

Ethnolinguistic vitality and intergroup processes

During the last years, an interdisciplinary research paradigm concentrating on the emergence and dynamics of social identity in language usage and public discourse has gained prominence. This research paradigm connecting sociolinguistics, critical discourse analysis, cultural anthropology and social psychology is called sociocultural linguistics (see Bucholtz and Hall 2005). The paper at hand belongs to this paradigm and seeks to outline the discursive factors that have the greatest effect on ethnolinguistic vitality and model how the different ethnolinguistic vitality profiles of the minority and dominant group yield to different intergroup processes such as integration, assimilation or segregation.

The paper starts with the claim that ethnolinguistic vitality is a characteristic of a group's social identity and as such it is constructed and maintained discursively. The second section of the paper distinguishes three main types of factors that influence vitality: group-external factors beyond its control, group-internal factors such as social structures and institutions that the group is able to build and secure its sustainability in a particular setting, and symbolic-discursive factors that are used to achieve and maintain ethnolinguistic vitality. The third section outlines the main discursive factors that influence groups vitality: cultural mass differential, inter-group distance, utilitarianism and intergroup discordance. The last section discusses the impact of ethnolinguistic vitality on intergroup processes by refining the Interactive Acculturation Model proposed by Bourhis et al. (1997).

1. The definition of ethnolinguistic vitality

Ethnolinguistic vitality is usually defined as what “makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in intergroup situations.” (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977, 308). It is interesting that the substance of this vitality is hardly defined or explained in the vitality literature, with research focusing just on the factors that influence it. I think it would be good for the EVT first to understand what the nature of vitality is in order to better understand its determinants and the mechanism of their impact. For this reason, I start the discussion of defining what it is that causes groups to behave distinctively in intergroup situations.

Deep down, it is a group identity issue. According to Tajfel (1978, 63), social identity is “that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership.” Ellemers, Kortekaas and Ouwerkerk (1999, 386) argue that these three components of social identity – cognitive, evaluative and emotional – are conceptually distinct aspects of identity; and that only the “group commitment appears to be the key aspect of social identity which drives the tendency for people to behave in terms of their group membership.” Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) call this commitment *bounded solidarity*, which is the feeling of unity that often arises from real or perceived threats to the group. Thus, ethnolinguistic vitality could be defined as the group's will to act collectively, deriving from its members' emotional attachment to this particular group membership. The stronger the affective commitment is, the more vitality the group possesses.

Of course, the affective commitment is not the sole cause that motivates group members to behave collectively in intergroup situations. It is often that people are morally forced to participate in the actions of the group even if they do not approve of the action. Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) refer to this phenomenon as *enforceable trust*, which is defined as the group's capacity to sanction those who do not obey the norms.

To be more precise, bounded solidarity and enforceable trust could be seen as two facets of what Bourdieu (1991, 170) calls symbolic power – a power of “making people see and believe, of conforming or transforming the vision of the world and, thereby, action on the world ... by virtue of the specific effect of mobilization ... capable of producing real effects without apparent expenditure of energy.” All of the factors mentioned above – emotional attachment, bonded solidarity, enforceable trust and symbolic power are all built communicatively in public and private discourse. Thus, ethnolinguistic vitality is also built and maintained discursively. A successful theory should be able to reflect this fact.

2. Systematising the vitality factors

A lack of theoretical understanding concerning which factors are the primary variables affecting vitality and which factors are indirectly influencing it is the main weakness of most theories of vitality as well as some other models that concentrate on language maintenance. Let us take the classical model of ethnolinguistic vitality that differentiates three broad factors that have impact on vitality: status, demographic and institutional support factors (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977). Vitality calculated on the basis of these factors as they occur in the real world is called objective vitality. If the perception of these features amongst the group members is measured, it is called subjective vitality.

The main methodological problem with this approach is that the suggested objective vitality factors do not refer exclusively to objective features of the world that can be measured, but also include features that are symbolic in nature. For example, status factors are by nature symbolic, whereas demographic factors are objective measurable entities. This lack of distinction between symbolic and real features is common to most well known language endangerment assessment frameworks, for example Fishman (1991), Edwards (1992), and Grenoble and Whaley (1998). This inconsistency does not allow distinguishing between factors that have direct impact on vitality from the factors that only indirectly influence it. I'll try to make this explicit through the example of institutional support factors which are commonly taken as good predictors of vitality (or endangerment).

As Giles, Bourhis and Taylor (1977, 316) note, “minority groups who have organised themselves to safeguard their own interests ... would have more vitality than linguistic minorities who have not organised themselves in this fashion”. This statement reveals correctly that extensive social structure is a sign of vitality, and the institutional support system is a necessary feature that enhances this. Yet it would be wrong to equal the richness of the support system to vitality. In prototypical cases it certainly makes sense, but the support system has considerable inertia, so that it may lag a great deal behind emerging social mobilisation or may reflect a glory that has long passed.

My main argument here is that the group is a social construction and its strength depends on social psychological and discursive factors relating to how its position in

this world is imagined, how the emotional attachment to the group is constructed and to what extent such a vision is shared amongst the members. The objective factors are just background forces that make achieving the group's social mobilisation easier or more difficult, but ultimately it is the shared vision that leads to the group's sustainable existence or dissolution.

In this light it would be useful to distinguish between the notions of sustainability and vitality. Sustainability is the group's ability to maintain itself over time. Vitality is its will to act collectively. It is evident that sustainability is a much broader notion than vitality. This relationship is well explicated in Sue Harris Russell's (2001) sociocultural framework. I'll outline its main features below.

The framework includes three levels of analysis – the external setting, the speech community (the group) and the individual. The main unit of analysis is the group which is characterised by two interdependent variables – the ideological system and the social system. The ideological system includes religion, values, ideologies and beliefs that are the basis for the norms of this particular group. Social identity and language in its integrative sense also belong to this system. The social system includes various institutions that the group has established and that are used by people to attain access to resources valued in this particular group. The social systems includes family, marriage, economy, religion, political institutions and language in its instrumental function.

The group does not exist in a vacuum, but in a specific ecological setting, that includes geographic factors, climate, availability of resources, geopolitical significance of the location and the presence of other groups. A typical minority language usually is surrounded by a larger group which has its own ideological and social systems and constitutes an immediate social environment for this minority. Undeniably, the ecological setting affects the sustainability of the group and the group as a self-organising system tries to adjust its ideological and social systems in a manner best suited to survival in a given setting. Groups that successfully manage this remain sustainable. Graphically the framework could be visualised as follows:

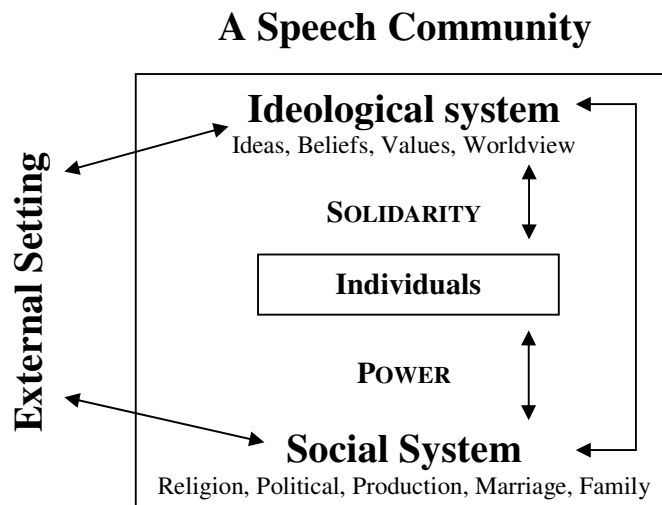


Figure 1: The model of speech community (Harris Russell 2001, 143)

Needless to say that this system is dynamic, responding adaptively to both environmental changes as well as internal system innovations in both the social and ideological spheres. To some extent, this view is consistent with Mufwene's, who sees language shift as adaptive behaviour of speakers in a given ecological niche: "Speakers decide what is useful to them, and they determine history relative to their current needs without any foresight. ... Like cultures, languages are dynamic, complex adaptive systems that cannot be considered independent of the adaptive needs of their speakers" (Mufwene 2004, 219); and thus there is little hope of saving endangered languages "without restoring the previous socioeconomic ecologies that had sustained them." (Mufwene 2004, 219).

However, Mufwene does not take into account the important difference between biological and social adaptation. Language, culture, and other symbolic structures consist of, of course, generalisations of idiolects or idiocultures or individual social identities, and as such, they change when individual behaviour changes, but these generalisations, because of their symbolic and socially shared nature, feed back to the individuals and by this, influence their behaviour. "While circumstances construct identities, identities, via the actions they set in motion, are also capable of reconstructing circumstances." (Cornell 1996, 67). This means that the group has the ability to challenge the changing ecological conditions collectively by mobilising its members to coordinated behaviour. This tells us that language maintenance is not a lost cause per se, as Mufwene tries to argue. The dependency is twofold and symbolic factors can save the day when economic or environmental conditions turn unfavorable.

From this, it follows that the factors influencing sustainability can be grouped into three categories: 1) external ecological factors beyond the control of the group such as the presence of dominant outgroups, availability of resources etc; 2) internal ecological factors that the group is able to create and modify according to its needs such as social institutions and other support systems, the structure and density of social networks, group demographic characteristics etc; 3) symbolic factors of a discursive nature that are used to maintain the group as a collective actor, i.e. to maintain its vitality.

Note, that group vitality is the only factor that is directly at the disposal of the group in order to secure its sustainability: it is only through social mobilisation that the group is collectively able to respond to unfavourable external ecological conditions and to do something to maintain its integrity. Whether these attempts are sufficient and successful is a different matter. It is for this reason that a successful model of ethnolinguistic vitality should take into account first and foremost the symbolic factors that influence this response. Below I will outline the main factors of such a model introduced in XXX (2005, 2007, forthcoming); and introduce an additional factor having a strong impact on a group's vitality.

3. Factors influencing vitality

3.1. Cultural mass differential

Most researchers agree that the driving force behind language shift is power differences between the dominant and minority groups and that identity maintenance or shift depends on the opportunities and rewards, real or symbolic (including more positive social identity) that the two groups can provide to their members. I have called all these factors together as the cultural mass (M) of the group (see XXX 2005).

However, for group vitality, the crucial factor is not the cultural mass itself, but the differential of cultural masses between the two groups – the ingroup and the prominent outgroup. If the cultural mass differential (CMD) is small, the benefits from shifting one's group membership would not outweigh its emotional and social costs. The larger the CMD is in favor of the outgroup, the more beneficial it would be to shift the identity. Needless to say, what counts is the subjective perception of, or to be more precise, the socially shared vision concerning this difference. Thus, provided that the influence of all other factors is absent, the vitality (V) of the group would be equal to the differential of the cultural masses (M_1 and M_2) of the minority (G_1) and majority (G_2) groups:

$$(1) \quad V = M_1 - M_2$$

If $V < 0$, the group has low vitality (likely to assimilate)
 If $V \geq 0$ the group is stable (not likely to assimilate)

Thus CMD expresses the drive towards shifting group affiliation. This means, that the theory of ethnolinguistic vitality is not a theory of language maintenance *per se*. First and foremost, it is a theory of social identity maintenance, although in many cases this coincides with language maintenance.

3.2. Inter-group distance

Although the CMD is the driving force behind identity and language shift, it is hardly unaffected by other factors that either hinder or enhance this tendency. One such factor is inter-group distance (r). This is a complex factor that refers to the various components making up group boundaries defined as “patterns of social interaction that give rise to, and subsequently reinforce, in-group members’ self-identification and outsiders’ confirmation of group distinctions.” (Sanders 2002, 327). A loss of vitality follows the loosening of these patterns and their replacement by patterns that work for some other identity. Thus, all factors being otherwise equal, the vitality of the group is higher the larger the perceived distance between the groups is, i.e the clearer the groups’ boundaries are and the more distinct the groups appear. As intergroup distance is a complex notion, it can be divided into two subfactors: extent of intergroup contact and cultural distinctiveness.

The former expresses the minority’s ability to maintain their networks while the environment offers opportunities for the development of a different network that unavoidably would loosen the strength of the heritage network (Landry, Allard and Henry 1996). Sanders (2002) refers to numerous cases where ethnic entrepreneurship was able to provide resources for the community, thus reducing the need for contacts with outside communities. The segregative networks created and maintained by this process have been shown to enhance the vitality of the group despite large differentials between the cultural masses. Even in cases where intergroup contacts eventually become more widespread and “acculturation moves forward, some aspects of assimilation are resisted by groups who have developed effective social networks and institutions for generating and distributing scarce resources to group members” (Sanders 2002, 333).

Network structure in turn is heavily interrelated with language usage: as intergroup contact often involves two languages, the network structure will determine the

language usage patterns. The tensor the contacts with the dominant outgroup are the more the dominant language is used. This means that the language usage pattern is often a good indicator of the extent of intergroup contact. On the other hand, language is also a boundary feature for many groups and as such indicates the cultural distinctiveness of the group (Barth 1969).

Cultural distinctiveness is determined by the number and vividness of the boundary features of the group. Some of the features are essentialist by nature such as racial features; some are socially constructed such as religion. While latter features could be abandoned by group members, the essential features may not. Language, although a constructed feature, has strong essentialist characteristics – the native accent is hard to conceal. Often language is the defining boundary feature for a group (see also the notion of core values of Smolics 1981; 1989), but the boundary could also be a marked by other features such as religion and related cultural practices (Myhill 2003).

The vitality of the group further depends on its cultural distinctiveness – the number of features defining the group and the extent of essentialism of these features. Sanders (2002, 342) refers to a number of studies indicating the inhibitory effect that individuals' distinctive racial features have on their choice of possible ethnic identities.

Ultimately, the intergroup distance is determined by symbolic and discursive factors of vitality that set the norms concerning the acceptability, extent and nature of intergroup contacts, as well as the wish to maintain cultural distinctiveness. Hornsey and Hogg (2000, 147) report a number of cases where a perceived threat to identity brought in by gradual convergence in intergroup contact has eventually led to symbolic actions to reduce intergroup contact and to stress cultural differences. So, the intergroup distance could be an effective factor affecting a group's vitality. Mathematically, its relation to the other factors could be expressed as in (2):

$$(2) \quad V = (M_1 - M_2)/r$$

The minimal value for r is 1. This would correspond to minimal intergroup distance both in terms of social network terms and cultural distinctiveness. In such cases, r has no impact on the vitality V which is determined only by the CMD. When r is larger than 1, it starts to reduce the negative cultural mass differential and by this V starts to approach zero. The larger r gets, the closer V gets to zero, i.e. the point of ethnolinguistic stability¹.

3.3 Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism is a broad discursive mindset that justifies pragmatic and economically beneficial courses of action. According to Scollon and Scollon (1995) the basic principles of utilitarian discourse are as follows: 1) humans are defined as rational economic entities, 2) 'good' is defined as what will give the greatest happiness for the greatest number, and 3) values are established by statistical (i.e. quantitative) means.

Each culture, though, functions as an interplay of innovation and tradition and the utilitarian principles are balanced by what could be called the identity discourse: 1) the essence of humanity is emotional; 2) the notion of "good" is set by the moral authority; 3) values are defined by tradition. The success of identity discourse relies

on the emotional attachment of a person to their group members and heritage, as well as to their immediate surroundings – the cultural landscape. In a balanced culture, the utilitarian discourse and the identity discourse are in a modest conflict of innovation and tradition, which is a characteristic of many well-functioning societies.

As the utilitarian principles are discursive, different groups may differ in respect to the salience of the utilitarian principles in their culture. The less salient these principles are the more conservative the culture is. For example some religious groups (like the Amish or Russian old-believers) are so conservative that they almost do not assimilate at all despite the large negative CMD. In this case the utilitarianism is virtually zero. If the society is totally utilitarian, the assimilative effects of the cultural mass differential are enforced; and if the utilitarian and identity discourses are well balanced, U does not affect the impact of CMD on vitality. From this, it could be reasonable to let the values of U to change in the diapason $0 \leq U \leq 2$ and to include it in the formula in the following way:

$$(3) \quad V = U(M_1 - M_2)/r.$$

This means that if the value of U is 1, its impact to the overall vitality can be disregarded. If its value is greater than 1, the effects of CMD start to be increased. In the case the U value reaches its maximum value 2, the effect of CMD gets doubled. In the case of a typical minority group, which has a negative CMD, high U value causes it to increase. The reverse is also true: if the value of U falls below 1, it starts to reduce the negative value of CMD. When U reaches 0, the whole equation becomes equal to 0, indicating that this particular group is stable due to its extremely traditional and conservative value system.

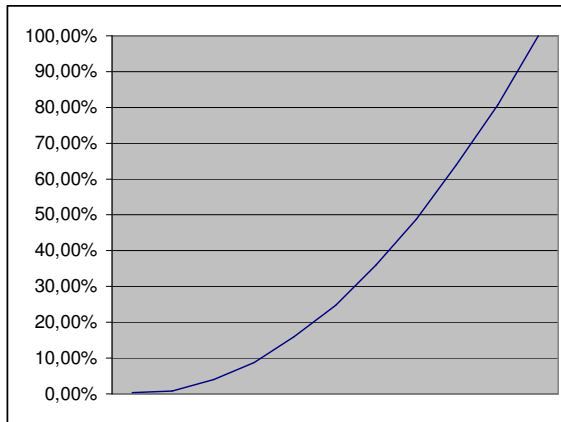
3.4. Inter-group discordance

Intergroup discordance, or D-factor, expresses perceived illegitimacy of intergroup power relations as well as the dehumanisation of the outgroup. Although legitimacy and stigmatisation are clearly distinct concepts, they are interrelated. The pilot study conducted in Estonia to design an instrument for measuring D-factor revealed that, both amongst the ethnic Estonians as the majority and ethnic Russians as a minority, the perceived legitimacy of the interethnic situation in Estonia and the level of stigmatisation of the outgroup were statistically significantly correlated: for Estonians $r = 0,202$ ($P < 0,05$) and for Russians $r = -0,541$ ($p < 0,01$). This means that for the majority group the more legitimate the situation is perceived to be, the more likely the outgroup is to be stigmatised. For the minority group, the more illegitimate the situation is perceived, the more the outgroup is stigmatised.

Thus, conceptually, D-factor is a variable that incorporates the crucial affective factors towards the outgroup. The core of these factors is expressed by the extent of dehumanisation. These factors interact with legitimacy perceptions creating sentiments that either enforce or inhibit identity shift, all things being equal. In general, for the D of the dominant group (D_d), the sense of legitimacy justifies dehumanisation, creating high levels of discordance. For the D of a minority group (D_m), the perception of high levels of illegitimacy in the interethnic situation legitimises dehumanisation. Thus the D-factors for both groups would have to be calculated by the following formulas:

$$(4) \quad \begin{aligned} &a) D_d = LEG * DEHUM \\ &b) D_m = ILLEG * DEHUM \end{aligned}$$

If we take that all subcomponents can assume values from 0 to 1 and that there is often positive correlation between the subcomponents, this would lead the D-factor to be a square function of its components (in the ideal case of a perfect correlation where $r=1,0$, see graph 1). What this means is that the value of the D lags somewhat behind the values of its subcomponents. This is justified by the fact that small ingroup bias is found to be characteristic to many societies without it affecting intergroup relations to a large extent. Only when strong claims of legitimacy/illegitimacy combine with high levels of dehumanisation, do the intergroup relations get seriously distorted with full consequences on the vitality of the minority groups. Of course, the empirical studies should reveal whether this assumption is correct.



Graph 1. the range of D-factor values as the square function of its components

Let us see what this means for the V-model. According to social identity theory, there are two strategies that members of the low status groups may undertake in order to achieve a more rewarding social identity: social mobility (i.e. individual identity shift) or social change (i.e. a collective action to change status relations) (Tajfel and Turner 1979). The later strategy depends on whether there are cognitive alternatives for the existing intergroup power relations. Cognitive alternatives to the existing situation depend on the perceived stability-instability and legitimacy-illegitimacy of the current situation (Turner and Brown 1978).

The nature and interrelation of these two dimensions needs to be clarified in order to incorporate them into the V-model appropriately. Giles et al (1977, 335) argue that cognitive alternatives are apparent when stability, legitimacy and vitality factors are combined, but they do not specify the interrelation of these factors. I will argue below that stability is the sum of CMD and legitimacy perceptions of both the minority and majority groups.

The most unstable situation is the one where the dominant group perceives itself as (relatively) weak, the minority perceives itself as (relatively) strong and both admit that the current intergroup situation is illegitimate. In this situation, the previous intergroup power relations are likely to be modified. The most stable one is the situation where the dominant group feels strong, the minority weak, and both agree that the situation is legitimate. This leaves the minority little motivation and/or possibility to challenge the intergroup situation.

For the dominant groups, the level of discordance is in positive correlation with legitimacy. Thus, for the dominant group, the higher D is and the higher CMS is, the more stable situation. For the minority group, the more negative the CMD is and the

lower the value of D, the more stable the situation is. Thus, stability could just be stated as the sum of CMD and D:

$$(5) \quad S = \text{CMD} + D$$

For a minority group, the greater the **negative** value of S, the greater the perceived stability of the situation will be. For the majority group, the greater the **positive** value of S, the greater the perceived stability of the situation is. To calculate the overall stability of a particular interethnic situation, the value of minority stability (S_m) should be subtracted from the stability value of the dominant group (S_d). Thus the overall stability would be

$$(6) \quad S = S_d - S_m$$

When the D-factor is incorporated, the V formula obtains the following form:

$$(7) \quad V = U((M_1 - M_2) + D)/r$$

This can be restated as:

$$(8) \quad V = U \cdot S/r$$

This means that we can say that the low vitality of the minority group depends on the perceived high stability of its low status in the situation where the intergroup distance r is small (that reduces the costs of identity shift) and the attitudes of the members of the group are utilitarian (which favours social mobility and identity shift). The vitality of the minority group is thus higher, the more unstable the situation is perceived; the larger the intergroup distance are and the more prominent the traditional and conservative values.

3.6 The vitality of the dominant group

Thus far I have explained the workings of the V-model only in the cases of minority groups whose CMD value is typically less than 0. Considering what is known about language maintenance and shift, the V model seems to capture the main regularities. Its first empirical test on the case of the YYY minority (XXX 2007) also seems to suggest its relative accuracy. Let us now turn to the predictions of the model in the case of dominant groups whose CMD is positive.

For the members of the dominant group there is no reason to assume any drive towards shifting identity to the minority group, at least it has not been attested. Thus, for a group whose CMD value is positive, it does not matter how high the value is, the group is nevertheless stable. However, this does not mean that for the dominant group, the V-model has no usage. In fact, identity shifts within minority groups does not only depend on its vitality, but also on the attitudes of the dominant group. If the latter is not ready to accept the shifting minority members as its own members, this can hinder or prevent the identity shift of the former, indirectly securing the maintenance of this minority, but also creating intergroup tensions. Interestingly, the same factors that influence the vitality of the minority group, influence the openness of the majority group towards new members, too.

The value of S_d indicates the perception of stability of the interethnic situation from the view-point of the dominant group. Keeping in mind that the value of S for a dominant group is a composite of its positive CMD and D (perceived legitimacy of the situation and the degree of dehumanisation) in relation to the particular outgroup,

one would expect that, all things equal, the dominant group would be more ready to include shifting minority members if the discordance is low and the CMD difference not large, particularly in the case that the outgroup members are generally considered more or less equal and respected. In the case of large D values and high status differences, the minority members are too stigmatised to be readily accepted as ingroup members.

Utilitarianism also affects the dominant group's readiness to accept shifting minority members. The more utilitarian the value system of the dominant group is, the more open it should be for the new members. Very traditional and conservative dominant groups are often quite exclusive because of the ideals of cultural purity. Thus, one would expect that the U values between 0 and 1 would increase the closedness of the dominant group, whereas the U values from 1 to 2 would increase openness.

Intergroup distance would have the opposite effect: the larger the perceived intergroup distance between the dominant ingroup and the minority outgroup is, the less likely it is that the dominant group would accept the shifting minority members. If the perceived distance is small, the willing minority members are more easily incorporated into the majority.

Basically, this means that in determining the openness of the dominant group to shifting minority members, the factors above have a mirror relationship (9a) of that of the vitality formula for the minority group (8, repeated here as 9b):

$$(9) \quad \begin{aligned} \text{a) } V_d &= r * S_d / U \\ \text{b) } V_m &= U * S_m / r \end{aligned}$$

What this model would predict is, that the value of V_d is the higher the higher S_d , the lower U and the larger r . In other words, a dominant group with a high V_d would consider itself vastly superior to the minority, its domination absolutely legitimate and the members of the outgroup considerably dehumanised. These perceptions would be reinforced even more by a large perceived intergroup distance.

Obviously, what the high V_d shows is not the actually vitality of the dominant group but rather its ethnocentrism or ethnic closedness. Despite this, I am not going to change the symbol V . There are two reasons for not doing so: first, not to create confusion by introducing new variables, and second, it seems that both V_m and V_d are conceptually close, indicating two halves of the same dimension, whatever the name of this dimension would be. The reason to believe this stems from the fact that different combinations of V_m and V_d values seem to relate to different types of intergroup processes.

4. The impact of V on intergroup processes

The connection between the vitality perceptions of the dominant and minority group have been discussed in a number of previous studies of ethnolinguistic vitality. For example, Harwood, Giles, Bouris (1994) outlined three possible types of intergroup vitality profiles: perceptual distortions in favour of ingroup vitality; perceptual distortions in favour of outgroup vitality, and nonconsensual vitality perceptions. Particularly interesting is the third type that seems to indicate the presence of identity threat. In the case where the minority group assesses its vitality to be higher than that of the majority, it feels its identity being threatened by the majority and in order to defend it, a shared perception of superiority is constructed. In the case when the

majority assesses that the minority has higher vitality than their own group, but the minority considers the majority to have higher vitality, the groups are unsure about their intergroup relationship, and that the dominance relationship is open to debate. In fact, such a pattern has been attested in Pierson, Giles and Young (1987) who studied the vitality perceptions of Westerner and Chinese students in Hong Kong during the negotiations over the territory's future.

These results clearly indicate that orientations for intergroup behaviour are related to vitality perceptions, and that they are constructed relationally in the intergroup contact situation. Based on this rationale, the Interactive Acculturation Model (IAM) was proposed by Bourhis et al. (1997). According to this model "through intercultural contact, dominant host majority members do influence the acculturation strategies of immigrant group members, who in turn may also affect the orientations of the host majority" (Bourhis et al. 1997, 375). IAM is based on Berry's (1974; 1997) bidimensional acculturation model that proposes a typology of four immigrant acculturation orientations: integration, assimilation, separation/segregation, and marginalization.

The IAM states that the outcomes of intergroup relations are influenced by the acculturation orientations that both the dominant group and a particular immigrant group have in the context of this particular intergroup setting. Bourhis et al. (1997) draw a matrix that maps the five dominant group orientations to the five immigrant group orientations. The 25 member typology is derived quite mechanically by calculating the number of agreements to the questions whether the immigrants should adopt the values of the host culture and whether they should maintain their heritage culture. This leads to three logically possible combinations: consensual (both groups agree on both dimensions), problematic (groups agree on one dimension) or conflictual (disagreement on both dimension).

As it often happens with such matrices, it leads to a large number of logical possibilities that may or may not correspond to reality very closely and need not be necessary. Despite this, the concept of interactive acculturation is a strong one, and the authors make several useful generalisations from its principles (Bourhis et al 1997, 384), 1) state policies that aim to integration are more likely to yield positive relational outcomes than assimilative policies while "segregationist and exclusionist policies reflecting the ethnist ideology are likely to foster conflictual relational outcomes"; 2) despite the state policies, there could be sections of the host society whose acculturation orientations favour segregation or exclusion and this would have interactive effect on the orientations of the minority, too; 3) relative vitality of the groups is likely to influence the acculturation orientation and interethnic processes, predicting that low vitality groups are more vulnerable than medium vitality immigrant groups.

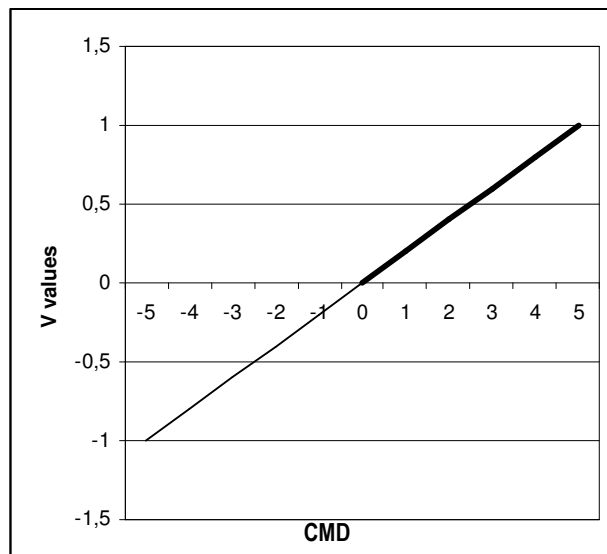
As the V-model expresses, the vitality of the minority group (V_m) and openness or ethnocentrism of the dominant group (V_d , see section 3.6), the V-model is able to express the generalizations of IAM through the systematic comparison of the V-values of the dominant and minority group:

		Dominant group	
		$V_d > 0$	$V_d \approx 0$
Minority	$V_m \approx 0$	Segregation	Integration or separation
	$V_m < 0$	Marginalisation	Assimilation

Table 1. Interethnic processes as function of dominant and minority group vitality

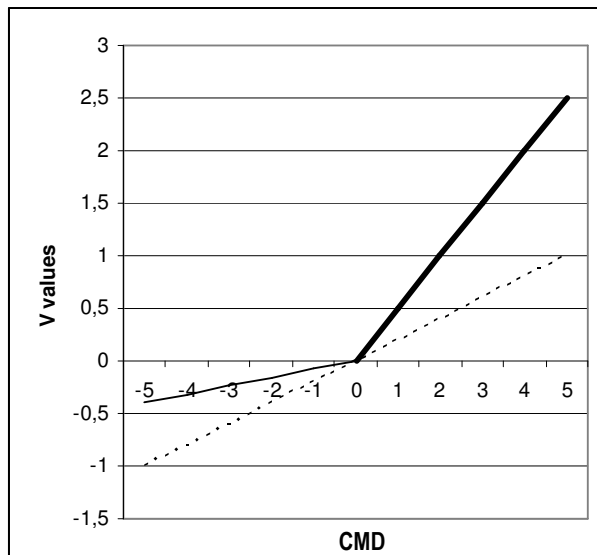
As the V values are just summaries of a quite complex set of relations, their single numeric values are themselves not very informative concerning the real acculturation processes that are underway in this particular intergroup situation. It is important to observe what the main contributors are to the particular V value: CMD, U , r , and D . This is best illustrated graphically.

CMD is the feature that indicates the perceived status of the ingroup in respect to the particular outgroup. If V would depend only on CMD, the possible V values for the dominant group (thick line) and minority (thin line) could be plotted as in Graph 2:



Graph 2. Base line of dominant and minority group vitality

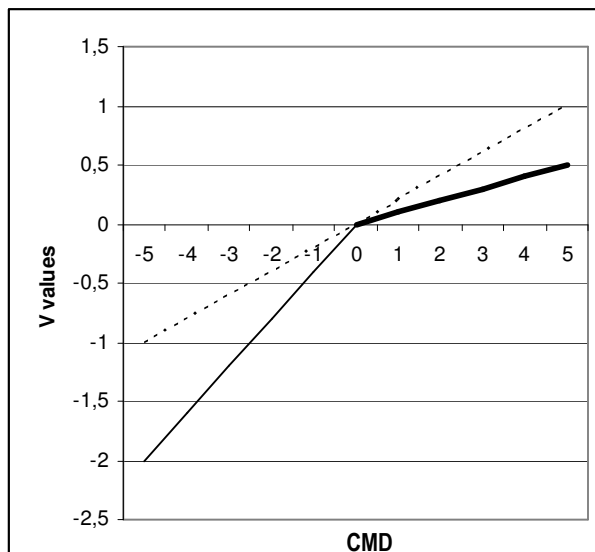
Adding the values of U and r to the CMD, the slope of the line will change. In the case of low U and high r (when the group is very conservative and the intergroup distance is large), the slope of the line representing the V values will be changed as illustrated below (the dotted line represents the V values in the case of base line CMD, as in graph 3):



Graph 3. Vitality configuration characteristic to segregation

In the case the U values are low and r high the most likely relational outcome for this particular intergroup situation is segregation. Thus, if the insertion of U and r values to the V formula leads to the configuration where both the dominant and minority group lines are above the baseline, the particular setting would predict segregation with possible conflictual outcomes.

In the case where the U values are high and r values low, indicating that the groups have utilitarian value systems and the intergroup distance is small (low r), both lines swing below the base line:

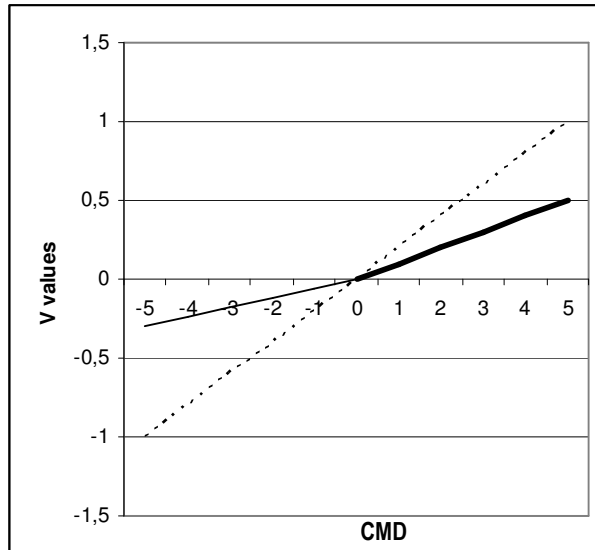


Graph 4. Vitality configuration characteristic to assimilation

This configuration would suggest assimilation as the relational outcome of acculturation orientations: both groups are pragmatically minded, the intergroup distance is small, all other factors notwithstanding, it would not be very costly to change group membership as the former ingroup members approve the motives (since

they are utilitarian themselves) and the small intergroup distance makes the shifters easily accepted by utilitarian dominant group members.

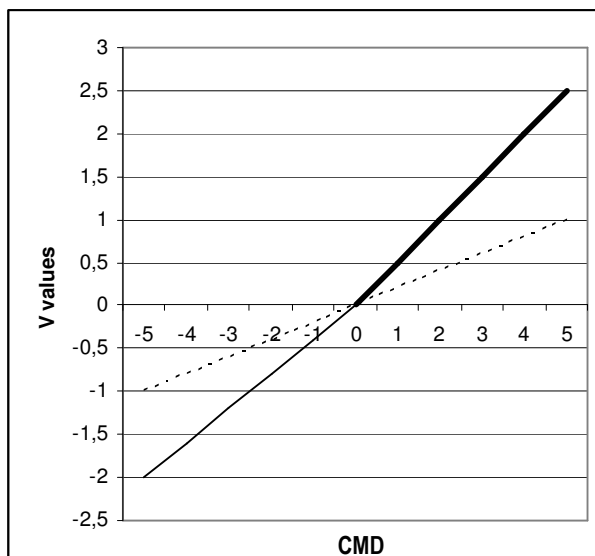
This dominant group V configuration could also lead to integration. This is more likely in the cases where the minority values their heritage culture (lower than average U) and perceives large intergroup distance (higher than average r). In this case the graph acquires the following shape:



Graph 5. Vitality configuration characteristic to integration

Thus, integration is the likely outcome when the dominant group is rather open (V line below base line) and the minority group rather vital (V line above the base line).

Marginalisation is the likely outcome when the dominant group is very traditional, conservative and perceives greater distance from the minority group (low U, high r), the minority group has just low CMD, possibly combined with a utilitarian value system. The graph representing this would in the most prototypical case look like this:



Graph 6. Vitality configuration characteristic to marginalisation

Thus, by plotting the values of CMD, r, and U of both the dominant and minority group on the graph, it becomes possible to characterize the relational outcome of the acculturation orientations of both groups with a greater preciseness and provide a more detailed profile of each particular intergroup situation.

5. Conclusion

The goal of this paper was to generalise the previous studies of ethnolinguistic vitality to elaborate a more comprehensive model of vitality, that could specify the crucial factors affecting vitality and specify the basic patterns of their interaction and its impact on intergroup processes. The main assumption of the model is that group's vitality and interethnic processes are constructed discursively and in interaction with the outgroup concerned.

It is widely known that the economic, social and cultural diversity of societies poses a major methodological problem for comparative studies to obtain viable generalisations. The paper presents a formal model that could be used to obtain directly comparable data from diverse interethnic contact situations. Certainly, the model needs testing in a wide range of diverse intergroup settings. As the model makes precise theoretical hypotheses about the interaction of factors influencing ethnolinguistic vitality and their impact on intergroup processes, it may be impugned through empirical studies, allowing for a systematic and cumulative refinement of the theory. This could lead to the emergence of a theoretical model explaining the major patterns of intergroup dynamics, and a standardised methodological tool to assess these dynamics in any novel setting, similar to the Schwartz (1992) Value Inventory used in specifying the value structures of societies. Such a tool would be valuable for all policy planning agencies who wish to understand what the crucial socio-symbolic features of a given intergroup setting are in order to seek the optimal strategy for social integration and more efficient discourses on social cohesion.

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ⁱ Note that the discussion here applies only for cases of negative CMD, typical for minority groups. The cases of positive CMD are discussed in detail in section 3.6.