

Inter-group relations and attitudes:
Conceptualization, measurement and relevance for LPP

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Abstract

This chapter explores how inter-group relations and attitudes toward diversity and language can foster or impede the implementation of language policies. The core idea is that identification, measurement, and management of such subjective factors may be an important feature of language policy analysis. The chapter starts with an introduction to several key concepts in social psychology (e.g. attitudes, social identity, inter-group relations). Then general notions about the measurement of these variables are presented and discussed. On this basis, the chapter explores how theories and methods coming from social psychology, psychometrics, and quantitative analyses can combine in order to inform the selection, design and evaluation of language policies. Particular attention is paid to a four “archetypical situations” (lingua Franca; multilingualism; minority language; migration). Possible challenges at each step of policy analysis are also examined (emergence, recognition, formulation, implementation, and evaluation). General research perspectives are offered, from measurement issues to research designs and data modelling techniques.

Introduction

Language issues are closely tied to identity, and anything related to identity often carries a lot of affect, both positive and negative. These issues are also related to challenges revolving around inter-group relations and possible tensions, conflicts and prejudices between groups. Such issues are arguably quite peripheral aspects of language policy and planning (LPP); however, at least in some cases, these issues may have important ramifications, to the point that they may compromise the success of LPP if overlooked. Hence, the overarching goal of this chapter is to clarify how and when to consider them in LPP, from both a theoretical and an empirical standpoints. To this end, the first section of this chapter is devoted to contributions from social psychology, starting with the very notion of “attitudes”. We also explore the roots and corollaries of social identity, and clarify how it is related to attitudes. In the second section, we focus more closely on empirical questions and measurement issues. In the third section, we combine insights from the two previous sections, and explore in more specific detail how this can be relevant for language policy.

Insights from social psychology

Social psychology is relevant to this chapter for several reasons. First, and most obviously, it is the discipline that has traditionally specialized in the conception and measurement of attitudes. Second, social psychology is also well equipped theoretically to discuss the related notions of social identity and inter-group relations. In this section, we therefore introduce and discuss important contributions of social psychology, with a focus on the linkage between attitudes, social identity and inter-group relations.

What are attitudes?

Attitudes can be defined as “versions of the world that are constructed by people in the course of their interactions with others (...) they are considered to be an evaluation of people, objects

and ideas” (Bidjari 2011, 1593). More specifically, attitudes are made up of a *cognitive* component (typically beliefs) and of an *affective* component (leading to affective responses such as like or dislike). Ultimately, attitudes can also have behavioural consequences (approach, avoidance, aggression, etc.), but the relation between attitude and behaviour is not necessarily tied to the definition of attitudes.

Attitudes were long considered as relatively stable over time and context, especially when they are strong or extreme (e.g., Prislín 1996). At the same time, there is also substantial and growing evidence that attitude change is possible (Albarracín et Shavitt 2018; Petty et Krosnick 1995; Tyler et Schuller 1991). Attitude changes can be related to individual factors such as personality or life experience, social factors such as the persuasiveness of a communicator, or historical factors such as generational context. Nevertheless, “the degree of attitude change generally observed in published research tends to be modest, at about one third of standard deviation” (Albarracín et Shavitt 2018, 320).

For the purpose of this chapter, this means two things. First, attitudes are important and robust phenomena that cannot be ignored; for instance, when a majority has negative attitudes toward a minority, this can have implications for public policies. Second, beyond this relative stability, there is room for attitude change; and this change may be driven, among other things, by public policies. This – reflecting both constraints and opportunities – clearly shows why attitudes may matter for LPP. Before we return to this in more detail, let us consider some important, related notions, namely inter-group relations and social identity.

Inter-group relations and social identity

Human beings inevitably forms groups of all types and sizes, and an important part of individual identity (or “self-concept”) relies on various group memberships. This phenomenon refers to the *social identity theory* – a cornerstone of social psychology (e.g.,

Tajfel 1982; Turner et Oakes 1986). One crucial implication of group membership is *in-group bias* or *in-group favouritism*, which basically applies to any group of any size, up to an entire culture (Efferson, Lalive, et Fehr 2008). This notion refers to the fact that people generally have more positive *attitudes* toward in-group members (“we”) as compared to the out-group members (“them”); people often help members of their own group more than members of other groups, and resources are generally allocated in favour of the in-group.

This phenomenon of in-group bias has also been linked to group conflict and prejudice, although in-group favouritism does not necessarily imply direct hostility. Indeed, “much in-group bias and intergroup discrimination is motivated by preferential treatment of in-group members rather than direct hostility toward out-group members” (Brewer 1999, 429).

Nonetheless, in-group and out-group relations, through preferential treatment, inevitably holds the potential for conflict. More specifically, hostility and prejudice arise when there are tensions over resources, power and other similar issues (including non-material goods such as values and norms). Several authors (e.g., Brief et al. 2005; Insko et al. 1992; Jackson 1993) emphasize that every group has the desire to obtain and maximize valued outcomes and resources. In this context, group competition and conflict may arise from a real or perceived scarcity of resources, generally when groups see a competition as having a zero-sum outcome.

In short, a systematic, natural and incompressible *in-group favouritism* can frequently be observed. This favouritism can range from relatively harmless opinions to direct hostility. The more there is tension regarding resources allocation, power issues and conflicting values, the higher the risk of discrimination, prejudice and conflict. More generally, complex, changing and uncertain circumstances are also likely to precipitate tension and conflicts. Hence, if LPP overlooks this type of intergroup tension, problems may arise during the implementation phase. Although managing intergroup tension is certainly not a primary goal of LPP, it is an important contingent consideration.

Overview of extant questionnaires

Let us now move to the challenges associated with the assessment of the variables just discussed and a few ones that are more specific. We start with the empirical assessment of inter-group relations, then move on to several types of associated attitudes, which range from general attitudes to overall (ethnic and linguistic) diversity and more specific language-related attitudes.

Inter-group relations, tensions and prejudices

Instruments allowing the assessment of inter-group conflict comes in many varieties (see, e.g., Böhm, Rusch, et Baron 2018), ranging from rating measures (questionnaires) to behavioural measures and allocation tasks (experimental situations where intergroup behaviour is examined through the allocation of valuable resources to in-group versus out-group members). Here, we will focus on questionnaires, because they are the more practical tools; research designs and data collection procedures based on experimental situations such as allocation tasks are generally more complicated and costly to implement.

A prominent questionnaire-based measure of inter-group relations is adjective rating, in which participants are asked to report their feelings toward in-group versus out-group members, generally using a seven-point scale, where 1 represents low intensity of the feeling in question and 7 represents high intensity. For example, in-group favouritism and out-group hostility can be assessed via ratings of the intensity of warmth or anger toward several groups, typically an in-group, a target out-group (the one with which tension and conflicts are obvious or likely), and several other out-groups (groups with which there is comparatively less problematic relations) used as a benchmark. Such procedures allows to construct variables reflecting in-group warmth, out-group warmth and dispositional warmth – and of course the same logic applies to anger and hostility (Perry et al. 2018).

Similar approaches (e.g., Hewstone, Islam, et Judd 1993) use several items instead of just one as in the example above. For each of these items, participants are asked to report their level of agreement, again using a seven-point scale, ranging from low agreement [1] to high agreement [7]. This allows the construction of more reliable dimensions (the various items are typically summed or averaged), reflecting a *negative evaluation* (e.g. based on adjectives such as “aggressive”, “selfish”, “nasty”, “opportunistic”, “disruptive”) and a *positive evaluation* (e.g. based on adjective such as “hospitable, “openhearted”, “friendly”, “honest”, “intelligent”). Hewstone et al. have also proposed to assess the degree of perceived dispersion of the target out-group – a measure of “radicalism” of the evaluations – using an additional seven-point item, with possible answers ranging from “they’re all completely different from one another” [1] to “they’re pretty much alike” [7].

Other, complementary approaches have focused on the direct evaluation of perceived discrimination. For instance, Molero and colleagues (2013) have proposed a questionnaire distinguishing between four types of discrimination – blatant group discrimination, subtle group discrimination, blatant individual discrimination, and subtle individual discrimination. This questionnaire is based on quite straightforward items such as “I have felt personally rejected for being...”, “I have been treated unfairly for being...”, etc. This questionnaire is of particular interest here, because it is easily adaptable to any stigmatized group, including various minorities or migrant populations. (For additional information on perceived discrimination scales, see also Atkins 2014.)

Attitudes toward ethnic and linguistic diversity

Another category of instruments combines those allowing the measurement of overall positive attitude (or openness) toward ethnic and/or linguistic diversity. A popular one is the *Multicultural Personality Questionnaire* (MPQ; van der Zee et van Oudenhoven 2000; 2001; van der Zee et al. 2013). However, despite its name, this instrument is actually very general –

not to say unspecific – because most items are actually not much focused on multicultural issues. A similar, but more specific instrument is the *Intercultural Development Inventory* (IDP; Hammer et Bennett 1998; Hammer, Bennett, et Wiseman 2003; Paige et al. 2003). This questionnaire, which is rooted in a developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (Bennett 1986), allows the assessment of five dimensions: denial of differences, defence against differences, minimization of differences, acceptance of differences, and adaptation to differences. Both these instruments, however, have a rather general scope and are not especially focused on linguistic issues; hence, their potential application for LPP is mostly indirect. At best, these instruments capture potentially relevant background factors.

Unfortunately, instruments that specifically target the more precise notion of attitudes toward *linguistic* diversity are scarce. The only few exceptions are found in the domain of education; both have relatively specific applications, but they can certainly inspire useful adaption to other contexts. One of these instruments is a scale developed by Byrnes and colleagues (Byrnes et Kiger 1994; Byrnes, Kiger, et Lee Manning 1997), which assesses the language attitudes of teachers in the USA. This is a 13-item questionnaire distinguishing three factors labeled *Language politics* (e.g. “To be considered American, one should speak English”), *Intolerance to limited English proficiency* (e.g. “Having a non- or limited-English proficiency student in the classroom is detrimental to the learning of the other students”) and *Language support* (e.g. “I would support the government spending additional money to provide better programs for linguistic minority students in public schools”).

Another similar instrument focused on linguistic diversity is a questionnaire developed by Wiese et al. (2017). This instrument assesses German teachers’ attitude toward linguistic diversity in schools. It contains 19 items falling in different thematic domains, for instance *Language repertoires* (e.g. “I speak different kinds of German, depending on the situation”); *Multilingualism* (e.g. “It is a sign of a reduced lexicon if young people in a conversation

change back and forth between two languages”) or *Traditional dialects* (e.g. “Dialects have a complex grammar of their own, just like standard German”). Then again, questionnaires like this have a rather general scope and mostly capture background factors. However, an open-minded stance toward linguistic diversity may certainly ease the implementation of many linguistic policies.

Language-specific and policy-specific attitudes

There are also many contributions on the subject of attitudes toward a specific language. Most of these, however, focus on the perception of language *variation*, such as the use of specific lexical and grammatical forms (e.g., Cargile 2017; Garrett 2010; Holtgraves 2014). In regard of the objectives of this chapter, such studies are arguably of minor interest.

Closer to our concerns are studies that investigate language attitude change following a change in language policy. For instance, a study by Marley (2004) assessed attitudes toward French and Arabic two years after the implementation of a language policy outlined in the Morocco’s *Charter for Education and Training*. Based on a questionnaire including items such as “French is useful for working in Morocco” or “Arabic is useful for working in Morocco”, this study unfortunately did not include an assessment of attitudes *before* the policy change. Another study by Woolard and Gahng (1990), targeting the change of attitudes toward Catalan and Castilian in Catalonia, used a more solid research methodology, namely a two-wave study based on an experimental design. In this study, participants heard recordings of people speaking Catalan and Castilian. They were then asked to evaluate each speaker on 14 personal traits (e.g. trustworthy, cultured, intelligent, etc.). Results shows that the perceived status of speakers (i.e. positive attitudes toward them) is similar across time, with a higher evaluation of Catalan than Castilian.

There are also several studies on the attitudes toward *learning* a foreign language, English in particular (e.g., Abidin, Pour-Mohammadi, et Alzwari 2012; Ahmed 2015; Lombard 2017). Studies of this type focus on the perception of English by students and on a variety of more or less specific factors such as *Desire to learn English* (e.g. “If it were up to me, I would spend all of my time learning English”), *Attitudes toward Learning English* (e.g. “I really enjoy learning English.”), *Attitudes toward English-speaking people* (e.g. “I wish I could have many native English-speaking friends.”), etc. (Chalak et Kassaian 2010). In principle, questionnaires like this one could be easily adapted to attitudes toward learning any other language.

Another instrument of particular interest here is the subjective vitality questionnaire (Bourhis, Giles, et Rosenthal 1981; see also Bourhis et Sachdev 1984; Sachdev et al. 1987). This instrument was designed to assess how group members (i.e. speakers of a given language, generally a minority) subjectively perceive their in-group position relative to a given out-group (i.e. speakers of another language, generally a majority), distinguishing between three sets of factors (status factors, demographic factors, and institutional support and control factors). Although a recent examination by Abrams, Barker, & Giles (2009) has shown that its factorial structure is unidimensional, which means that the three-factor distinction is not empirically supported, this is nonetheless a reliable and valid instrument. (Notions of reliability, validity and factorial structure are further discussed in the next section.)

Even more specific, and of indisputable relevance for LPP, are instruments that simply allow the direct assessment of attitudes toward a given linguistic policy. For instance, the study by Perry et al. (2018) – mentioned above in the subsection on the measurement of inter-group relations – has incorporated measures of policy opposition. In this study, which was focused on European New Zealanders and Maoris, the authors straightforwardly asked participants to rate their level of support (or opposition) toward *resources-specific policy* items (e.g.

“Reserving places for Maoris students to study medicine”) and *symbolic policy* items (e.g. “Singing the national anthem in Maori and English”). This kind of approach is interesting because it may help clarify whether or not a given policy will prove controversial.

Synthesis and possible applications

This last section is dedicated to a synthesis of theoretical and empirical elements discussed so far. We start with an analysis of the relevance of the conceptual notions and corresponding assessment tools in four simplified, archetypical LPP situations (lingua Franca; multilingualism; minority language; migration). Then we will consider in more detail why and how to develop ad hoc instruments and research procedures, focusing especially on the five steps of LPP (emergence, recognition, formulation, implementation, and evaluation) and associated relevant data analysis methods (multivariate and longitudinal models in particular).

Four archetypical situations

Obviously, not all situations calling for a language policy are the same – indeed, they are all specific in their own way. Equally obvious is the fact that it is inconceivable to discuss the specificity of each of them within the limited space of this chapter. Hence, as a compromise, we will now focus on four general situations in which language policy may be used (based on Cobarrubias et Fishman 1983; Grin 2018). These are inevitably simplified situations – and the list is not necessarily exhaustive. However, this basic taxonomy is adequate for our purposes; even with simple distinctions, numerous specificities already emerge. These four archetypical situations are the following:

1. lingua Franca and, by extension, the adoption of a non-indigenous language as a means of international communication;
2. recognition and support for multiple languages within one society; related problems of efficient and fair communication in multilingual settings;

3. protection and promotion of regional and minority languages, restoration and development of an indigenous language;
4. presence of other languages accompanying migration flows, adoption by migrants of the host society's language.

Each of these four situations is represented on a radar chart with five axes (see Figure 1).

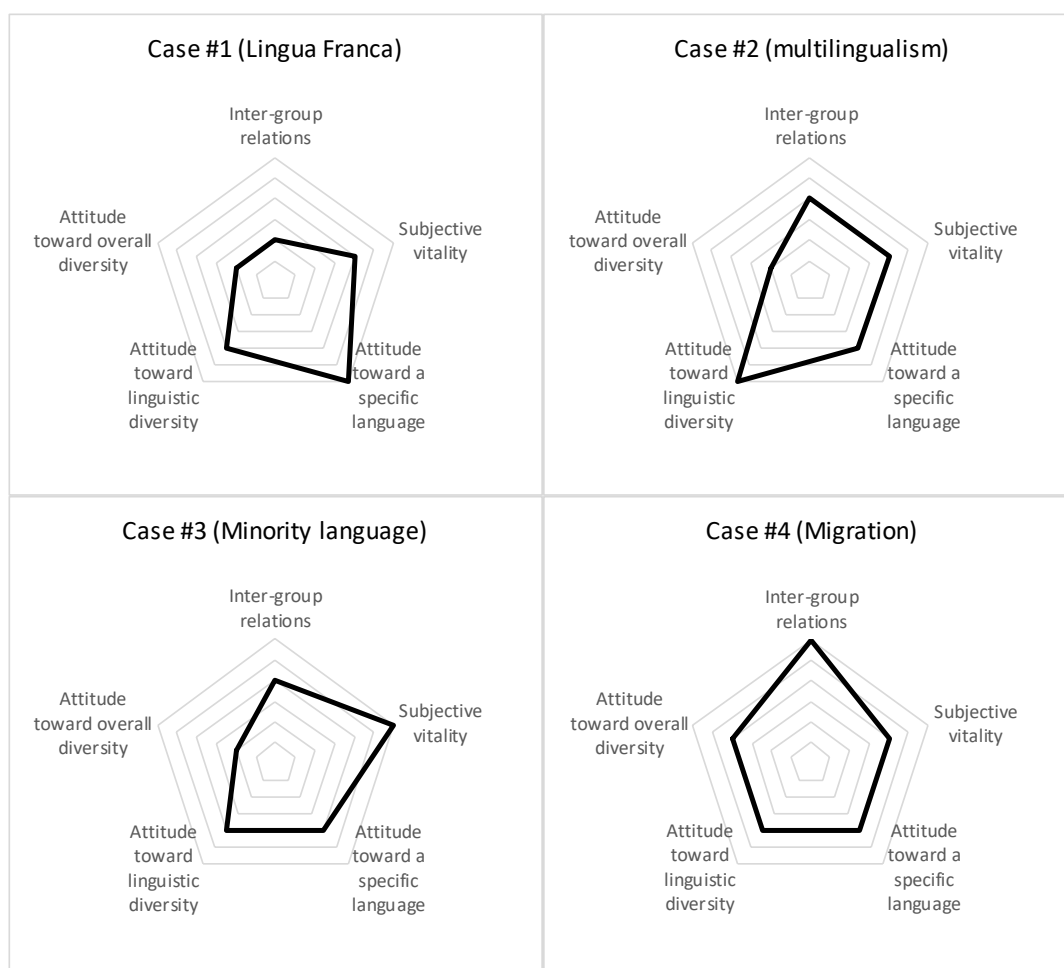
Each of these axes represent key factors discussed in the previous sections, namely:

- *inter-group relations*: overall warmth and/or hostility between groups involved in a language policy (e.g. Hewstone et al., 1993; Molero et al., 2013; Perry et al., 2018);
- *subjective vitality*: feeling from speakers of a given language that their language and culture is threaten (e.g. Bourhis et al., 1981; Abrams et al., 2009);
- *attitude toward a specific language*: attitudes toward a language in particular, often in multilingual contexts (Marley, 2004; Woolard & Gahng, 1990) or attitude toward a lingua Franca, typically English (Chalak & Kassaian, 2010; Lombard, 2017);
- *attitude toward linguistic diversity* : attitudes toward language-related factors (multilingualism, limited proficiency), mostly in specific settings such as school or workplaces (e.g. Byrnes et al., 1994, 1997; Wiese et al., 2017);
- *attitude toward overall diversity*: general dispositions toward ethnic and linguistic diversity or “multicultural personality” (Paige et al., 2003; van der Zee et al., 2013).

These five factors were selected essentially because they are *distinguishable* (although related in many ways) and *measurable*. For these four cases, the overall logic of the graphs is the same: the closer the black line is to the edge, the more important the corresponding factor is – that is, the more likely the factor is to be connected to sensitive issues (opposition, conflict, etc.). Of course, the values assigned are somewhat arbitrary and does not reflect any exact assessment. Rather, these graphs are just a convenient way to represent, for each archetypical situation, which factors are *key factors* (inescapable issues; factors that should be considered),

secondary factors (potentially relevant issues; factors that may be considered), or *mostly negligible factors* (background factors or indirectly relevant issues; considering them may be useful in some cases, however). On this basis, let us now discuss each case in more detail.

Figure 1. The profile of four archetypical situations



In the first case (lingua Franca), the key factor is arguably the attitude toward a specific language, namely, the lingua Franca in question (typically English or Esperanto). Attitudes toward linguistic diversity are considered a secondary factor here, because the use of the lingua Franca will inevitably create situations in which languages cohabit, especially at work. However, it is probably not as pervasive as in other cases, typically those involving the use of multiple official languages within a society. Likewise, subjective vitality (of the official language, as opposed to the lingua Franca) is also a secondary factor. Indeed, the official

language is arguably not at risk, unless the use of the lingua Franca become so widespread that it compromises the vitality of the national language. Finally, inter-group relations and attitudes toward diversity are considered negligible factors in this situation because it does not imply any serious cohabitation with speakers of the lingua Franca – as opposed, for instance, to immigration situations. Inter-group tensions are thus comparatively unlikely.

In the second case (multilingualism; the use of multiple languages within one society), the key factor is probably attitudes toward linguistic diversity, since linguistic diversity is intrinsic to this situation. The factors represented as having secondary importance reflect potential problems that may arise. First, there can be issues related to negative attitude toward one of the national languages. This can also be connected to the subjective impression that the vitality of one language is threatened, which can ultimately crystallize in inter-group tensions. All these problems, of course, are not inevitable, but they are nonetheless quite likely (hence their “secondary” status in this taxonomy). Finally, the attitude toward overall diversity is arguably of negligible importance in most multilingual situations of this type, although this may be very variable from one situation to another. More specifically, it is likely that the more there is a unifying culture beyond linguistic differences (which is probably the case if inter-group tension is low), the less it is probable that overall diversity will be considered problematic.

In the third archetypical situation (protection and promotion of regional and minority language), the key subjective factor is probably subjective vitality. As in case #2 just discussed, the overall attitude toward diversity is arguably the most negligible factor. Rather, the more specific notion of attitude toward linguistic diversity is probably more relevant. In addition to subjective vitality, this factor constitute an important secondary, background factor. Furthermore, as in case #2, although maybe in a lesser extent, any policy aiming at revitalizing a minority language have higher chances to be more positively received if the

majority has an overall positive attitude toward linguistic diversity. More specifically, the attitude toward the language targeted by such policy should also be positive overall.

Relatedly, one last secondary critical factor in this situation concerns inter-group relations; ideally. Just as in case #2 again, it is likely that a unifying culture beyond linguistic differences considerably alleviates inter-group tensions.

Finally, case #4 (migration, adoption by migrants of the host society's language) is perhaps the more sensitive one. First, overall attitudes toward diversity (and attitudes toward linguistic diversity) – considered here both as a secondary factors – may inform whether citizen of the host country value (or simply tolerate) the presence of various cultures and languages. This, of course, is very closely connected to the inter-group relations factor, which is arguably the key factor here. In migration situations, it may be useful to consider additional information regarding the acculturation strategies (Berry 1997; Brown et Zagefka 2011; Sam et Berry 2010) which allows a characterization of the relations between a cultural minority and a majority (and corresponding attitudes). Berry's classical framework describes four situations: *integration* (both cultures are preserved and inter-group contact is high), *assimilation* (group contact is high, but the minority's cultural heritage is not preserved), *separation* (the minority's cultural heritage is maintained but inter-group contact is low), and *marginalization* (characterized by both cultural loss and low inter-group contact). Relatedly, subjective vitality may help clarify whether the speakers of the minority language feels like their own language and culture is threatened by acculturations processes such as marginalization or assimilation.

Developing ad hoc questionnaires and procedure

Although several instruments reviewed in section 2 could be use as they are, a substantial adaptation work will have to be done in most cases, because these instruments are either very general (and would not be very informative in most situations) or quite specific (and therefore not immediately transferable to another specific situation). For the most part, such adaptations

need not be necessary complicated; however, the psychometric properties of such instruments should be checked. Moreover, the psychometric properties of some of the instruments reviewed above are wanting or insufficiently documented. Hence, in this subsection, we will quickly review these psychometric properties and suggest some guidelines on how to test them. We will then consider more general research procedures, multivariate and longitudinal approaches in particular.

The two essential key psychometric properties of any questionnaires are reliability and validity. *Reliability* is closely tied to the notion of measurement error; a questionnaire with low measurement error is said to have a high reliability. In practice, this is generally assessed with indices based on the mean correlations across all items, typically Cronbach's alpha, although more sophisticated methods exist (McNeish 2018). The notion of *validity* refers to the fact the instrument adequately assesses what it is supposed to – the target instrument should be strongly correlated with another instrument assessing a similar construct (e.g. different questionnaires of attitudes toward diversity should be correlated) and/or it should have predictive power of some kind (e.g. in a real-life situation, people scoring high on these questionnaires should behave or state opinions different from those scoring low). Finally, clarifying the *factorial structure* of a questionnaire – sometimes referred to as factorial validity – is also an important step in the validation of a questionnaire. Based on techniques such as factor analysis (for an introduction see, e.g., Field 2013), the investigation of the factorial structure allows to clarify whether the questionnaire measures a single unitary concept or several distinguishable concepts, which may be correlated or independent, but which should be analysed separately.

On the basis of solid assessment tools, we can move on to the next step: considering research procedures and data analysis schemes throughout the five steps of LPP design and evaluation. In what follows, we will start with a very simple research design (one variable assessed just

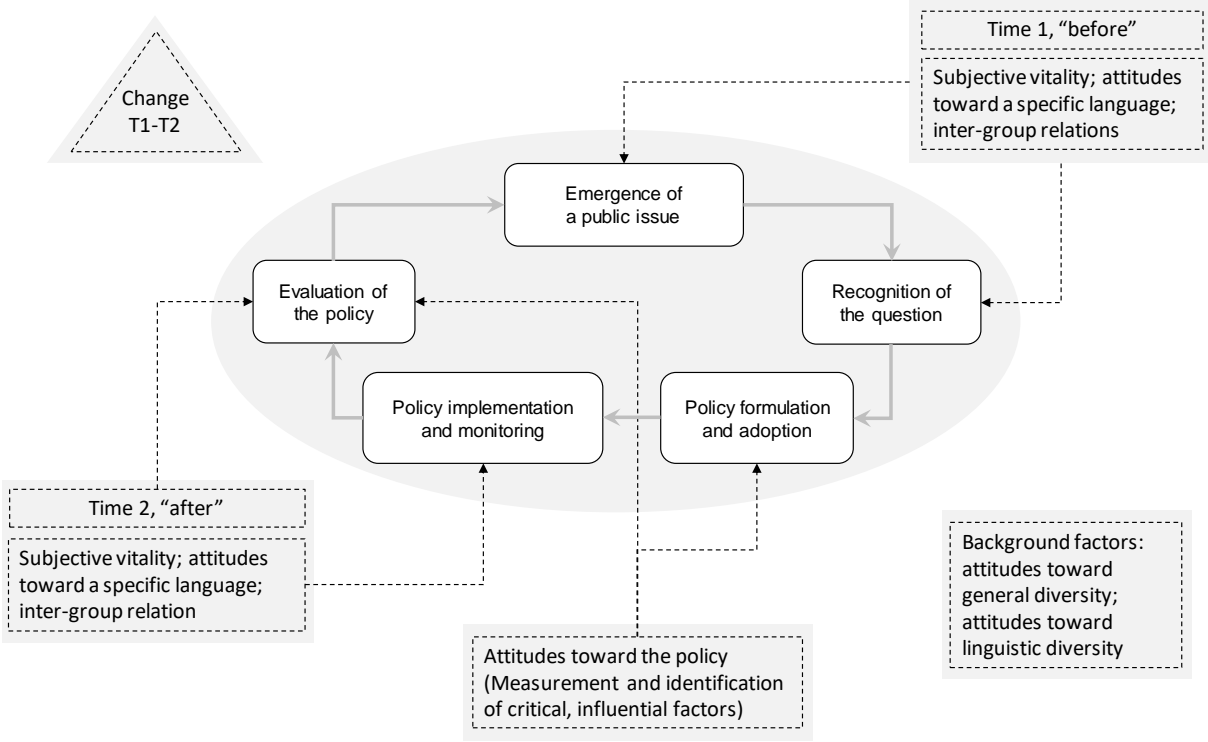
once) and then move on to more complex and more informative designs, especially multivariate approaches, both cross-sectional and longitudinal (or repeated measurement). An overview of what follows is provided in Figure 2.

As just mentioned, a basic approach would be to measure a single concept a single time. For instance, subjective vitality could be assessed in order to clarify if a linguistic issue is emerging; or attitudes toward a proposed policy could be assessed during the policy formulation stage; or attitudes toward a given language could be assessed in the evaluation stage of the policy. Although such approaches can provide valuable information, they are limited in several ways. For instance, if it is found that the attitudes toward a proposed policy are strongly negative, it might be interesting to find out *why* – what factors are predictive of such a negative attitude? A single-variable approach cannot answer this question. Likewise, if it is found that attitudes toward a given language are quite negative after the implementation of a language policy, it might be interesting to find out if the policy in question has nonetheless been successful in *reducing* this negative attitude. An approach based on a single measurement time cannot answer this question. So let us consider more sophisticated research designs.

A first possibility is to use a cross-sectional multivariate approach, that is, to collect data only once, but to assess several variables. An good example of this kind of approach is provided in the study on Maori and European New Zealanders by Perry et al. (2018) who has used multiple regression analysis in order to predict policy opposition with in-group favouritism and out-group hostility. Their results shows that in-group favouritism and out-group hostility predict both resource policy opposition and symbolic policy opposition, along with other variables such as dispositional anger, dispositional warmth, age, income and education. Their models predict between 19% and 30% of opposition opinions, which is quite substantial. Generally speaking, this kind of approach based on multiple regression could help clarifying

what are the supportive and opposing forces related to a specific LPP. As shown in Figure 2, this type of approach could be used in the policy formulation stage, in order to clarify if strong opposition is to be expected, and identify what are the key variables related to it. (For an introduction to multiple regression analysis, see, e.g., Field 2013; or Howell 2012.)

Figure 2. Overview of the relevance of attitudes throughout the policy cycle



Another type of powerful research design is longitudinal (or repeated measurement) studies. In such studies, there are at least two measurement times, so that potential change between time 1 and time 2 can be estimated. In the context of LPP design and evaluation, an interesting possibility, as shown in Figure 2, would be to assess key variables in the preliminary phases (emergence or recognition) and then to assess them again during or after the implementation of the policy (evaluation phase). Approaches of this kind are the only ones that can answer questions such as: “Has the policy led to an increase in subjective vitality perceptions?” “Have attitudes toward a specific language changed?” “What effect has a policy had on inter-group relations?” “Did it help lowering such tensions?” Although a consensus

regarding group conflict reduction has yet to be established, it is however not unrealistic to expect that LPP may help lowering intergroup tension. Indeed, one classical approach stipulates that the reduction of prejudice between majority and minority group members can be obtained through *contact* between members of both groups (e.g., Hewstone et Swart 2011; Paluck et Green 2009; Vezzali et Stathi 2016). While this works only under specific circumstances – the groups must have a relatively equal status, the context must be a cooperative one, social norms or institutional authorities should not sanction contact – the key idea here is that in most cases, LPP will positively ease communication between groups, thereby increasing contact.

Conclusion

Attitudes are a key and pervasive constituent of human psychology; they have a strong affective component and are central to social identity. Attitudes play a central role intergroup relations, tensions, conflicts, and discrimination. Although conflict and prejudice does not stem from in-group bias only – rather, group competition and conflict generally emerge when there are tensions associated with power, resources, or values – intergroup relations, with or without conflict, are critically important for LPP. Indeed, LPP often involve different groups of people (e.g. a minority and a majority) and generally imply some kind of resource (re)allocation. In this context, the tools of social psychology can help to flesh-out, and give, precise, measurable substance to the well-known observation that there is no such thing as “purely linguistic issues”. Since languages are tightly connected to culture and social identities, attitude and intergroup relations are always in the background of virtually any LPP.

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