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Ethno Linguistic Vitality

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Abstract

The variety of dialects among Arab nations will cut off the unity of Arabism and there will be only a geographical proximity. This lingual division will create isolation and misunderstanding between Arabs. Then new for foreign new languages will establish and replace Arabic language. All of these studies it was not made clear how the changing political situation brought about the decline of the role of Arabic and its vitality in the public sphere in country. Only in more recent works have the social-political and legal issues been examined in depth. This study examines the Arabic language in country from a sociolinguistic perspective, considering the changing socio-political situation and its repercussions for Arabic, and thereby gaining insights about the language's current vitality in country. This paper argues that ethno linguistic vitality depends on four crucial social psychological factors: perceived strength differential, intergroup distance, utilitarianism and intergroup discordance.

Keywords: variety, linguistic, ethno, Arabic language, etc.

Introduction

The influence of these factors on the vitality of subordinate and dominant groups is outlined. It is proposed that the vitality of both types of groups could be measured on the same scale. The low end of this scale indicates group members' disposition to dissociate themselves from the in-group's cultural values and practices^[1]. The high end indicates a perception of cultural distinctiveness, superiority, closed ness and derogation of out-groups, i.e. high level of ethnocentrism. A theoretical model is proposed explicating how the interaction of vitality profiles of the dominant and subordinate groups leads to different acculturation orientations of subordinate groups (assimilation, integration, segregation, or marginalization). The 21st century is believed to be the century when 50 to 90 percent of languages currently spoken will cease to exist^[2-5]. In many cases, the immediate and inevitable loss is so acute that documentation is seen as the only action left to save languages from total disappearance, because securing normal transmission as a living practice already appears impossible. Although the pessimistic forecasts of the speed of the extinction of languages may well be accurate, this need not be the inevitable outcome for all endangered languages: there are cases where one small language is disappearing through shift while another, under apparently similar conditions, continues to be used and inter-generationally transmitted^[6]. This suggests that the sustainability of a small language does not depend entirely on the size of the community or on external conditions beyond the control of the community and language revitalization activists; sustainability also depends on the disposition and attitudes of the speech community. If this is so, there must be opportunities to improve the sustainability of endangered languages without an impossible attempt to restore the whole old ecology in which they were sustainable^[7].

Review of Literature

The connection between the vitality perceptions of dominant and minority groups has been discussed in a number of previous studies of ethno linguistic vitality. For example,^[8] outlined four possible types of intergroup vitality profiles. The first type they called 'perceptual distortions in favor of in-group vitality'. In this profile both the minority and majority agree that the majority vitality is higher, but the minority group perceives the vitality difference between groups to be less than the majority does. Studies have shown that such a pattern occurs between Greek- and Anglo-Australians^[9], Italian- and English-

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Canadians and Arab- and Jewish-Israelis ^[10]. This pattern suggests that the groups are well established and distinct and that integrative or assimilative tendencies are discouraged. It would suggest good sustainability for the minority group. The other pattern was called ‘perceptual distortions in favor of out-group vitality’. In this case, the minority perceives the vitality difference between its own group and the dominant out-group to be larger than perceived by the dominant majority. This pattern is characteristic of first generation Chinese immigrants in London and Toronto, as well as for francophone students in francophone Switzerland. This pattern shows typical low self-esteem among first generation immigrants, who often seek a way to assimilate to the dominant group, if possible. The third and fourth patterns show ‘nonconsensual vitality perceptions’ ^[11]. Both of these patterns seem to indicate the situation of identity threat. In the case where the minority group assesses its vitality to be higher than that of the majority, it feels that its identity is being threatened by the majority and, in order to defend it, a shared perception of superiority is constructed. In a case in which 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 the dominance relationship is open to debate. In fact, such a pattern has been attested to in, who studied the vitality perceptions of students during the negotiations over the territory’s future.

1. The impact of vitality factors on dominant and subordinate groups

The approach taken here for ethno linguistic vitality is based on the V model developed, which differs, to some extent, from traditional accounts. According to the V-model, there are four factors that affect the vitality of a group:

- 1) Perceived strength differential (PSD),
- 2) Intergroup discordance (D),
- 3) Intergroup distance (r) and
- 4) Utilitarian- anism (U).

These factors influence the vitality (V) of both the subordinate and the dominant groups. Since the V-model is based on group members’ perceptions and other shared dispositions, it is a theory of what traditionally has been called subjective vitality. As a group’s perception of its standing relative to other groups could be ‘distorted’, it must not be confused with actual relations of dominance and power.

2. Perceived strength differential

Most researchers agree that the driving force behind language shift is power differences between dominant and subordinate groups. notes that ‘the attraction that a “larger” language has for “small”-language speakers has nothing to do with intrinsic linguistic qualities, and everything to do with perceptions of power and its concomitant features: status, prestige, economic clout, cultural dominance, elevated levels of education and income, opportunities for social and psychological mobility, and so on’. In a sense, the stronger, more prestigious, more powerful and more culturally attractive the out-group is perceived to be in comparison with the in-group, the stronger the motivation to be associated with the out-group. If the groups are perceived as equally powerful, or the in-group is perceived as stronger, there is little to gain from language and identity shift.

3. The impact of vitality on intergroup processes

As argued, the language and identity shift of a subordinate group depends not only on its own vitality, but also on the attitudes of the dominant group. If the latter is not ready to accept the shifting minority members, this can hinder or prevent the shift, 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 ^[12]. One would expect that, all else being equal, the dominant group would be more ready to include shifting minority members if the D level were low and the PSD were not large _ in this case the subordinate out-group members are considered more or less equal and respected. In the case of large D values and large PSD, the minority members are too stigmatized to be readily accepted as in-group members. Utilitarianism also affects the dominant group’s readiness to accept shifting minority members. The more utilitarian the value system of the dominant group, the more open it will be to new members. Very traditional and conservative dominant groups are often quite exclusive in regard to admitting new members. Thus, one would expect that low U values would increase the closedness of the dominant group, whereas high U values would reduce it. Intergroup distance would have the opposite effect: the larger the perceived intergroup distance between the dominant in-group and the minority out-group, the less likely it is that the dominant group would accept the shifting minority members.

Table 1: Interethnic processes as a function of dominant and subordinate group vitality

		Dominant group	
		$V_d > 0$	$V_d \approx 0$
ordinate group	$V_s \approx 0$	Segregation	Integration or separation
	$V_s < 0$	Marginalisation	Assimilation

It is important to consider what the values for the main V factors (PSD, D, r and U) are. This could be summarized as follows:

- a) Large PSD + small inter-group distance + low discordance + high utilitarianism = assimilation
- b) Large PSD + large inter-group distance and/or high discordance and/or low utilitarianism = segregation
- c) Small PSD + large inter-group distance and/or high

- discordance and/or low utilitarianism = separation
- d) Small PSD + small inter-group distance + low discordance + high utilitarianism = integration

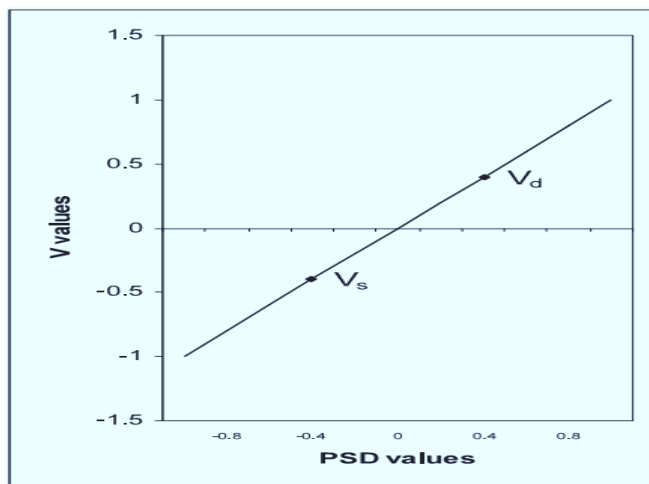


Fig 2: Base line of dominant and minority group vitality.

➤ Inter-group discordance

Intergroup discordance, or D-factor, expresses perceived illegitimacy of intergroup power relations as well as the dehumanization of the out-group. Although legitimacy and stigmatization are clearly distinct concepts, they are interrelated. A 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.

Conclusion

For this paper should be to study the particular minority group to find out what its Ethno Linguistic vitality is particularly the values are for using the model for obtaining of the actual vitality of a group. The fully operationalized for quantitative research and could be easily applicable to any minority. It was that vitality depends on four crucial social psychological factors: perceived strength differential, intergroup distance, utilitarianism and intergroup discordance. These factors affect not only the vitality of minority groups, but also the dominant groups. On the other hand, however, they preserve their Palestinian-Arab identity by maintaining their Arabic mother tongue. Considering the status and use of Arabic both nationally and regionally, Arabic in Israel may overall be described as having a medium level of vitality. Also, the cultural patterns are not easily changed. Thus, it is not at all guaranteed that such attempts through the minority education would be successful.

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