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LANGUAGE USE AS A CARRIER OF SOCIAL IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT. *In the present study, we examined the relationship of social identity (Hongkonger or Chinese) and the attitudes toward bilingual code switching in a conversation between a Hong Kong person and a Chinese Mainlander. Students from a local university in Hong Kong (N = 159) listened to a four-turn conversation between a Hong Kong person and a Mainlander in a wedding party. As expected, when the speaker converged to the Putonghua (the Mainland official language), those who claimed a Hongkonger identity judged the Hong Kong speaker less favourably than did those who claimed a Chinese identity. In addition, participants who claimed a Chinese identity judged the Hong Kong speaker more favourably when he converged to Putonghua than when he maintained Cantonese (a Chinese dialect most commonly used in Hong Kong). Finally, social identity was unrelated to language attitudes when the Mainland speaker converged to Cantonese first. © 1999 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.*

Research has found language to be a marker of ethnic identity (Giles, Taylor & Bourhis, 1977; Giles, Taylor, Lambert & Albert, 1976; Taylor, Bassili & Aboud, 1973; see Krauss & Chiu, 1998). The present study

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examined the relationship between social identity and intergroup relations in transitional Hong Kong via an analysis of Hong Kong people's attitudes towards bilingual code-switching. We begin with an analysis of the intergroup orientations in transitional Hong Kong, and then proceed to discuss how such intergroup orientations may be reflected in Hong Kong people's language attitudes.

Intergroup Orientations

In the few years preceding the handover of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China, contacts between Hong Kong people and Mainland Chinese had increased drastically. Whereas the vast majority of Hong Kong people speak Cantonese, a Southern Chinese dialect, as their first language, most of the new immigrants and visitors from Mainland China speak Putonghua. The language difference together with many other differences in the sociocultural background and life-style between Hong Kong people and Mainland Chinese have increased the salience of the group boundary between Hong Kong people and Mainland Chinese in transitional Hong Kong (Chiu & Hong, this issue; Hong, Chiu, Yeung & Tong, this issue).

Berry and his associates (Berry, 1991; Berry, Kim, Power, Young & Bujaki, 1989) have found that in the face of frequent intergroup contacts that may lead to acculturation of the traditional mode of life, people may have four different kinds of reactions: (a) separating themselves from the outgroup by maintaining their own group and rejecting the outgroup culture, (b) accepting and integrating the outgroup culture into the ingroup culture, (c) abandoning the ingroup culture and assimilating into the outgroup culture, and (d) giving up both the ingroup and outgroup culture.

In the Hong Kong context, research has found separation and integration to be the two dominant reactions of the Hong Kong people during the transition (Chiu & Hong, this issue; Hong et al., this issue). Under the scheme of "one country, two systems," many Hong Kong people have sought to maintain and enhance the distinctiveness of the Hong Kong system after the handover. However, there are also Hong Kong people who look forward to greater integration with the Mainland culture after the handover.

The ethnolinguistic identity model (Giles & Johnson, 1987) and the communication accommodation theory (Giles, Coupland & Coupland, 1991) also posit that in intercultural contacts, individuals may seek to promote social approval and intergroup communication efficiency or increase the distinctiveness of their own group. In addition, individuals who identify strongly with a group may strive for a positive group identity. In Hong Kong, Hong Kong Chinese may identify themselves as primarily Hongkongers or primarily Chinese. Conceptually, Hongkonger is a more

distinctive group, which includes only permanent residents of Hong Kong, whereas Chinese is a more inclusive group, which includes both Hong Kong Chinese, Mainland Chinese, and overseas Chinese as well (Brewer, this issue). Thus, those who identify themselves as Hongkongers may consider only Hong Kong residents to be ingroup members. To maintain the positive distinctiveness of their group, those with a strong Hongkonger identification would be inclined to resist integration with and to favour separation from Chinese Mainlanders. By contrast, if those who claim themselves to be Chinese consider both Hong Kong people and Chinese Mainlanders to be their ingroup members, they would favour integration more than separation (see Hong et al., this issue; Lam et al., this issue). Thus, we predicted that Hong Kong people's social identity would be related to their preference for separation vs integration. More specifically,

H1: Compared to those who identified themselves as primarily Chinese, those who identified themselves as primarily Hongkongers would be less inclined to accept and more inclined to avoid the people and culture of Mainland China.

Attitudes Toward Learning English and Putonghua

The integration vs separation intergroup orientation may be reflected in people's attitudes toward learning a second language. The ethnolinguistic identity model posits that individuals who have strong group identification will consider language as an important symbol of their identity (Giles & Johnson, 1987). Consistent with this idea, research has found that strong identification with one's own ethnolinguistic group is associated with frequent use of the group language in daily interactions (Van Den Berg, 1988). Moreover, the motivation to learn a second language is strongly associated with acceptance of the relevant language group (Kelly, Sachdev, Kottsieper & Ingram, 1993).

To Hong Kong people, both English and Putonghua are their second language. Previous studies have shown that in Hong Kong, learning Putonghua is positively associated with a preference for integration, whereas learning English is related to a preference for separation (Chiu & Hong, this issue; see also Giles & Pierson, 1988; Pierson, Giles & Young, 1987; Young, Giles & Pierson, 1986). Thus, a recommendation to start learning Putonghua earlier and English later was consistent with the preference for separation, whereas a recommendation to start learning Putonghua later and English earlier was in line with the preference for integration. Accordingly, we predicted that

H2: Compared to those who claimed a Hongkonger identity, those who identified themselves as Chinese would recommend an earlier age to start to learn Putonghua. In addition, those who identified

themselves as Hongkongers, probably because of their resistance to integration, would recommend children to start learning Putonghua later than English.

Attitudes Towards Convergence and Divergence

In speech-accommodation theory (SAT), a speaker may shift his or her speech style during social interactions, depending on his or her interaction goal (Coupland & Giles, 1988; Giles et al., 1991). For example, speakers who seek to promote social approval or communication efficiency may adapt to each other's speech by means of a wide range of linguistic features, including pronunciations, pause, utterance lengths, and speech rates (Giles, 1979; Taylor & Royer, 1980; cf. Bilous & Krauss, 1988; Krauss & Chiu, 1998). Speech convergence is often seen by the listener as a well-intended, integrative communicative strategy for maintaining a harmonious relationship between the conversationalists (Beebe & Giles, 1984; Bardac, Mulac & House, 1988; Giles, Taylor & Bourhis, 1973). As such, it may help speakers evoke social approval from the listener and foster cooperativeness in communication.

Alternatively, speakers may choose to promote their distinctiveness. To maintain positive distinctiveness and to dissociate themselves from the conversational partner (Beebe & Giles, 1984), they may attempt to maintain their ingroup speech pattern or even diverge linguistically away from that of the outgroup conversational partners (Coupland & Giles, 1988; Giles et al., 1991). For example, speakers may accentuate vocal differences between themselves and their outgroup conversational partners (Beebe & Giles, 1984).

In an intergroup communication context, the conversationalists are faced with two goals. On the one hand, they need to maintain and even foster a cooperative relationship between the conversationalists so that the conversation can proceed in a smooth and cooperative fashion. Attainment of this goal could be facilitated by mutual convergence in linguistic characteristics. Consistent with this idea, Giles et al. (1973) have shown that in multilingual settings, convergence to outgroup language may promote the intercultural climate. For example, Anglophones in Montreal perceived Francophones more favourably when Francophones converged to English than when they maintained French. Supportive findings were also reported by Cote and Clement (1994), Genesee (1984), and Genesee and Bourhis (1982, 1988).

On the other hand, when people identify strongly with their ethnic group, they may define themselves in ethnic terms and use their ethnic language in social interaction to symbolically distinguish themselves from others (Giles & Johnson, 1987). For example, Bourhis and Giles (1977; Bourhis, Giles, Leyens & Tajfel, 1979) have shown that in reaction to

group identity-threatening circumstances, people may accentuate speech and nonverbal differences between themselves and members of the other group.

Social identity may also set up expectation for code choice in bilingual settings, and hence affect one's evaluations of the linguistic code used in a bilingual intercultural encounter. Hogg, D'Agata and Abrams (1989) studied the perceptions of ingroup members speaking the dominant outgroup's language. They found that the more people identified with their ethnic group, the more negative they felt toward the ingroup member who spoke the dominant outgroup language. Perhaps when group identification is strong, ingroup members are expected to use the ingroup language to communicate with outgroup members. When they could not fulfil such expectations, they receive negative evaluation from their ingroup members.

Among the Hong Kong people who identified themselves as primarily Hongkongers, they might expect a Hong Kong person (ingroup) to communicate in Cantonese (the ingroup language) with a Mainland Chinese (outgroup). They might also perceive those Hong Kong people who conform to such expectation more favourably than those who do not. By contrast, among those Hong Kong people who identify themselves as primarily Chinese, they might expect a Hong Kong person (ingroup) to accommodate their language to a Mainland Chinese (another ingroup) so as to promote a harmonious "intragroup" communication. They might therefore perceive those who conform to this expectation more favourably than those who do not. Thus, we hypothesised that in a conversation between a Hong Kong person and a Chinese Mainlander,

H3: Those who claimed to be primarily Hongkongers would evaluate the Hong Kong speaker more favourably when the speaker maintained Cantonese than when he or she converged to Putonghua. The reverse pattern was predicted for those who claimed to be primarily Chinese.

The Role of Discursive Norm

Recent studies have shown that situation-specific discursive norm may have an overriding effect on social identification and speech accommodation (Ball, Giles, Byrne & Berechree, 1984; Cote & Clement, 1994; Genesee, 1984; Genesee & Bourhis, 1982, 1988). Genesee and Bourhis (1982, 1988) showed that in salesperson-customer interactions, the salesperson is expected to switch to the language of customer. Thus, subjects regardless of whether they were in the same ethnolinguistic group with the salesperson or the customer rated the salesperson more favourably when he followed the norm than when he violated it. Similarly, Ball et al. (1984)

found that in a job interview, the applicant is expected to sound standard-accented and formal. Applicants who conformed to this situational language norm were evaluated positively. In their recent reformulation of the language attitude model, Cargile, Giles, Ryan and Bradac (1994) also acknowledge the effects of situation-specific norms. As they put it, "Norms are important to language attitudes because they provide a basis for judging language that both does and does not serve as a cue for group membership . . . as well as dictates what is situationally appropriate or inappropriate communication" (p. 227).

Cargile et al. (1994) also maintain that speaker language does not inevitably trigger certain attitudes within the hearer. The dynamic interaction during a conversation may activate a situational language norm that overrides the social identification effects on language attitudes. In the Hong Kong context, when a Mainland Chinese first converges to Cantonese, the norm of reciprocity may be activated. If the Hong Kong speaker reciprocates by using Putonghua to communicate with the Mainland Chinese, this Hong Kong person should not be perceived negatively even by those who have a strong Hongkonger identity. Thus, we predicted that

H4: Following the Mainlander's convergence to Cantonese, evaluation of the Hong Kong speaker who converged to Putonghua would not be downgraded even by those who claimed to be primarily Hongkongers.

Overview of the Present Study

The present experiment was conducted in Hong Kong in 1996, one year before the handover of sovereignty.

To test H3 and H4, we used the bilingual code-switching paradigm developed by Genesee and Bourhis (1982, 1988). To manipulate language convergence or divergence, participants listened to a conversation between a Cantonese-speaking Hong Kong Chinese and a Putonghua-speaking Mainland Chinese. The Hong Kong Chinese speaker started the conversation in Cantonese, and the Mainlander responded with either Putonghua or Cantonese, depending on the experimental condition. Then, in the third turn, the Hong Kong Chinese responded with either Cantonese or Putonghua. After each conversation turn, the participants evaluated the speaker on a number of person perception measures.

Later in the experiment, the participants' social identity (primarily Hongkonger or primarily Chinese) was assessed. In addition, to test H1 and H2, the participants also answered a set of questions pertaining to (a) the integration vs separation intergroup orientation, and (b) attitudes toward learning English and Putonghua.

In short, the study used a 2 (Social Identity: Hongkonger or Mainlander) \times 2 (Turn 2 Language: Cantonese or Putonghua) \times 2 (Turn 3 Language: Cantonese or Putonghua) between-subjects design.

METHOD

Participants

One hundred and fifty nine (83 males, 74 females, 2 missing) freshmen from a local university in Hong Kong with average of 21.6 (S.D. = 1.27) volunteered to participate in the present study.

Materials

A four-turn conversation between a Cantonese-Putonghua bilingual Hong Kong Chinese and a Putonghua-Cantonese bilingual Mainland Chinese was tape-recorded. The conversational setting chosen by Genesee and Bourhis (1982, 1988) was one of salesman/customer interaction. Because a salesman is under strong normative pressure to accommodate his speech to that of the customer, the relationship between social identity and language choice strategies might be obscured (Genesee & Bourhis, 1988). Thus, in the present study, we chose a wedding party as the conversational setting, which was an informal social setting with no clear situational language norm. Participants were told that the conversation occurred in a Chinese wedding party in Hong Kong, and the Mainland conversationalist was the cousin of the groom, who came from Mainland China. The Hong Kong conversationalist was the bride's colleague. Both conversationalists were male.

The contents of the conversation were as follows:

Hong Kong Conversationalist: Are you a relative of the bride or the groom?

Mainland Conversationalist: I am the groom's cousin, I am on a business trip from Mainland. And you?

Hong Kong Conversationalist: I am the bride's colleague. How long will you stay in Hong Kong?

Mainland Conversationalist: I still need to take care of some business here, I'll go back one or two weeks later.

Experimental Design

The participants were randomly assigned into one of the four experimental conditions. In all the conditions, the Hong Kong speaker started the conversation in Cantonese (Turn 1), and the Mainlander responded in

either Putonghua or strongly accented Cantonese (Turn 2). Then, the Hong Kong speaker completed Turn 3 in either Cantonese or Putonghua. The four experimental conditions were formed by crossing Turn 2 Language (Cantonese vs Putonghua) with Turn 3 Language (Cantonese vs Putonghua). Turn 4 was not a design variable in the present study. It was included as the closing turn for the conversation.

Table 1 depicts how the four experimental conditions were set up. In the Maintenance Condition, both conversationalists maintained the use of their native language throughout the conversation. The Hong Kong conversationalist initiated the conversation in Cantonese, and the Mainlander conversationalist responded in Putonghua. Then, the Hong Kong conversationalist maintained Cantonese in the third turn of the conversation, and the Mainlander conversationalist maintained Putonghua in the fourth conversation turn.

In the Convergence to Mainlander Condition, only the Hong Kong speaker, but not the Mainlander, accommodated. After the Hong Kong conversationalist began the conversation in Cantonese and the Mainlander conversationalist responded in Putonghua, both the Hong Kong conversationalist and the Mainlander used Putonghua in the next two turns of the conversation.

In the Convergence to Hong Kong Person Condition, only the Mainlander, but not the Hong Kong speaker, accommodated. When Hong Kong speaker completed the first turn in Cantonese, the Mainlander responded in accented Cantonese. The remaining conversation turns were completed in Cantonese.

Finally, in the Mutual Convergence Condition, both the Hong Kong

TABLE 1
Experimental Conditions (C = Cantonese, P = Putonghua)

	Condition	Turn 1	Turn 2	Turn 3	Turn 4
		Speaker	Hong Kong Person	Mainlander	Hong Kong Person
Maintenance	1	C	P	C	P
Convergence to Mainlander	2	C	P	P	P
Convergence to Hong Kong Person	3	C	C	C	C
Mutual Convergence	4	C	C	P	C

speaker and the Mainlander accommodated, as reflected in the Cantonese, accented Cantonese, Putonghua, and accented Cantonese sequence.

Dependent Measures

Lambert (1967) found that three frequently emerged dimensions in language attitude research are personal integrity, competence and social attractiveness. Thus, after each turn of conversation, the participants were asked to rate their impression of the speaker who had just talked on these three dimensions, with two items for each dimension. The six terms were: *kind, honest, able, clever, friendly* and *considerate*. Participants indicated their responses to each item on a 6-point scale, from 1 ("not at all") to 6 ("extremely"). Average inter-item correlation among the six items in post-Turn 1, 2, and 3 evaluation was .40, .53, and .48, respectively. Because of the high internal consistency of the six items, for each conversation turn, we constructed an overall evaluation of the speaker by averaging the six items. The internal reliability of the overall evaluation for Turn 1, 2, and 3 was .80, .87, and .85, respectively.

Measures of Social Identity and Intergroup Attitudes

Participants filled out an intergroup attitudes measure upon the completion of the code switching task, which assessed the participants' social identity and their convergent vs divergent intergroup attitudes. Participants' social identity was assessed using a multiple choice question with five choices: (1) Hongkonger, (2) Chinese, (3) primarily Hongkonger, only secondarily Chinese, (4) primarily Chinese, only secondarily Hongkonger, and (5) others.

To assess attitudes towards learning English and Putonghua, participants were asked to recommend (a) the age at which Hong Kong children should start to learn English, and (b) the age at which Hong Kong children should start to learn Putonghua. Finally, to provide direct assessment of the participants' intergroup attitudes, we asked them to indicate on a 6-point scale (from "very unlikely" to "very likely") how likely they were to (a) accept, (b) make connection with, (c) avoid, and (d) reject the people and culture from China. Responses to items (a) and (b) were averaged to form an integration score, and responses to items (c) and (d) were averaged to form a separation score.

Procedures

The experiment was conducted in small groups with not more than 8 participants in each session. They listened to the tape recording of the conversation. To ensure clear comprehension of the contents of the con-

versation, we had participants listen to each turn of conversation twice before they rated their impression of the speaker at the end of each turn. Finally, participants filled out the Intergroup Attitudes Questionnaire.

RESULTS

Social Identity Measure

In this study, 35 (22%) participants identified themselves as Hongkongers, 25 (16%) identified themselves as Chinese, 67 (42%) of them identified themselves as primarily Hongkonger, only secondarily Chinese, and 32 (20%) of them identified themselves as primarily Chinese, only secondarily Hongkonger. None of the participants chose “others.” Because relatively few participants chose the “Chinese” identity, as in other social identity study in Hong Kong (Hong et al., this issue), we categorised participants who chose the “Chinese identity” or the “primarily Chinese, only secondarily Hongkonger” identity into the “primarily Chinese group” and those who chose the “Hongkonger” identity or the “primarily Hongkonger, only secondarily Chinese” identity into the “primarily Hongkonger group.” The primarily Chinese vs primarily Hongkonger identity was not related to gender, $\chi^2(1) = .48$, ns, or the four experimental conditions, $\chi^2(1) = .39$, ns.

Social Identity and Acceptance vs Avoidance of Mainlanders

Recall that participants were asked to rate the extent to which they would accept or avoid Mainlanders after 1997. A Social Identity \times Group Attitude ANOVA performed on the ratings revealed a significant social identity main effect, $F(1,155) = 4.63$, $p < .05$ and a significant group attitude main effect, $F(1,155) = 130.58$, $p < .0001$. The main effects should be interpreted in light of the significant Social Identity \times Group Attitude interaction, $F(1,155) = 14.23$, $p < .001$. As expected, compared to primarily Chinese, primarily Hongkongers were significantly less likely to accept Mainlanders after 1997 ($M = 3.98$ vs 4.69), $F(1,157) = 19.32$, $p < .0001$. They were also significantly more likely to avoid Mainlanders ($M = 2.87$ vs 2.49), $F(1,157) = 5.30$, $p < .05$. These findings supported Hypothesis 1.

Social Identity and Recommended Age for Language Learning

To assess the relationship between social identity and the recommended age for learning English and Putonghua, a 2 (Social Identity: primarily Chinese vs primarily Hongkonger) \times 2 (Language: English vs Putonghua) analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed on the recommended age

for language learning, with the second factor as a within-subject factor. Fourteen participants did not answer the language learning questions, and their data were not included in the analysis. The language main effect was significant, $F(1,141) = 11.26, p < .001$. The mean recommended age for learning English was 4.16, and the mean recommended age for learning Putonghua was 5.41. The Social Identity \times Language interaction was also statistically reliable, $F(1,141) = 7.66, p < .01$. Follow-up analysis revealed that primarily Hongkongers recommended an earlier age for learning English ($M = 4.11, S.D. = 2.39$) than for learning Putonghua ($M = 5.94, S.D. = 3.67$), $t(91) = 4.62, p < .0001$. Primarily Chinese recommended learning English ($M = 4.35, S.D. = 2.79$) and Putonghua ($M = 4.43, S.D. = 2.77$) at about the same age, $t(50) = .48, ns$. These findings provided support for Hypothesis 2.

Language Choice Strategies

A 2 (Social Identity) \times 2 (Turn 2 Language) \times 2 (Turn 3 Language) ANOVA was performed on each of the first three post conversation turn evaluation of the speaker. Data from four participants were excluded due to missing data on some of the measures.

Turn 1. No significant effects on the evaluation of the Hong Kong speaker were found, suggesting that participants in each social identity and experimental condition had similar evaluation of Hong Kong speaker prior to the introduction of the experimental manipulation.

Turn 2. Only the Social Identity \times Turn 2 Language interaction was significant, $F(1,151) = 5.59, p < .05$. Participants who identified themselves as Hongkongers rated the Mainlander (outgroup) more favourably when he converged to the language of the Hong Kong speaker (ingroup): The Mainlander was rated more positively when he spoke Cantonese ($M = 4.17$) than when he spoke Putonghua ($M = 4.01$), although the difference was not statistically reliable ($F(1,100) = 1.53, p = .22$). By contrast, participants who claimed a primarily Chinese identity rated the Mainlander more favourably when he spoke Putonghua ($M = 4.23$) than when he spoke Cantonese ($M = 3.86$), and the difference was marginally significant ($F(1,55) = 3.21, p = .07$).

Turn 3. Only the Social Identity \times Turn 2 Language \times Turn 3 Language was significant, $F(1,151) = 5.47, p < .05$. As shown in Figure 1, in the Convergence to Mainlander Condition, participants who claimed a Hongkonger identity judged the Hong Kong speaker less favourably than did those who claimed a Chinese identity, $F(1,44) = 6.88, p < .05$. Also, participants who claimed a Chinese identity judged the Hong Kong speaker

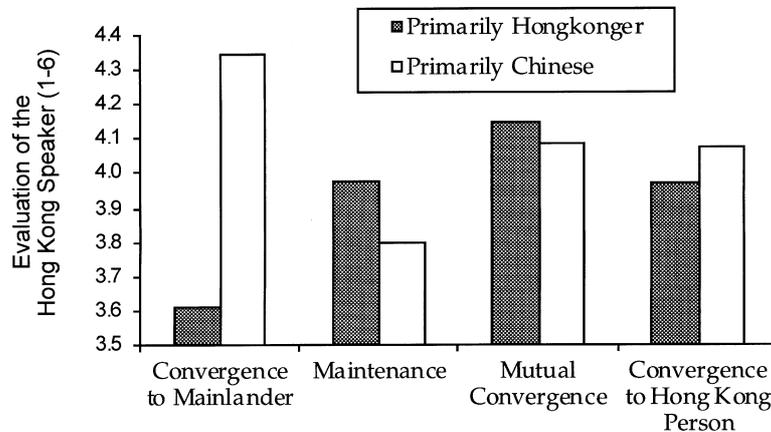


FIGURE 1. Evaluation of the Hong Kong speaker as a function of the speaker's code switch pattern and the participants' social identity. Higher scores indicate more positive evaluation.

more favourably in the Convergence to Mainlander Condition than in the Maintenance Condition, $F(1,30) = 4.18, p = .05$. These findings were consistent with Hypothesis 3. Finally, consistent with Hypothesis 4, no third turn language effects was found when the Mainland speaker converged in the second turn.

DISCUSSION

On the whole, our hypotheses were confirmed. First, as reflected in both assessment of intergroup attitudes and attitudes toward language learning, those Hong Kong people with a strong Hongkonger identity were less inclined to accept and more inclined to avoid Mainland people and the Mainland culture relative to those with a strong Chinese identity (Hong et al., this issue; Lam et al., this issue). Moreover, the evaluation of code switching data also revealed that those Hong Kong people with a strong Hongkonger identity expected other Hong Kong people to use Cantonese (the ingroup language) to communicate with Mainland Chinese, more so than did those with a strong Chinese identity.

Taken collectively, the results of the present study suggested that there may be tension in the intergroup relations in Hong Kong among those who have a strong Hong Kong identity. It has been suggested that social groups need to maintain its group distinctiveness (Brewer, 1991). The need to maintain distinctiveness among the Hongkonger identity group may drive some of its members to engage in divergent communicative behav-

our. Such identity maintenance strategies may hinder the development of intergroup understanding after the handover.

One solution to this problem, as suggested by the present study, is to strengthen Hong Kong people's identification at a more inclusive level. Through categorisation of the self into a more inclusive group (e.g., Chinese), Hong Kong people may identify with more superordinate goals, which could help promote inter-group relations (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987).

Another solution is to encourage reciprocity of convergent behaviour. The present study suggests that on the one hand, people may expect ingroup members to maintain a distinctive group identity by maintaining the use of ingroup language in intergroup communication. On the other hand, they also react favourably to an outgroup's linguistic convergence, which may signify an attempt on the part of the outgroup to establish an integrative intergroup relations. In the present study, once the Chinese Mainlander initiated speech convergence, whether the Hong Kong conversationalist displayed convergence or divergence had no effect on the participants' perceptions of the Hong Kong conversationalist, regardless of the participants' social identity. This indicates that as an outside person has made an initial attempt to connect himself or herself to the local group, the interactional expectations associated with the maintenance of a distinctive identity does not apply. In other words, effort to improve intergroup relations in Hong Kong should not focus only on changing Hong Kong people's social identity. Indeed, what is equally important is the promotion of initiatives from both Mainland Chinese and Hong Kong people to display reciprocal, convergence communicative behaviour.

The present study also makes contact with the language attitude literature and the speech divergence literature. Research on language attitudes has relied heavily on the matched guise technique developed by Lambert (1967). Typically, in these studies, participants listen to recordings of bilingual speakers reading the same message in two target languages and evaluate the speakers' personalities. The personality ratings often reflect the participants' perceptions of the target's linguistic groups. This paradigm has helped generate important findings on evaluative reactions to social identity information conveyed in speech and how such reactions may change over time (see Krauss & Chiu, 1998). One limitation of the language attitude research is that it is largely descriptive in nature (see Giles, Henwood, Coupland, Harrisman & Coupland, 1992; Giles, Williams, Mackie & Rosselli, 1995), and relatively little attention has been given to the dynamic changes in intergroup relations in the course of intergroup communication.

Speech divergence research has documented the on-line shifts in speech and nonverbal patterns that occurred in the course of intergroup communication. This research has focused on how the occurrence of speech

divergence may be related to group identification, intergroup relations, and prior language attitudes. Until recently, less attention has been given to the role of interaction norms that emerge, develop, or change during the course of intergroup communication (Ball et al., 1984; Cargile et al., 1994; Cote & Clement, 1994; Genesee & Bourhis, 1988; Giles et al., 1991).

The present study suggests that intergroup communication is subject to normative regulation (Cargile et al., 1994). In the present context, participants' evaluative reactions to the language variations of the conversationalists seem to be governed by norms regarding ingroup-outgroup behaviour as well as the norm of reciprocity. Moreover, which norm is dominant depends on the prior speech behaviour of the conversation partner. The dynamic cognitive and social processes implicated in the situational transformation of intergroup relations are of great potential interest to social psychologists. As Cargiles et al. (1994) put it, "language attitude studies might profit by examining not only trait attributions accorded speakers on tape but also hearers' construals of their own social identities created as a situated function of reacting to the speech of certain others" (p. 217).

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