate the effects of contact on identity and wellbeing. The results obtained by Noels and Clément (1996) support both this hypothesis and the preceding considerations regarding status. As can be seen in Figure 2.2, majority Anglophones (i.e., Anglophones originating from settings where they are a majority) show an additive pattern: better identification with the Francophones and better psychological adjustment as a result of greater language confidence in French and no erosion of English identity.

These results contrast with those obtained by Noels, Pon & Clément (1996). In this research, rather than involving participant members of the two Canadian chartered language groups, Chinese university students were invited to participate. As in many areas of the world, the Chinese
community is old and well established, with its own institutions and living area. It is also a visible minority, with all the attendant difficulties related to individual integration into the mainstream. For these reasons, they would be expected to be relatively resistant to the erosive forces affecting their identity. As Figure 2.3 shows, however, this is not the case. English language confidence not only leads to a subtractive identity profile but also to better psychological adjustment, thus aggravating the influence of erosive forces on identification to the Chinese community. This research supports the original contention pertaining to the potentially subtractive effects of second language competence, and further demonstrates its implications for psychological adjustment. Finally, the results obtained with majority Francophone and Chinese students support the powerful impact of second language confidence as a determinant of identity.

Yet it is obvious that minority communities survive and even thrive for long periods without the appearance of a final obliteration. Understanding the dynamics of such resilience requires a broadening of the definitions of contact and communication beyond those above. Direct contact with members of the outgroup may be only one of the multiple aspects in which intergroup communication is manifested. Another aspect of contact corresponds to contact with the ingroup. Although the work depicted above hinges on definitions of contact with members of the outgroup, maintaining harmonious and involved relations with the ingroup should be a factor in ingroup identity maintenance.

Furthermore, indirect contact via the media may be as important as direct contact, particularly with respect to ensuring first language usage among linguistic minorities. Clément, Baker, Josephson and Noels (2005) recently reported results supporting cultivation (Gerbner, 1969) and

![Figure 2.2 Path analytic solution: majority Anglophones. (From Noels & Clément, 1996)](image)
erosion (Varan, 1998) theories to the effect that media have an immediate impact on culture. Specifically, their longitudinal design showed that L2 audio-visual and written media had an impact on degree of identification with the outgroup, mediated by second language confidence.

Although these results further support the key role filled by language confidence, they also suggest that the mediation process linking aspects of contact on the one hand, and on the other hand identity and adjustment, may require some degree of added complexity. Figures 2.2 and 2.3 show an unexpected path from contact to identity, by-passing language confidence. It is, therefore, possible that another mechanism may act as a mediator. Besides developing language confidence, intergroup contact contributes to the development of networks, themselves a source of social support. The influence of social support on wellbeing has received much support in previous research (Stroebe & Stroebe, 1996). Its effect on ethnic identification has, however, received little attention.

A study by Gaudet and Clément (2005), therefore, aimed to test this conjecture among the Francophone community of the Province of Saskatchewan (Canada). These people, known as the Fransaskois, are descendants of the early French settlers originating from French areas of Eastern Canada as well as the United States. They are made up of remote pockets of small French communities, largely self-sustaining. Contacts with the majority Anglophone group as well as inter-marriage has, however, brought their population from 4.4 per cent in 1951 to 2 per cent in 1996.
The results of the study are presented in Figure 2.4. As can be seen, two concurrent processes seem to be operating here. The paths from Anglophone contact and media through English language confidence to identity and adjustment replicate the subtractive situation discussed earlier. Francophone involvement and social support result, however, in an additive situation, sustaining Francophone identity and self-esteem. Furthermore, Francophone social support fosters Anglophone social support and, eventually, self-esteem as well. An examination of involvement with one’s community and social support provides a hint at the complex processes governing minority identity and adjustment. Expanding the definition of contact as well as that of the mediational process has proved useful in improving our understanding of resistance to assimilation pressures shown by extreme minority groups. Nevertheless, that social support as a psychological phenomenon is dependent on communication patterns which remain to be delineated.

**Figure 2.4** Path analytic solution: the Fransaskois (From Gaudet & Clément, 2005)

**Conclusion**

Whether it is the Fransaskois or any other group discussed here, the issue of communication is a keystone to understanding contextual effects. The results reported above, while supporting the role of individual characteristics such as self-determination, willingness to communicate and language confidence, highlight at the same time the interpersonal, intergroup and societal aspects of context as they impinge on the motivation, usage
and consequences of bilinguality. In all cases, however, and in spite of
the rather wide scope of this review, the understanding of contextual
effects lies with an adequate comprehension of the transactions between
individuals embedded in specific cultural contexts.

Although not specific to bilingualism or second languages, Bourdieu
(1977) made the point that languages only convey meaning in a specific
context which acts to lift the ambiguity inherent to utterances or lexical
items taken out of context. This semiotic function is, furthermore,
intimately tied to the power relation between interlocutors. ‘The value
of a language is equivalent to the value of its speakers’, (p.22, author
translation). In interactions, the meaning of an utterance is what is
understood and intended by the most powerful individual, who may
legitimately use an array of discursive strategies to orient and dominate
the conversation (e.g., Ng & Bradac, 1993). Conversely, if a conversation
is to persist, the non-dominant participant must also subscribe to the
dominance rules. Finally, given changing contexts dominance relations
and strategies are likely to change to maximize individual gains.

Applied to bilingualism, this approach to communication thrives on
context effects of the type described above. Learning and using a second
language, as well as their consequences, are optimized in situations where
these activities act to support the relative dominance of the speaker. A
learning environment supporting autonomy fosters more self-determined
motivation to acquire a language; a high degree of language confidence in
a given context promotes willingness to communicate; additive forms of
bilingualism are found among dominant group members. The common
thread here is not so much social dominance but rather the individual’s
appraisal that, given a specific context, the conversation will evolve
according to his or her goals and expectations.

But what about minority groups? Obviously, their acquisition of a
majority language plays out along with their goals and expectations
to direct interactions with members of the majority group. To the
extent that they achieve close to perfect mastery of the language
they may legitimately claim ascendancy in the conversation, such as
was the case in the Clément et al. (2003) study with highly bilingual
Francophones. But for them, societal erosion of their first language poses
another challenge, that of maintaining positive relationships with their
own non-dominant group. As shown by Gaudet and Clément (2005),
however, that too is resolved through the establishment of community
communication networks.

The recourse to and maintenance of speech characteristics that are
considered non-dominant, or the refusal to interact in the second
language evidenced by the Asian students, is the product of cultural norms that define what is a desirable outcome. The Western hierarchically organized society described by Bourdieu (1977) may foster relatively well-defined power relations based on social class. A collective ideology favouring plurality, as is the case for the Canadian examples, or the need to conserve face and respect for the teachers in the Chinese case, dictate approaches to language transactions which are quite different. In the end, it is the broader cultural tapestry of values which determines the contextual conditions for mastery.

acknowledgements

Production of this paper was facilitated by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada to the three authors. We would like to thank Susan Baker, Sophie Gaudet and Sara Rubenfeld for their assistance in completing this project. Correspondence concerning this chapter should be addressed to R. Clément, School of Psychology, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1N 6N5 (rclement@uottawa.ca).

note

1. Heritage language students are those learning a language once spoken by their ancestors whereas this is not the case for non-heritage language students.

references

three variations on the social psychology of bilinguality


language, accommodation and intercultural encounters


Leets, Laura & Giles, Howard (1995). Dimensions of minority language survival/ non-survival: Intergroup cognitions and communication climates. In W. Fase,


