

Interethnic Contact, Identity, and Psychological Adjustment: The Mediating and Moderating Roles of Communication

Richard Clément*

University of Ottawa

Kimberly A. Noels

University of Alberta

Bernard Deneault

University of Ottawa

Social psychological theories of second-language communication posit a relationship between second-language competence/usage and social identity. Identity and adaptation outcomes of intercultural contact have also been central issues for cross-cultural psychology. The studies described here are at the junction of these two research traditions. Based on a situated-identity approach, they show the mediating and moderating roles of second-language confidence for identity change and adjustment among minority- and majority-group members. Two studies involving Canadian francophone and anglophone university students illustrate the relationship between relative status and identity as well as the mediating role of communication in determining identity and adjustment. The third study, involving participants of East Indian descent, shows that incongruities among aspects of identity are related to the experience of collective discrimination and stress. Furthermore, these relations are moderated by second-language confidence. The conclusion discusses theoretical and practical implications for policy.

*Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Richard Clément, School of Psychology, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1N 8A5 [e-mail: rclement@uottawa.ca].

Preparation of this article was facilitated by grants from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada to the first two authors. We wish to express our gratitude to Ken Dion, Jack Dovidio, and Vicki Esses for their comments on a draft of this article.

Acquiring a second language has very little in common with other academic exercises. In fact, much of the past research pertaining to motivational aspects of acquiring and using a second language, be it among immigrants or among members of the receiving society, has underlined the role of social psychological factors, such as intergroup attitudes and aspects of intergroup contact (for a review, see Clément & Gardner, in press; MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998). Furthermore, in recent research and analyses, that social psychological approach has brought to light a number of implications related to other individual and collective outcomes, such as identity change, cultural assimilation, and psychological adaptation: Learning and using another language has a profound effect on the outlook of individuals and on the fate of the groups to which they belong (e.g., Clément, 1996; Genesee & Gandara, 1999; Hamers & Blanc, 2000; Masgoret & Gardner, 1999). Similarly, but from a different historical and theoretical perspective, the cross-cultural psychology approach to intergroup contact emphasizes identity changes accruing from such contact and their relation to individual psychological adaptation (e.g., Berry, 1997). The latter approach, however, does not provide an account of the process linking contact to its consequences.

The theoretical perspective and studies presented below are at the junction of the social psychology of language and cross-cultural approaches to interethnic contact, identity and adaptation.¹ Relying on a situated approach to identity processes, we illustrate the importance of different aspects of intergroup communication via the results of three empirical studies conducted in Ottawa, a bilingual and multicultural context in Canada's national capital. In the following, key concepts and their relations are defined. Subsequently, the first study is devoted to understanding the dynamics of the link between identification and its context, the latter being defined as the relative status (minority vs. majority) of groups as well as in terms of situational characteristics. Once these parameters of identity variation have been established, the second study illustrates the mediating role of second-language communication vis-à-vis aspects of intergroup contact, identity, and adjustment. The final study develops the concept of identity as identity processes endowed with their own internal dynamics linked to the experience of discrimination and to adjustment. The moderating role of second-language communication is illustrated there.

Acculturation and Adaptation

Recent models of acculturation, designed to reflect the possibilities offered by pluralist contexts, have represented the process as bidimensional (e.g., Berry,

¹ As can be seen from the reference list, the terms *adaptation* and *adjustment* have been used almost interchangeably in the current research. In this article, *adaptation* will refer to the global phenomenon of achieving an adequate measure of comfort in living within one's current social context. *Adjustment* will refer specifically to a subset of characteristics underlying adaptation, all related to psychological phenomena, such as stress, depression and anxiety.

1997; Clément & Noels, 1991). Identification to the in- and outgroup are treated as independent from one another, resulting in four strategies corresponding, respectively, to identification with both groups (i.e., *integration*), to neither group (i.e., *marginalization*), exclusively to the outgroup (i.e., *assimilation*) and exclusively to the ingroup (i.e., *separation*).

Much of the work pertaining to these constructs has been spearheaded by John Berry and his colleagues (for review, see, e.g., Berry, 1997; Berry & Sam, 1997), who have systematically investigated the relation between acculturation attitudes toward each of the four strategies and a variety of correlates. Within a wider perspective dealing with a number of pre- and postmigratory factors, Berry (1997) has claimed that a positive attitude toward integration is related to a better psychological adaptation among immigrants.

Identity, Communication, and Adaptation

Although the predispositions toward one acculturation strategy or another may influence the type of interface between immigrants and minorities and the dominant groups, it should not be confounded with actual identification patterns (Boski, 1994; Piontkowski, Florack, Holeker, & Obdrzalek, 2000). Whereas pluralist societies may successfully promote a multicultural ideology, endorsement of such an ideology does not necessarily imply the preservation of distinct cultural identities between or among the members of groups in contact. A distinction should therefore be made between acculturation strategies as preferred patterns of association and identity as a feeling of belonging to a particular group. A positive attitude toward one of the four acculturation strategies identified above does not necessarily guarantee that the desired identification will be achieved. Indeed, as illustrated by the analysis proposed by Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, and Senecal (1997), the acculturation process develops in the context of contact with other groups whose attitudes may act to thwart or enhance the acculturating group's dispositions. It is thus possible to imagine that although completely assimilated, some individuals would nevertheless retain a very positive attitude toward integration. In fact, Clément, Gauthier, and Noels (1993) have shown that members of a French minority group living in Northern Ontario display different correlates related to acculturation attitudes versus actual identification profiles.

The Situated-Identity Approach

To study identification profiles of groups in contact, Clément and Noels (1992) have proposed a situated-identity approach. Like many approaches dealing with the self (e.g., Reid & Deaux, 1996), the situated-identity approach (e.g., Alexander & Beggs, 1986; Weinreich, 1996) represents identity as a composite of multiple self-representations and self-categorizations. As described in social identity

theory (e.g., Turner, 1987), the situated-identity approach is based on the argument that individuals seek to maintain a positive self-image given contextual and social determinants. Thus, momentarily salient identities vary in a dynamic relation to environmental demands. Returning to the issue of acculturation, this premise implies that, in an intergroup contact situation, important contextual variations in identity should be expected across groups as well as within the same person across situations.

Within that theoretical context, a first hypothesis examined by Clément and Noels (1992) suggests that the importance of identification to different groups is related to the relative status of the ingroup and the outgroup. Given that a positive social identity may be derived from associating with a group characterized by desirable characteristics, it was hypothesized that different patterns of identification would characterize members of majority and minority groups.

The research was conducted with francophone and anglophone participants in the institutional context of the University of Ottawa, a bilingual university in which both language groups have equal status. The province of origin of the students varied, however, such that different subsamples of both groups had, respectively, a minority and a majority status. The university is situated on the Ontario side of the border between the Canadian provinces of Québec and Ontario, the former characterized politically and demographically as French and the latter as English. Thus, francophone majority students (from Québec), francophone minority students (from Ontario), anglophone majority students (from Ontario) and anglophone minority students (from Québec) share the same campus. The four groups are therefore characterized by different ethnolinguistic vitalities, that is, different degrees of demographic representation, institutional support, and social status likely to foster their maintenance and thriving (Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977). In a North American linguistic context favoring English, it would be expected that the anglophone majority group would show the most ethnolinguistic vitality, whereas the francophone minority group would show the least, and the position of the two other groups would be a function of the relative impact of the North American and provincial ethnolinguistic contexts.

The obtained results reflect the ethnolinguistic pattern: Maximal distinction between identification with the ingroup and to the outgroup is obtained for the majority Anglophones whereas the smallest difference is obtained for the lowest vitality group, the Francophones from Ontario. The minority Anglophones resemble more the majority Anglophones, whereas the majority Francophones resemble more the minority Francophones, thus suggesting the preponderance of the North American ethnolinguistic situation over the more proximal characteristics of the province of origin.

This research also examined the most common profiles of acculturation among the four groups. Using the midpoint of the ingroup and outgroup identity scales to categorize participants in each of the four acculturation profiles (assimilation,

integration, separation, marginalization), the majority (over 80%) fell into the separation category, a result similar to those obtained recently by Ward and Rana-Deuba (1999) using the same partition method on a sample of foreign residents in Nepal. An exception to this pattern comes from the group with the least ethnolinguistic vitality, the minority Francophones: 31% of that group shows an integration profile. Given the well-documented situation of Francophones in Ontario, whose numbers have been decreasing through the years, it may be that, for that group, integration is the intermediary step leading to assimilation (Clément et al., 1993).

Besides examining the macrosocial context, Clément and Noels (1992) also looked at more immediate situational characteristics. In addition to assessing separately identification with the ingroup and the outgroup, their questionnaire also measured identification in an array of daily situations. Factor analysis of these answers allowed us to delineate different domains of interaction, such as the university, the community, and media usage. Analysis of the mean identification with the outgroup in different domains showed variations consistent with the characteristics of these domains. Differences between the groups in identification with the outgroup were maximal in the more private situations, including using the media. In those domains, the Francophones showed more identification with the outgroup than did the Anglophones. Relatively little difference was found in the specific context of the university environment. There, students appear to have been responding to the institutional norm of equality, which did not play a role in the other sectors of their activities.

Taken together, these results and those reported by, among others, Weinreich (1996), illustrate the usefulness of a situated approach to identity variation and acculturation. Specifically, identity profiles are linked meaningfully to social and situational characteristics; they reflect the relative importance of the groups in contact as well as, more proximally, the contextual constraints imposed by characteristics of interaction situations. Because the modal acculturation response corresponded here to a separation profile (rather than integration, as found in studies of attitudes), identity profiles also support the distinction between actual identification and attitudes toward strategies of acculturation in intergroup contact situations.

Communication as a Process

Understanding the joint impact of contact and context on acculturation requires a description of how those factors come to influence identity and adaptation. Although some have lumped issues of language and communication together with other factors like religion as contributing to cultural distance between two groups (see Berry, 1997), others have given language and communication a much more active and mediating role (e.g., Collier & Thomas, 1988; Genesee & Gandara, 1999; Gudykunst, 1988). Furthermore, even though language production

is an individual phenomenon, it binds, through communication, those using it to a social and ethnic community. It is thus viewed as a dynamic instrument of contact, a tool of communication and thinking, and a transmitter of culture and tradition. Learning and using a second language therefore has far-reaching and important consequences for individuals and groups (Edwards, 1994).

Lambert (1978) proposed that the acquisition and usage of a second language leads to different outcomes depending on the relative status of the first- and second-language group. For minorities, immigrants, and refugees, learning the language of the receiving society often is necessary to ensure their adaptation in the new community. In such cases, contact and status interact in promoting assimilation (Clément, 1986), a phenomenon identified by Lambert (1978) as corresponding to subtractive bilingualism: the loss of the first language and culture resulting from the acquisition and use of a second language. Majority-group members learning the language of a minority group, such as Canadian Anglophones learning French or Anglo Americans learning Spanish, should, however, experience additive bilingualism: the addition of a second language and culture without erosion of the first.

In dealing with the role of language and identity, Clément (1980; Clément & Kruidenier, 1985) proposed that, in situations in which contact is possible between speakers of the first- and second-language groups, second-language confidence mediates the effects of contact on communicative competence and identity. Second-language confidence corresponds to the subjective feeling of being able to cope adequately with situations involving the use of a second language. As in more recent models of communication (e.g., Gudykunst, 1988; Stephan & Stephan, 1985), second-language confidence includes anxiety as an affective component and the belief in one's capacity to cope adequately in an intergroup contact situation as a cognitive component. Its relation to aspects of intergroup contact and to communicative competence has been well documented (e.g., Clément, 1986; Clément & Kruidenier, 1985; Labrie & Clément, 1986).

Even though some attempts have been made to link language and acculturation (Clément, 1986; Lanca, Aksnis, Roese, & Gardner, 1994; Young & Gardner, 1990), the issue of the complex relations among language, acculturation, and adaptation has received scant attention, particularly in studies of identity change. Accordingly, Noels and Clément (1996; see also Noels, Pon, & Clément, 1996) collected (from the same groups described above) data pertaining to their identification with the ingroup and with the outgroup, to frequency and pleasantness of contact with the outgroup, to degree of confidence with the outgroup language, and to adjustment. These data were entered in separate path analyses, one for each group.

The results of these analyses show that language confidence mediates the effects of contact on identity and adjustment in three cases out of four and that for all groups, increased language confidence is related positively to an increased

identification with the outgroup. A detailed analysis shows that the two anglophone groups present similar results: increased confidence in French does not affect identification with Anglophones but promotes identification with Francophones as well as adjustment. These findings illustrate additive bilingualism or integration.

The two francophone groups, however, differ appreciably from the anglophone pattern. The majority Francophones show a subtractive or assimilated identity profile. As English confidence increases, identification with Anglophones increases, whereas identification with Francophones decreases. The minority Francophones also show a subtractive pattern, except that in their case, the erosion of ingroup identification is related directly to aspects of intergroup contact. It may be that through their being continuously exposed to using English, the issue of Francophone identity has for minority Francophones become anchored in aspects other than language. These nonlinguistic aspects of culture are nevertheless eroded by direct contact with Anglophones, thus illustrating what might be called a *postlinguistic* assimilation profile. Comparatively, the majority Francophones, who have moved only recently into a situation of contact with the outgroup in an anglophone provincial environment, are still at an early stage of acculturation in which variations in language confidence play their most important role with respect to identity change and assimilation.

Our conclusion that there is a differential relation between intergroup contact and language confidence as a function of the vitality of the ingroup buttresses Berry's (1997) contention that acculturative outcomes are subject to the influence of a number of social and collective factors. In this case, the anglophone groups are the only ones to reap the benefits of intergroup contact in terms of a dual identity and better adjustment. They are also part of a North American linguistic majority. Even the so-called minority Anglophones come to an English provincial setting from a French environment that guarantees their rights to education in their own language. In contrast, the majority Francophones display an assimilative pattern, linked to communication aspects, as they are placed in an English Canadian environment. This difference in acculturation styles illustrates the hegemony of English in the North American culture (see Barker et al., 2001). More generally, it shows the powerful effects on the acculturation process of the interaction between the context of contact and communication.

That is not, however, the only role played by communication and, even if a microcosm of English–French relations in Canadian society, the bilingual university used here as context permits only a partial analysis of acculturation. A careful look at the research suggests that a wider conceptualization integrating other aspects of identity and a conceptualization of intergroup contact anchored in the notions of acceptance/discrimination may provide a more comprehensive perspective. We have documented above the mediating role of communication. We now intend to illustrate its complementary moderating role on adjustment.

Identity Incongruities, Possible Selves, and Discrimination

The above results suggest that minority-group members, such as the minority Francophones and the Canadian Chinese examined by Noels et al. (1996), might benefit from assimilation (endorsing exclusively the dominant-group identity) into the outgroup in terms of adjustment. This runs contrary to other claims (e.g., Berry & Kim, 1988; Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987; Schmitz, 1994) that integration (endorsing both the original and the dominant group identity) is the best strategy for adjustment. The contrasts between the two viewpoints may be more apparent than real, however. As explained above, the latter studies look at attitudes toward strategies of acculturation, whereas the former look at identification. Of more interest than the discrepancy in findings and interpretation is the fact that an individual might simultaneously hold attitudes toward acculturation strategies that are incompatible with his or her actual identification profile, resulting in a conflict that may affect adaptation. This may, indeed, be a crucial psychological dilemma facing immigrants.

Recasting the Identity Issue

Although the interface between actual and desired identity has not been of much interest in cross-cultural psychology, it has been a research focus for researchers interested in the self. Higgins (1987), for example, proposes that discrepancies between the actual and ideal self will lead to feelings of dysphoria or dejection. Likewise, Markus and Nurius (1986) have described the developing self as subject to tension between the actual self and the possible self. Although such tension may be beneficial in terms of promoting development, the discrepancy itself may involve, if only momentarily, a certain degree of discomfort. The research cited above supports an approach that takes into consideration the incongruity between the actual and the desired acculturation profile.

A second type of discrepancy that may be of relevance to the process of acculturation arises from incongruity between actual identity and that which is reflected by the outgroup. Brown (1998) proposed that experiencing ethnic stigmatization is a negative affective experience because it controls and limits the achievement of desirable possible selves. In cross-cultural psychology, Weinreich (1996) and Camillieri and Malewska-Peyre (1997) consider discrepancies between self-identity and the identity assigned by others as potentially debilitating because they represent the limits imposed by others on the development of the self in cross-cultural situations. The evidence reviewed so far suggests that the tripartite distinction and incongruities between the actual, desired, and reflected identities are relevant to the issue of immigrant adaptation. Before we turn to an empirical illustration, however, the issue of contact needs to be tackled from a different angle.

Recasting Intergroup Contact

The studies described previously define contact along qualitative and quantitative dimensions. As shown above, more positive contact with the outgroup leads to more language confidence, which, in turn, leads to the various identification profiles. Although these aspects may still be relevant to conflicted identities, what may be more relevant is whether or not discrimination occurs in intergroup situations. The experience of discrimination has been found in a number of studies (e.g., Abougundia & Noels, 2001; Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999; Crocker & Major, 1989; Dion & Earn, 1975; Pak, Dion, & Dion, 1991) to be related to adjustment. Within this theoretical context, discrimination would be maladaptive, because it conveys a reflected identity that is incompatible with the actual and/or desired identities.

A further issue here is the distinction between personal and collective discrimination. Taylor, Wright, Moghaddam, and Lalonde (1990) showed that members of minority groups consistently reported more discrimination toward their group than toward themselves personally. Based on research dealing with other groups, Taylor, Wright, and Porter (1994) concluded that this phenomenon was of considerable significance and robustness. Subsequent analyses (e.g., Taylor, Ruggiero, & Louis, 1996) suggest that collective discrimination may be intimately linked to existing stereotypes about the group as well as to reactions to inequalities in intergroup relations (Dion, 1986; see also Dion & Kawakami, 1996). The minimization of personal discrimination may be used as a means of retaining control over a difficult, potentially threatening situation for the self-concept (Ruggiero & Taylor, 1995).

To this point, the experience of collective discrimination has been related to group perception issues. It remains to be seen whether it would relate to identity discrepancies, since these would reflect the more individual and personal aspect of identity. Because they are private, individual phenomena, discrepancies in identities should be more related to the personal experience of discrimination. Ethnic identity is, however, defined along group membership, suggesting that experiencing collective discrimination may be more crucial to identity incongruities than experiencing personal discrimination. The answer here is an empirical issue.

The relation between discrimination and identity need not, however, be unidirectional. It is entirely possible that an incongruity between actual and desired outgroup identity might lead one to seek more contact and therefore experience more discrimination. This would happen, for example, in cases in which, to build a positive self-image, one seeks, via more contact, greater identification with a dominant outgroup than is actually experienced but is, in the process, confronted with discriminatory practices. Thus, there is a reciprocal relation between identity processes and discrimination such that, whereas the experience of discrimination influences the congruity of the identification profiles, the dynamics of the

identification processes would promote more or less contact and experienced discrimination.

The anticipated relation among identity, discrimination, and adaptation is depicted in Figure 1. As can be seen in the figure, a bidirectional relation joins discrimination and identity, and both are hypothesized to influence adaptation, measured here as experienced stress. That impact is further moderated by second-language confidence. Following Kim's (1988) argument and our own, being able to communicate in a host language facilitates adaptation to a new cultural environment. It would therefore be expected that experiencing identity incongruities would be less maladaptive for those who are confident in their capacity to use the dominant language in an efficient manner. The relation between discrimination and stress is equally open to this buffering effect. Dion, Dion, and Pak (1992) showed that personality-based hardiness (a mixture of self-esteem and internal locus of control) acts to moderate the relation between discrimination and stress. Ruggiero and Taylor (1995, 1997), on the other hand, suggest that the motivation to keep control over the outcome of a situation may have a beneficial effect on self-esteem when one is confronted with discrimination. In our ongoing discussion regarding the importance of communication, we argue that confidence in being able to use the outgroup language efficiently is the active ingredient in (1) actualizing hardiness and (2) instrumentally serving the need for control. It is therefore hypothesized that second-language confidence will also moderate the relation between discrimination and adjustment.

An Empirical Study

A preliminary test of some aspects of the preceding hypotheses was conducted by Clément, Deneault, and Noels (1996). The participants were members of the East Indian community of Ottawa, which was particularly suited for this study for a

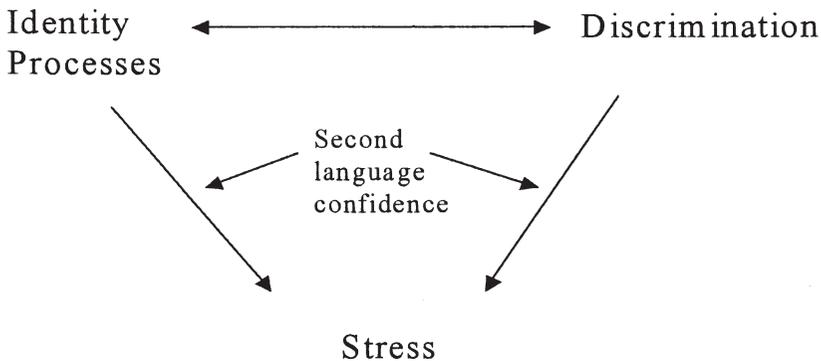


Fig. 1. Schematic representation of conceptual relations between discrimination, identity, stress, and second-language confidence.

number of reasons. Because of their physical appearance, their distinctive cultural practices and beliefs, and their language, East Indians are considered to be a visible minority (Mangalam, 1986). Furthermore, numerous previous studies show them to be victims of discrimination (e.g., Lalonde, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1992; Moghaddam, Ditto, & Taylor, 1990; Shah, 1991) and census data show a marked discrepancy between their average level of education and their income (Rajagopal, 1990). Finally, the Ottawa community of East Indians was large enough to allow for individual variations in the degree of acculturation experienced by members of that group. The sample used here consisted of 92 participants (36 women, 56 men), most of whom (78%) were born in India. They represented a wide range of statuses, from landed immigrant to Canadian citizen, and lived and worked in close contact with native Canadians.

An East Indian research assistant administered a series of scales assessing, respectively, identity, discrimination, and adjustment. The identity scales were modeled after the actual identity scale used by Clément and Noels (1992). Three versions were prepared, asking participants to take the perspective of (1) how they actually identified along an Indian and a Canadian continuum, (2) how they would ideally like to identify on these two dimensions, and (3) how they thought their identity was perceived (reflected) by Canadians on both dimensions. Because identification with the Indian and with the Canadian groups was assessed using separate scales, the combination of these three perspectives resulted in six scores. Discrimination was assessed using two three-item scales, respectively assessing perceived personal and group discrimination (Taylor et al., 1990). These items asked participants if they ever experienced discrimination for reasons of physical appearance, cultural characteristics, and newcomer status. The adjustment scale was Lemyre, Tessier, and Fillion's (1990) psychological stress measure, an instrument assessing nonpathological daily stress. Finally, the second-language confidence scale was borrowed from Noels and Clément (1996).

Replicating previous results, those obtained here showed that the participants reportedly experience more collective than personal discrimination. With respect to the threefold identity profiles, participants endorsed the Canadian identity to a greater extent than it was reflected on them. Furthermore, they desired a stronger Canadian identity than what they felt they had and what was reflected on them. Opposite results were obtained for Indian identity: they desired it less than it was reflected on them.

To assess the relations among identity incongruities, discrimination, and stress, a series of stepwise multiple regressions were performed, using as criteria the indices of personal and collective discrimination and stress. Table 1 lists the beta weights associated with the residual from the first term, after partitioning out the second term of the subtractions listed in the first column. As can be seen, only one incongruity is related to personal discrimination. Those who feel a reflected identity to be more Indian than their actual Indian identity reported more personal

Table 1. Relations Between Identity Incongruities, Discrimination, and Stress

Type of incongruity	Discrimination		
	Collective	Personal	Stress
Indian: Reflected <i>minus</i> actual	.51**	.41**	.27
Indian: Desired <i>minus</i> actual	-.24	-.21	.13
Indian: Desired <i>minus</i> reflected	-.30**	-.24	.04
Canadian: Reflected <i>minus</i> actual	-.28	-.12	.22
Canadian: Desired <i>minus</i> actual	.36**	.19	.25*
Canadian: Desired <i>minus</i> reflected	.38**	.18	.21
Stress	.04	.13	1.00

Note. With the exception of the last row, all entries are beta weights associated with the first term of the subtraction after accounting for the second term. Entries for the last row are simple correlations.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

discrimination. Comparatively, four of the six incongruities correlated significantly with collective discrimination. Collective discrimination was felt when the Indian identity was reflected more than what was actually felt or desired and when a Canadian identity was more desired than what was actually felt or reflected. Only one residual was related to stress: Those who desired a stronger Canadian identity than what they actually experienced reported more stress. Finally, the simple correlations between stress and the discrimination indices showed no direct link between these constructs.

A significant relation between discrimination and stress is found, however, in the results of the analyses testing the moderating role of language confidence. As can be seen in Figure 2, there is no difference, under high language confidence, between the stress experienced by those who report low or high collective discrimination. Under low language confidence, however, there is a significant difference such that those experiencing high collective discrimination report more stress than those reporting low collective discrimination. The same results are obtained for personal discrimination. With respect to the relation between Indian identity

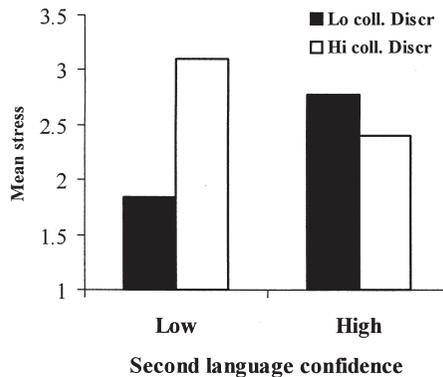


Fig. 2. Stress as a function of collective discrimination and second-language confidence.

incongruities, language confidence, and stress, the pattern depicted in Figure 3 is obtained in all cases. That pattern is reversed for Canadian identity incongruities. In the illustrated case, the comparison is made between a group showing a more pronounced actual Indian identity than what is felt to be reflected and a group showing, obversely, a more pronounced reflected Indian identity than what is actually felt. As can be seen, under low language confidence the latter group shows much more stress than the former, whereas there is no significant difference for those with high confidence in English. There is, therefore, a positive relationship between experiencing discrimination and stress and between experiencing *unwanted* identity incongruities and stress, but only for those who show low second-language confidence, thus supporting the buffering effect of the latter characteristic.

In summary, this study brings together trends of research in social and cross-cultural psychology as well as intercultural communication that all deal purportedly with interethnic contact but that have evolved in a more or less independent fashion. Furthermore, it introduces to this arena concepts and issues that have been at the core of research and theorizing on the self in social psychology. The results show intricate relations among identity, discrimination, and stress, exemplifying the moderating role of second-language confidence. Among members of a visible minority subject to discrimination, it is collective and not personal discrimination that is mostly related to the intrapsychic conflicts in identity incongruities. Furthermore, although neither discrimination nor identity seems to be directly related to stress, the consideration of the buffering effect of language confidence clarifies these relations: Identity incongruities and discrimination are related to stress for those who show less language confidence.

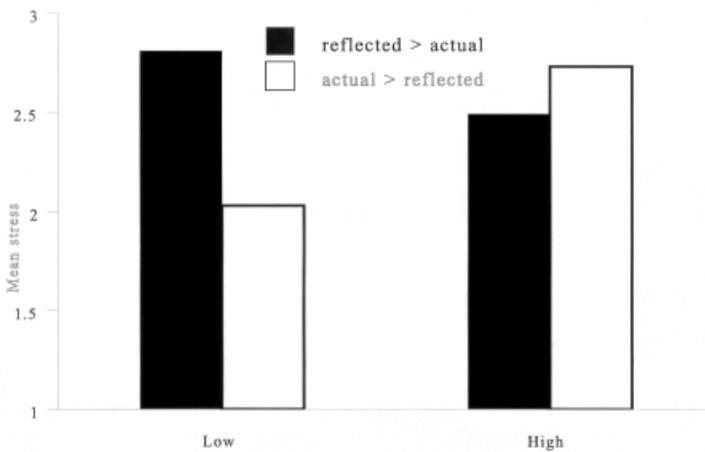


Fig. 3. Stress as a function of Indian identity incongruity and language confidence.

Conclusion

In describing this research, we have sought to illustrate the relations existing among group membership, group status, intergroup contact, and identity processes. The mediating and moderating roles of an aspect of communication, second-language confidence, were explored as well. The integration proposed here implicitly views minority and immigrant groups as subject to the same factors and processes affecting their acculturation. Their circumstances may result in markedly different outcomes, but aspects of relative status, contact, and communication are important for all groups.

Taken together, the results support the benefits of a pluralist approach to intergroup contact and the promotion of second-language learning, but mainly for majority-group members, as they are the only ones here to show an integrated or additive identity profile concurrently with enhanced adjustment. The results are quite different for the francophone minority groups, who show patterns of subtractive bilingualism or assimilation along with better adjustment. Within an ideologically pluralist context, this is troublesome. These francophone students live in the culturally comfortable context of sharing one of Canada's two official languages. They willingly chose to study in an institution supporting their language rights, and their geographical location gives them access to French media and services. What then of refugees or immigrants who cannot avail themselves of the same status and services? Our results suggest that, in the course of adapting to their new situation, the chances are slim that they would retain ingroup identity, thereby disappearing from the intended pluralist mosaic.

Another pernicious effect of promoting a cultural mosaic is related to the expectations it nourishes among minorities and immigrants. An ideology of cultural pluralism fosters the expectation that desires to identify with the majority groups will be fulfilled and that the receiving society will show an inclusive attitude, validating that aspiration. Particularly in the case of a group experiencing discrimination, enhancing these expectations aggravates self-incongruities and consequently affects adaptation. Promoting a national pluralist image may therefore engender consequences that are contrary to the goals it seeks to achieve. How then to foster a reconciliation?

The answer to this question rests, we believe, with the buffering and mediating factors, most notably language and communication. To the extent that cultural diversity is sought, different approaches might fit different groups. For the members of the receiving society, promoting a pluralist ideology, outgroup languages, and an open, welcoming attitude toward minorities and immigrants seems to yield positive results. These measures would ensure their own adaptation as well as support an identity profile for their perceiving minorities and immigrants in ways that would be more inclusive. This strategy would serve to minimize the experience of

collective discrimination and the incongruity noted between reflected identity, on the one hand, and actual and desired identities, on the other hand.

For minorities and immigrants, policies may more effectively focus on the conservation and preservation of those groups' cultural heritage and language. A solution for cultural maintenance, if desired, may be indicated by the crucial role language plays in the acculturation process. As shown by the empirical results reviewed above, outgroup language acquisition is an important instrument of identity change. Forestalling minorities' and newcomers' efforts to acquire confidence in the outgroup language would be contraindicated because of the role acquisition of such confidence plays in promoting adaptation. Rather, as argued elsewhere (e.g., Barker et al, 2001; Clément, Michaud, & Noels, 1998; Cummins, 1994; Landry & Allard, 1994), the promotion of the ingroup language, the organization of ingroup social support via informal networks, and community organization would seem to be of major importance. Valuing ingroup characteristics should act to reduce the incongruity between desired and actual identity. Without very concrete steps such as these to promote ingroup language and culture, the representation of states as pluralist environments is, at best, an illusion.

Intervening in a social process such as the acculturation of groups in contact is subject to the guiding objective of the ideology embraced by those who promote such interventions. States and communities vary in terms of the extent to which they seek a pluralist or multicultural societal fabric. The argument presented here stems, to a large extent, from a setting and situations where the preservation and promotion of a culturally diversified environment is considered to be valuable. Our own findings are therefore determined by the particular characteristics of their context. That is not to say, however, that the processes discussed here are uniquely bound to the situation at hand. This article is located at the junction between the cross-cultural psychology of acculturation, the social psychology of the self, and current theories of intergroup contact and communication. We hope to have shown the usefulness of this juncture, particularly as regards the intricacies of identity processes, the impact of discrimination, and the importance of intergroup communication.

Neither cross-cultural nor mainstream social psychology has so far given an important role to communication in explicating identity dynamics. As we have shown, outgroup language confidence plays both a mediating and a moderating role in the individual identification and adaptation process. Furthermore, because languages are shared collectively, their fate as tools of identification and adaptation also plays a role in the global development of societies. Although they are by no means the only markers of ethnic membership, their particular impact on the framing of relationships and social representations make them powerful instruments of societal harmony.

References

- Abouguendia, M., & Noels, K. A. (2001). General and acculturation-related daily hassles and psychological adjustment in first- and second generation South-Asian immigrants to Canada. *International Journal of Psychology, 36*, 163–173.
- Alexander, C. N., & Beggs, J. J. (1986). Disguising personal inventories: A situated identity strategy. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 49*, 192–200.
- Barker, V., Giles, H., Noels, K. A., Duck, J., Hecht, M., & Clément, R. (2001). The English-only movement: A communication analysis of changing perceptions of language vitality. *Journal of Communication, 51*, 3–37.
- Berry, J. W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation and adaptation. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 46*, 5–34.
- Berry, J. W., & Kim, U. (1988). Acculturation and mental health. In P. R. Dasen, J. W. Berry, & N. Sartorius (Eds.), *Health and cross-cultural psychology: Towards applications* (pp. 207–238). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Berry, J. W., Kim, U., Minde, T., & Mok, D. (1987). Comparative studies of acculturative stress. *International Migration Review, 21*, 491–511.
- Berry, J. W., & Sam, D. L. (1997). Acculturation and adaptation. In J. W. Berry, M. H. Segall, & C. Kagitçibasi (Eds.), *Social behavior and applications: Vol. 3. Handbook of cross-cultural psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 291–326). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Boski, P. (1994). Psychological acculturation via identity dynamics: Consequences for subjective well-being. In A. M. Bouvy, F. van de Vijver, P. Boski, & P. Schmitz (Eds.), *Journeys into cross-cultural psychology: Selected papers from the Eleventh International Conference of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology* (pp. 197–215). Amsterdam: Swets & Zeitlinger.
- Bourhis, R. Y., Moïse, L. C., Perreault, S., & Senecal, S. (1997). Toward an interactive acculturation model: A social psychological approach. *International Journal of Psychology, 32*, 369–386.
- Branscombe, N. R., Schmitt, M. T., & Harvey, R. D. (1999). Perceiving pervasive discrimination against African-Americans: Implications for group identification and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 77*, 135–149.
- Brown, L. M. (1998). Ethnic stigma as a contextual experience: A possible selves perspective. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 24*, 163–172.
- Camillieri, C., & Malewska-Peyre, H. (1997). Socialization and identity strategies. In J. W. Berry, P. R. Dasen, & T. S. Saraswathi (Eds.), *Basic processes and human development: Vol. 2. Handbook of cross-cultural psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 41–68). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Clément, R. (1980). Ethnicity, contact and communicative competence in a second language. In H. Giles, P. Robinson, and P. Smith (Eds.), *Social psychology and language* (pp. 147–159). Oxford, U.K.: Pergamon.
- Clément, R. (1986). Second language proficiency and acculturation: An investigation of the effects of language status and individual characteristics. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 5*, 271–290.
- Clément, R. (1996). Social psychology and intergroup communication. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 15*, 222–229.
- Clément, R., Deneault, B., & Noels, K. A. (1996, August). *Identité située, discrimination et stress: le rôle modérateur de la confiance langagière* [Situated identity, discrimination and stress: The moderating role of language confidence]. Paper presented at the First International Congress of French Social Psychology, Montreal.
- Clément, R., & Gardner, B. C. (2001). Second language mastery. In H. Giles & P. Robinson (Eds.), *The new handbook of language and social psychology* (pp. 489–504). London: Wiley.
- Clément, R., Gauthier, R., & Noels, K. A. (1993). Choix langagiers en milieu minoritaire: attitudes et identité concomitantes [Language choices in a minority setting: Concomitant attitude and identity]. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science, 25*, 149–164.
- Clément, R., & Kruidenier, B. G. (1985). Aptitude, attitude and motivation in second language proficiency: A test of Clément's model. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 4*, 21–37.

- Clément, R., Michaud, C., & Noels, K. A. (1998). Effets acculturatifs du support social en situation de contact intergroupe [Acculturative effects of social support in an intergroup contact situation]. *Revue Québécoise de Psychologie, 19*, 189–210.
- Clément, R., & Noels, K. A. (1991). Langue, statut et acculturation: une étude d'individus et de groupes en contact [Language, status and acculturation: A study of individuals and groups in contact]. In M. Lavallée & F. Larose (Eds.), *Identité, culture et changement social : Actes du troisième colloque de l'ARIC* [Identity, culture and social change: Proceedings of the third ARIC conference] (pp. 315–326). Paris: l'Harmattan.
- Clément, R., & Noels, K. A. (1992). Towards a situated approach to ethnolinguistic identity: The effects of status on individuals and groups. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 11*, 203–232.
- Collier, M. J., & Thomas, M. (1988). Cultural identity: An interpretive perspective. In Y. Y. Kim & W. B. Gudykunst (Eds.), *Theories in intercultural communication* (pp. 99–120). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Crocker, J., & Major, B. (1989). Social stigma and self-esteem: The self-protective properties of stigma. *Psychological Review, 96*, 608–630.
- Cummins, J. (1994). Heritage language learning and teaching. In J. W. Berry & J. A. Laponce (Eds.), *Ethnicity and culture in Canada* (pp. 435–456). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Dion, K. L. (1986). Responses to perceived discrimination and relative deprivation. In J. M. Olson, C. P. Herman, & M. P. Zanna (Eds.), *Relative deprivation and social comparison: The Ontario Symposium* (Vol. 4, pp. 159–179). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Dion, K. L., Dion, K. K., & Pak, A. W. (1992). Personality-based hardiness as a buffer for discrimination-related stress in members of Toronto's Chinese community. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science, 24*, 517–536.
- Dion, K. L., & Earn, B. M. (1975). The phenomenology of being a target of prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 32*, 944–950.
- Dion, K. L., & Kawakami, K. (1996). Ethnicity and perceived discrimination in Toronto: Another look at the personal/group discrimination discrepancy. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science, 28*, 203–213.
- Edwards, J. (1994). *Multilingualism*. London: Routledge.
- Genesee, F., & Gandara, P. (1999). Bilingual education programs: A cross-national perspective. *Journal of Social Issues, 55*(4), 665–687.
- Giles, H., Bourhis, R. Y., & Taylor, D. M. (1977). Towards a theory of language in ethnic group relations. In H. Giles (Ed.), *Language, ethnicity and intergroup relations* (pp. 307–348). New York: Academic.
- Gudykunst, W. B. (1988). Uncertainty and anxiety. In Y. Y. Kim & W. B. Gudykunst (Eds.), *Theories in intercultural communication* (pp. 123–156). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Hamers, J. F., & Blanc, H. A. (2000). *Bilinguality and bilingualism* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.
- Higgins, E. T. (1987). Self-discrepancy: A theory relating self and affect. *Psychological Review, 94*, 319–340.
- Kim, Y. Y. (1988). *Communication and cross-cultural adaptation: An integrative theory*. Clevedon, U.K.: Multilingual Matters.
- Labrie, N., & Clément, R. (1986). Ethnolinguistic vitality, self-confidence and second language proficiency: An investigation. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 7*, 269–282.
- Lalonde, R. N., Taylor, D. M., & Moghaddam, F. M. (1992). The process of social identification for visible immigrant women in a multicultural context. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 23*, 25–39.
- Lambert, W. E. (1978). Some cognitive and sociocultural consequences of being bilingual. In J. E. Alatis (Ed.), *International dimensions of bilingual education* (pp. 214–229). Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Lanca, M., Aksnis, C., Roese, N. J., & Gardner, R. C. (1994). Effects of language choice on acculturation: A study of Portuguese immigrants in a multicultural setting. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 13*, 315–330.
- Landry, R., & Allard, R. (1994). Diglossia, ethnolinguistic vitality, and language behavior. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 108*, 15–42.

- Lemyre, L., Tessier, R., & Fillion, L. (1990). *Mesure du stress psychologique (M.S.P.)* [Psychological Stress Measure (P.S.M.)]. Brossard, Quebec, Canada: Éditions Behaviora.
- MacIntyre, P. D., Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, K. A. (1998). Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. *Modern Language Journal*, 82, 545–562.
- Mangalam, J. J. (1986). Post-immigration adjustment of India's immigrants in Canada: A case study. In S. Chandrasekhar (Ed.), *From India to Canada: A brief history of immigration; problems of discrimination, admission, and assimilation*. La Jolla, CA: Population Review Book.
- Markus, H., & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American Psychologist*, 41, 954–969.
- Masgoret, A., & Gardner, R. C. (1999). A causal model of Spanish immigrant adaptation in Canada. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 20, 216–236.
- Moghaddam, F., Ditto, B., & Taylor, D. M. (1990). Attitudes and attributions related to psychological symptomatology in Indian immigrant women. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 21, 335–350.
- Noels, K. A., & Clément, R. (1996). Communicating across cultures: Social determinants and acculturative consequences. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*, 28, 214–228.
- Noels, K. A., Pon, G., & Clément, R. (1996). Language, identity and adjustment: The role of linguistic self-confidence in the adjustment process. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 15, 246–264.
- Pak, A. W., Dion, K. L., & Dion, K. K. (1991). Social-psychological correlates of experienced discrimination: Test of the double jeopardy hypothesis. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 15, 243–254.
- Piontkowski, U., Florack, A., Holelker, P., & Obdrzalek, P. (2000). Predicting acculturation attitudes of dominant and non-dominant groups. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 24, 1–26.
- Rajagopal, I. (1990). The glass ceiling in the vertical mosaic: Indian immigrants in Canada. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 22, 96–100.
- Reid, A., & Deaux, K. (1996). Relationship between social and personal identities: Segregation or integration? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71, 1084–1091.
- Ruggiero, K. M., & Taylor, D. M. (1995). Coping with discrimination: How disadvantaged group members perceive the discrimination that confronts them. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68, 826–838.
- Ruggiero, K. M., & Taylor, D. M. (1997). Why minority members perceive or do not perceive the discrimination that confronts them: The role of self-esteem and perceived control. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 373–389.
- Schmitz, P. G. (1994). Acculturation and adaptation processes among immigrants in Germany. In A. M. Bouvy, F. van de Vijver, P. Boski, & P. Schmitz (Eds.), *Journeys into cross-cultural psychology: Selected papers from the Eleventh International Conference of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology* (pp. 142–157). Amsterdam: Swets & Zeitlinger B.V.
- Shah, H. (1991). Communication and cross-cultural adaptation patterns among Asian Indians. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 15, 311–321.
- Stephan, W., & Stephan, C. (1985). Intergroup anxiety. *Journal of Social Issues*, 41, 157–166.
- Taylor, D. M., Ruggiero, K. M., & Louis, W. R. (1996). Personal/group discrimination discrepancy: Towards a two-factor explanation. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*, 28, 193–203.
- Taylor, D. M., Wright, S. C., Moghaddam, F. M., & Lalonde, R. N. (1990). The personal/group discrimination discrepancy: Perceiving my group, but not myself, to be a target for discrimination. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 16, 254–262.
- Taylor, D. M., Wright, S. C., & Porter, L. E. (1994). Dimensions of perceived discrimination: The personal/group discrimination discrepancy. In M. P. Anna & J. M. Olson (Eds.), *The psychology of prejudice: The Ontario Symposium* (Vol. 7, pp. 233–255). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Turner, J. C. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Ward, C., & Rana-Deuba, A. (1999). Acculturation and adaptation revisited. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 30, 422–442.
- Weinreich, P. (1996). Ethnic stereotyping and identification in a multicultural context: Acculturation, self-esteem and identity diffusion in Hong Kong Chinese university students. *Psychology and Developing Societies*, 8, 107–169.

Young, M. Y., & Gardner, R. C. (1990). Modes of acculturation and second language proficiency. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*, 22, 59-71.

RICHARD CLÉMENT received his PhD in social psychology from the University of Western Ontario and is currently professor of psychology at the University of Ottawa. Among his research interests are processes and consequences of intercultural communication, including second-language learning and use, the relation between language behavior and ethnic identity, aspects of the interethnic contact situation, acculturative stress, and adaptation.

KIMBERLY A. NOELS is an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Alberta. Her research concerns the social psychology of language and communication processes, with a focus on the role of communication in the process of cross-cultural adaptation and motivational aspects of foreign language learning. Her research has been recognized through awards from the Modern Language Association and the International Association of Language and Social Psychology.

BERNARD DENEALU received an honors BA from the University of Ottawa in 1994.