DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 140 378 CS 501 755

AUTHOR Lukens, Janet G.
TITLE Ethnocentric Speech: Its Nature and Implications.
PUB DATE Apr 76
NOTE 29p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Communication Association (Portland, Oregon, April 13-17, 1976); Background of document is dark

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Distance; *Ethnocentrism; *Intergroup Relations; Interpersonal Relationship; *Language Research; *Language Variation; Literature Reviews; *Social Relations; *Sociolinguistics

ABSTRACT

Many linguists and sociolinguists are interested in the relationship between ethnocentrism and language and in how the desire of ethnic groups to maintain their cultural distinctiveness influences linguistic variation. This paper suggests diverse ways in which ethnocentrism and the desire to increase social distance may be realized on several linguistic levels. Specifically, it is suggested that different intensities of ethnocentrism and the extent to which one desires to increase social distance are realized by different types of variation in phonology, syntax, semantics, discourse structure, and idiomatic expression. The various types of linguistic diversity, as influenced by different degrees of ethnocentrism, are discussed in relation to three communicative distances: indifference, avoidance, and disparagement. (Author/AA)

ETHNOCENTRIC SPEECH: ITS NATURE AND IMPLICATIONS

Janet G. Lukens
Department of Speech
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, Illinois 62901

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Janet G. Lukens
Department of Speech
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ABSTRACT

Recently, there has been increasing interest in studies and theories concerning the impact of social and psychological variables on language behavior. Currently, many linguists and sociolinguists are interested in the relationship between ethnocentrism and language and in how the desire of ethnic groups to maintain their cultural distinctiveness influences linguistic variation. Yet despite extensive interest in these factors and in the use of linguistic devices to increase social distance, very little systematic research has been undertaken to determine the impact of different intensities of ethnocentrism and feelings of social distance on type of linguistic diversity. In recognition of this gap in linguistic research this paper suggests diverse ways in which ethnocentrism and the desire to increase social distance may be realized on several linguistic levels. Specifically, it is suggested that different intensities of ethnocentrism and extent to which one desires to increase social distance are realized by different types of variation in phonology, syntax, semantics, discourse structure and idiomatic expressions. The various types of linguistic diversity, as influenced by different degrees of ethnocentrism, are discussed in relation to three communicative distances: (1) the distance of indifference, (2) the distance of avoidance and (3) the distance of disparagement. (Linguistic variation, language and ethnic identity, communicative distance, ethnocentrism, sociolinguistics)

ETHNOCENTRIC SPEECH: ITS NATURE AND IMPLICATIONS[1]

INTRODUCTION

Within the past two decades, there has been an increasing volume of publications pertaining to the influence of social variables on linguistic forms. Recently, many sociolinguists and other scholars have become interested in the relationship between language and ethnic identity. Yet in spite of the emerging interest in language and ethnic identity, most empirical studies have been limited in focus and have shed very little light on the exact nature of the relationship. Some scholars maintain that language influences ethnic identity and that it plays an important role in delimiting national and ethnic boundaries. Others have contended that ethnic identity influences language.

Although some research has indicated that ethnocentrism and language loyalty, the reactivation of a traditional language or ethnic dialect for common usage in everyday life, are intimately related (Fishman, 1973; Weinreich, 1958), the findings of other researchers have been conflicting (Riley, 1975). Another area of considerable interest, but one also laden with conflicting views, is the relationship between terms containing "white" and "black", which have positive and negative connotations respectively, and racism or ethnocentrism. Some writers have claimed that terms such as "black magic", "to blackball" and "black-

[1] This is a revised version of a paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Portland, Oregon, April, 1976. I wish to express my thanks to Howard Giles for his many valuable comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

list" stem from prejudice against blacks which has existed through the ages, and that terms such as "white lie", "white magic" and "Snow White" conversely have their origin in attitudes of cultural superiority by whites (Williams, 1965; Williams and Stabler, 1973). Other writers, on the other hand, have denied that the use of such terms is in any way related to racist or ethnocentric attitudes (Bosmajian, 1974).

Despite a lack of consistency in empirical findings concerning the relationship between language and ethnocentrism, research findings have generally indicated that attitudes towards one's own community and towards outsiders influence linguistic choices. Unlike the thought behind many sociolinguistic studies which have attempted to correlate single linguistic variables with attitudinal factors and with demographic characteristics, I maintain that different intensities of ethnocentrism will be linguistically realized on several linguistic dimensions. The various dimensions of language through which ethnocentrism may be expressed include variations in phonology, syntax, semantic structure, discourse structure and choice of idiomatic expressions. I propose that this linguistic variation will correspond to differences in the extent to which individuals of different ethnic and racial groups desire to create feelings of social distance.

The term, "ethnocentric speech", has been coined to refer to any manner of speaking which emerges as a result of ethnocentrism. Specifically, I maintain, that where ethnocentrism is low in inten-

sity, "ethnocentric speech" will be marked by fewer distinguishing characteristics than where it is of greater intensity.

ETHNOCENTRISM DEFINED

The Nature and Origin of Ethnocentrism:

Ethnocentrism has been defined in many ways. Some writers have defined it as the tendency to view one's own culture or ethnic group as the center of everything and others have defined it as being oblivious to points of view outside of one's culture. Still other social scientists have conceived of it as an unfounded belief that one's own culture is superior to all others, thus "justifying" disparagement of outgroups. Sumner (1906) in introducing the term into American Sociology described ethnocentrism as:

> . . . . the technical name for the view of things in which one's own group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it . . . Each group nourishes its own pride and vanity, boasts itself superior, exalts its own divinities and looks with contempt on outsiders . . . Each group thinks its own folkways are the right ones; and if it observes that other groups have other folkways, these excite its scorn (1906:13).

The varied definitions, I believe, reflect differences in intensity of ethnocentrism. For example, the definition that it is the tendency to apply the standards of one's own culture to human activities in other cultures (Downs, 1971) may characterize ethnocentrism that is fairly low in intensity. On the other hand, definitions which allude to

ingroup-outgroup behavior (ingroup loyalty and antipathy towards outgroups) would represent more intense ethnocentrism. Sumner (1906), accordingly, claimed that hatred of outsiders and increased loyalty toward the ingroup would inevitably result from ethnocentrism.

The question of whether ethnocentrism has its origin in social level variables or at the level of personalities has been widely debated. During the 1950's, a great many writings suggested that its origin could be attributed largely to psychological variables. Adorno et al. (1950) maintained that ethnocentrism resulted from authoritarianism, while Rokeach (1948) attributed it to mental rigidity, concreteness of thinking, and dogmatism. Srole (1950) criticized Adorno et al. for their failure to consider many important social, cultural and other psychological variables.

By contrast, other writers have maintained that ethnocentrism is primarily a social phenomenon originating in intergroup conflict. Accordingly, proponents of realistic group conflict theory claim that the "real" character of the outgroup enters as a cause of ethnocentrism (LeVine and Campbell, 1972). They contend that the nature and origin of ethnocentrism cannot be explained by psychological variables alone. Instead social and psychological factors are seen as operating concomitantly.

The Linguistic Realization of Ethnocentrism:

Sociolinguists have long been interested in the social backgrounds of speakers and hearers and the types of linguistic diversi-

ties they produce. Specifically, these researchers have been concerned with trying to identify the manner in which variables such as social class, occupation, age, sex and attitudes influence linguistic structure. Labov (1972a) found that high centralization of diphthongs /aw/ and /ay/ by up-islanders on Martha's Vineyard reflected a highly possessive attitude towards the island and resentment of intrusion from outsiders, while the less centralized speech forms of down-islanders corresponded with weaker feelings of identity with the island way of life and a lesser resentment of outsiders (summer visitors from the mainland). In a similar but more controlled study of speech patterns in New York City, Labov (1966) found that use, versus deletion, of postvocalic /r/ varied with differences in social stratification and patterns of mobility. Persons desiring to identify with higher socio-economic classes more frequently used postvocalic /r/.

As a result of the research of Labov and other sociolinguists understanding of linguistic variations has been greatly advanced. Subsequently, much of what linguists once thought were linguistic forms in "free variation" were realized to be quite systematically conditioned by social factors. However, despite the great strides made by sociolinguists, all linguistic variation cannot be accounted for by social factors alone. Rather Lindenfeld (1972) emphasizes the need for linguists to broaden their perspectives and to consider the impact of interpersonal variables on linguistic variation.

Thus far, people's moods, motives, attitudes, loyalties, prejudices and other feelings have tended to be overlooked as if they have no impact on language. In response to this gap in linguistic research, Giles and Powesland (1975) and Giles (1976) have suggested that three types of speech strategies, namely, speech convergence, language maintenance and speech divergence, can result in linguistic variation otherwise puzzling to sociolinguists. Bourhis and Giles (in press) have maintainted that in intergroup interaction ingroup members may employ communicative strategies in order to maintain their cultural distinctiveness from outgroups. One means is through emphasizing their own national accent, dialect or language (speech divergence). Moreover, Peng (1974), like the aforementioned, similarly maintained that social psychological phenomena and interpersonal factors can influence language behavior. He introduced the concept of "communicative distance" as a means for explaining linguistic diversity that reflects a speaker's attitudes towards an interlocutor.

A "communicative distance", like speech convergence, language maintenance and speech divergence, Peng maintained is realized by the manipulation of linguistic characteristics. Accent and lexical items, for example, may be intentionally varied so as to generate different feelings of social distance versus feelings of cooperation and closeness. Peng describes a communicative distance as follows:

> A communicative distance cannot be measured directly. It is not even visible. But we can be sure of its presence when we hear

certain words and expressions. In other words, our awareness of a communicative distance in the midst of a conversation depends to a large extent on certain linguistic devices which serve, from the speaker's point of view, to set up the communicative distance, or, from the hearer's point of view to let the hearer know that it has already been set up by the speaker (1974:33).

Since ethnocentrism and its product, "ethnocentric speech", emanate from both sociological and psychological variables, Peng's concept of communicative distance is employed to facilitate understanding of variation in language behavior. Specifically, his concept is expanded to include three communicative distances. These are: 1) the distance of indifference, 2) the distance of avoidance, and 3) the distance of disparagement. Each communicative distance, it is proposed, will exhibit distinct linguistic characteristics and speech style which will tend to distinguish it from the others.

While the three communicative distances are seen as different with respect to their disparate intergroup functions and the predispositions of persons who establish them, they are not to be considered mutually exclusive. Rather the characteristics seen as typifying one of the communicative distances may also be present in either of the other two, but probably to a much lesser degree. Thus, I propose that while different linguistic characteristics and speech styles will tend to characterize each of the communicative distances, at the same time there may be some degree of overlap

between the three communicative distances. The respective speech styles and linguistic characteristics associated with each are described below.

ETHNOCENTRIC SPEECH AND COMMUNICATIVE DISTANCES

Ethnocentric speech is conceived of as a speech style constituting specific linguistic characteristics that reflect different degrees of ethnocentrism. It also is seen as a speech strategy used to increase feelings of social distance between ingroups and outgroups. Specifically its nature will vary depending on type of interpersonal functions represented and the extent to which one desires to create social distance with outgroups. Essentially different interpersonal functions are associated with each of the three communicative distances. Thus, speech in accordance with the three communicative distances may be used: (1) to demonstrate lack of concern for persons of other cultures and reflect an insensitivity to cultural differences (the distance of indifference), (2) to demonstrate a desire to limit or avoid interaction with outroups (the distance of avoidance), and (3) to demonstrate feelings of hostility towards outgroups and a desire to belittle them (the distance of disparagement). The three interpersonal functions as presented here, I propose, are associated with increasingly higher intensities of ethnocentrism.

In general, all linguistic variation associated with ethnocentric speech, from the least to the most pronounced forms, will enhance feelings of ingroup loyalty while at the same time serve to make the ingroup

psycholinguistically and culturally distinct from competing outgroups. The types of linguistic variation associated with ethnocentric speech including variation in phonology, syntactic structure, lexical items, discourse structure and phraseology, I maintain, will differ in both degree and kind with increasing intensities of ethnocentrism. Furthermore, it will vary depending on whether ingroup members are conversing with other ingroup members or with outsiders. The various characteristics associated with different intensities of ethnocentrism and with the different communicative distances are presented below:

The Distance of Indifference (low ethnocentrism):

The distance of indifference is established where intergroup tension is low and little or no threat is perceived from outgroups. Where this distance is established linguistic characteristics serve to express feelings of indifference and insensitivity towards members of other cultures. Ethnocentrism is low and speech forms ultimately reflect the view that one's own culture is the center of everything.

In accord with the view that one's culture is the center of everything, ethnocentric speech associated with this distance bears much similarity to Piaget's egocentric speech. The two are alike in that they both reflect an insensitivity and lack of understanding of a listener's perspectives. Egocentric speech, however, differs from ethnocentric speech in that its characteristics reflect an inability to decender despite cultural differences, whereas ethnocentric speech only arises where such differences are present and one or both listener's are insensitive to them. The two also are different

in that ethnocentric speech is as characteristic of adults as of children as it reflects an insensitivity to cultural differences, whereas egocentric speech is viewed as language behavior that arises during an early stage of language acquisition in children (Piaget, 1955).

In communicating with persons of other cultures, individuals may frequently employ linguistic styles inappropriate to immediate situations. This often can be attributed to their insensitivity to expectations of the culture. Such characteristics, reflecting cultural insensitivity, are often observed in visitors abroad who think that they have a good grasp of the language or dialect used in the host culture. Peng (1974), for example, pointed out that Oriental visitors to the United States frequently may misuse address forms in conversing with colleagues and superiors. This may result from the unfamiliarity of these visitors with the socio-linguistic rules governing the use of address forms in varied situations. Specifically he claimed that many Oriental exchange students in interacting in formal classroom situations as well as informal settings will continue to use the title "Professor" or "Dr." long after their American peers and contemporaries have resorted to using the professors' first names.

The assumption that words have exact translations across languages also exemplifies ethnocentric speech reflecting cultural insensitivity and unwillingness to decenter. Barna (1972), for instance, reported that people often cling to the meaning of a

word regardless of the context, content, and possible alternative connotations. The belief that words have only one meaning may give ethnocentric speech a rigid quality, e.g., its lack of variety of lexical items.

The use of "foreigner talk", a stylized form of speech used for conversing with foreigners, similarly may characterize the distance of indifference. Although "foreigner talk" sometimes is used out of necessity, it also often arises where ethnocentrism is of low intensity and is largely unintentional. Its characteristics include slow, loud speech, exaggerated pronunciation and several means for "simplifying" speech, e.g., the deletion of articles and increased use of infinitives in place of other forms. Ferguson (1975) reported that the nature of "foreigner talk" is largely uniform across languages. Downs (1971) described his own and other's use of "foreigner talk" as follows:

> We tend to believe that, if we speak slowly enough or loudly enough, anyone can understand us. I have done this myself quite without realizing it, and others have tried to reach me in the same way in Japanese, Chinese, Thai, Punjabi, Navajo, Spanish, Tibetan, and Singhalese (1971:19).

Just as speech used with foreigners often is stylized, that used by members of the dominant culture in conversing with members of minority groups also may be stylized. A perfect example is patronizing speech or "pidgin-nigger-talk" which Fanon (1961) claimed is commonly used by whites in communicating with blacks.

According to him, the whiteman in addressing the black often behaves like an adult with a child and starts "smirking, whispering, patronizing, and cozening". This leaves the black feeling that he or she has been stereotyped as "subhuman" or "childish".

"Nondescriptions" are another characteristic of ethnocentric speech associated with the distance of indifference. These consist of adjectives which contain negative prefixes and particles. They are used by persons who are unfamiliar with a culture but who yet, nevertheless, attempt to describe it. Two examples, ones frequently used by whites in reference to Native Americans, consist of "unambitious" and "non-goal oriented". Gearing (1970) makes the following observation concerning the misuse of the "nondescription", "unambitious", by white Iowans to "describe" the Fox Indians:

> "Ambition" is an item from some unexamined list of behavior familiar to one group of Western man; it covers very diverse actions and is seen as a single category of behavior because the cultural tradition of that group has so defined it. To most Westerners, the word unites actions that to the Fox must have seemed to fall into several quite distinct Fox categories (~~1970~~:68).

Accordingly, the use of "nondescriptions" reveals less about the character of an outgroup than about the attitudes of those who employ such terms. More specifically their use by ingroup members suggests ignorance of or disregard for the perspectives of another culture.

Still another characteristic of ethnocentric speech, one also associated with the distance of indifference, is the use of lexical items and idiomatic expressions displaying racist overtones, some possible examples being "black sheep", "black looks" and "black magic". Yet, as mentioned earlier, some have questioned the relationship between these terms and racism or ethnocentrism. Other more convincing examples, however, would include expressions such as "the Negro problem", implying that the blackman is the problem, "nonverbal" or "language deficient child", used in reference to a child whose language or dialect happens to be different from that of the dominant culture, and "culturally deprived" which, like a "nondescription", reveals very little about the traditions, beliefs, and life style of a people. Similarly, the terms "Negro" and "colored" used in politeness especially by whites in the United States also characterize ethnocentric speech. Although in some situations the above and similar terms and expressions may reflect strong feelings of prejudice, in many instances their use probably stems from ethnocentrism which is of low intensity.

Finally, language maintenance and resistance to adjusting one's speech, despite recognition of cultural differences may characterize ethnocentric speech. Specifically, speakers may adhere to a distinct "ethnic speech style" even though modification of it might be more expedient for maintaining positive intergroup feelings. Such linguistic behavior is consonant with a low intensity of ethnocentrism and in turn with the distance of indifference.

The Distance of Avoidance (moderate ethnocentrism):

The distance of avoidance is established where ingroup members perceive some threat and competition from outgroups but not as extreme in intensity as that associated with the distance of disparagement (to be described next). This distance is established by ingroup members as a consequence of wanting to avoid or minimize interaction with outgroups. Ingroup members in trying to isolate themselves from outsiders may emphasize their ethnic speech patterns. The emphasizing of an ethnic dialect and other linguistic differences between the ingroup and outsiders may be purposefully used by ingroup members to make themselves appear esoteric so as to discourage and limit ingroup-outgroup interaction. Essentially, speech style and linguistic characteristics of ethnocentric speech associated with this distance may serve the following basic functions: (1) to lengthen communicative distance with outgroups (2) to enhance feelings of ingroup loyalty (3) to emphasize the distinctiveness of the ingroup and its difference from the outgroup and (4) to facilitate ingroup members in their effort to limit or avoid interaction with an outgroup or several outgroups.

Language loyalty, the reactivation of a traditional language or ethnic speech style for everyday use, characterizes this distance. It serves to solidify the ingroup and is used to increase feelings of social distance with outsiders. By adhering to and accentuating the use of a traditional language or ethnic speech style, members of ingroups emphasize their cultural distinctiveness and limit their

interaction with outsiders. Often, language loyalty arises in potentially threatening situations with outgroups where ingroup members feel compelled to emphasize their ethnic identity. Weinreich (1958) furthermore pointed out that language loyalty breeds in contact just as nationalism breeds on ethnic borders.

Other characteristics of ethnocentric speech associated with the distance of avoidance and which function to limit amount of interaction with outgroups are increased use of exophoric pronouns (pronouns whose references are in contexts outside of sentences), increased use of abbreviated speech forms and reduction in the number of qualifiers in sentences. Bernstein (1967; 1973) maintained that with the restricted code these characteristics emerge among persons and in situations where feelings, ideas, and thoughts are shared and where enormous amounts of information can be taken for granted. With ethnocentric speech, on the other hand, its diverse linguistic characteristics including abbreviated speech forms, exophoric pronouns and reduction in number of qualifiers in addition to enhancing feelings of ingroup loyalty, I maintain, also function to limit amount of interaction between ingroups and outgroups. Thus, while the characteristics of the restricted code and those of ethnocentric speech share many similarities their functions are different. Moreover, with ethnocentric speech the aforementioned characteristics are used essentially for the purpose of maintaining and increasing social distance with outsiders and to withhold from them information and feelings.

Solidarity terms similarly may be used by ingroup members wishing to establish the distance of avoidance in speeches and conversations as a means of maintaining social distance between themselves and outgroups. Their use along with ethnic dialects facilitates the development of linguistic self-respect among members of particular ethnic groups. Terms such as "black power", "black is beautiful", "red power" and "right on", often are strategically used throughout speeches to instill feelings of cultural pride.

> The writings and speeches of leaders of militant groups -- including the Black militants -- are cast in Standard English grammar, with a certain number of quotations from the vernacular inserted. Many listeners will hear this as Black English (Labov, 1973: 121).

Accentuated use of specific phonological, syntactic and lexical characteristics also characterize ethnocentric speech. David W. Reed (cited by Sawyer, 1973 and Giles, Bourhis and Taylor, (in press)), discusses the manner in which Anglos in the southwestern United States have attempted to dissociate themselves from Spanish Americans through consciously refraining from the use of certain phonological patterns:

> Patio with the vowel of father [ɑ] occurs everywhere in the United States -- perhaps side by side with the vowel of hat [a]. Only in the Southwest is the [ɑ] pronunciation scrupulously avoided by middle class Anglos who seem to want to distance themselves from the Spanish pronunciation of that word (Giles et al, 1977 in press).

The distance of avoidance also may be set up by ingroup members through the adoption of new social dialects or the use of a dialect associated with specific geographical regions. Many blacks whose parents or grandparents have migrated to northern cities from the south, for example have reverted to using and emphasizing colloquial expressions and other dialect features associated with the southern part of the United States. McDavid (1951) maintained that the adoption of dialects from different geographical areas and invention of new social dialects by ethnic and racial groups are associated with high intergroup tension.

Finally, extensive use of jargons, cants, and argots also characterizes ethnocentric speech. The use of these speech forms by members of ingroups reflects their desire to isolate themselves from outsiders and to increase social distance. Their use by various sects, interest groups, professions and ethnic enclaves as well as by subcultures such as homosexuals serves to enhance feelings of cultural identity. By the same token, these speech forms also serve to make the ingroup appear esoteric to outsiders thus limiting amount of interaction between them and outgroups. With higher intensities of ethnocentrism, one can expect increased use of jargons, cants, and argots.

The Distance of Disparagement (high ethnocentrism):

The distance of disparagement is established where ingroups and outgroups compete for the same resources and perceive one another as highly threatening. Where resources are especially scarce ethnocentrism

will be of extreme intensity. The greater the extent to which an ingroup member perceives that his ethnic identity and the welfare of his group are threatened by an outgroup the greater the likelihood that he will employ linguistic characteristics and speech styles typifying the distance of disparagement. Linguistic characteristics demarcating this distance are used to disparage outgroups.

The use of pejorative expressions to distinguish one's own ethnic group or social class from others is characteristic to ethnocentric speech associated with the distance of disparagement. Davis et al. (1941) in a case study reported that different social classes and ethnic groups in a southern community in attempting to distinguish themselves from other social classes frequently use such expressions as "people not our kind", "snobs trying to push their way up" and "good people, but nobody".

Ethnic or national slurs intended to poke fun at alleged national or ethnic traits also are often used to disparage outgroups. However, the use of such speech forms does not always reflect a desire by the ingroup to attack outsiders as in some instances these may be merely used in jest (Dundes, 1971). Where not meant as a serious attack on an outgroup these speech forms (ethnic and national slurs and ethnic jokes) may serve to offset tension -- the hearer knowing from tone of voice and other nonverbal cues that they should not be taken seriously. These speech forms, however, in the majority of cases are used for the purpose of demeaning a given outgroup.

Imitation or mockery of the speech styles of outgroups also may be characteristic of ethnocentric speech associated with the distance of disparagement. Speech forms intended for the purpose of mimicking the speech patterns of an outgroup usually arise where ethnocentrism is fairly intense and ingroup members wish to disparage and deride the outgroup. For example, such expressions as "hey man", and "soul brother" may be contemptuously used by whites to ridicule blacks. Similarly, whites also may imitate the phonology and rhythm patterns of black English yet in a facetious manner.

Finally, the use of ethnophaulisms, derogatory nicknames for different racial and ethnic groups, also characterizes ethnocentric speech associated with the distance of disparagement. Ethnophaulisms and other forms of verbal abuse, including "flettoric" or four letter rhetoric, similarly occur where ethnocentrism is of extreme intensity. Palmore (1962) has suggested that the number of ethnophaulisms used by a culture or subculture towards outsiders is associated with the intensity of ethnocentrism of the given ethnic or racial group. By the same token, one also could speculate that the number of ethnophaulisms and frequency of use by given individuals would indicate the intensity of such persons' ethnocentrism. By reinforcing disparaging evaluations of outgroup members, ethnophaulisms lengthen communicative distance.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Just as sociolinguistic studies have provided much valuable information concerning the relationship between linguistic characteristics and level of education, status differences and differences in attitudes within a culture, a study of ethnocentric speech could reveal important information concerning feelings of animosity exhibited towards outgroups versus acceptance of different cultures. The linguistic characteristics associated with ethnocentric speech and with the different communicative distances could serve as indices of degree of ethnocentrism and feelings of social distance evidenced in intergroup situations. Tape recordings of conversations could be analyzed for the purpose of determining degree of ethnocentrism exhibited in various intergroup situations.

An analysis of speech samples for degree of ethnocentrism also could prove useful in determining intensity of culture shock. An instrument for this purpose could be constructed by correlating the various characteristics of ethnocentric speech associated with each of the three communicative distances with different stages of adjustment to a new culture. The various stages of adjustment as proposed by Oberg (1966) could be very useful for this purpose. His four stages consist of: 1) Anxiety and rejection of the environment seen as causing the discomfort, 2) Regression and desire to return to the home environment -- avoidance of the host culture, 3) Tolerance yet nonacceptance of the host culture, and 4) Acceptance and recognition

that members of the host culture and the customs, values and practices they observe are just another way of living equally as viable as one's own way of life. I maintain that the characteristics of ethnocentric speech associated with the distance of disparagement may typify Stage 1, while those associated with the distance of avoidance and distance of indifference may characterize Stages 2 and 3, respectively. By understanding the four stages of adjustment and characteristics of ethnocentric speech associated with each stage one could determine the stage a person is at in coping with culture shock.

Finally, I maintain that the concept of ethnocentric speech could be of great value to pragmatists in their development, implementation and evaluation of programs of study in foreign countries as well as for the evaluation of domestic efforts designed to improve intergroup relations. The speech of participants in human relations workshops, for example, could be recorded periodically and analyzed to keep abreast of changes in the effectiveness of such endeavors. Where efforts are found ineffective recommendations could then be made for introducing modifications.

At this point the concept of ethnocentric speech is still in its formative stage. Once fully developed the concept should prove highly useful to linguists, sociolinguists, psychologists, communication scholars and pragmatists alike. The concept represents a direction in which linguistics and sociolinguistics should proceed

as for too long interpersonal variables such as moods, prejudices and feelings of loyalty have been ignored. Hopefully this paper will serve as a catalyst to stimulate investigations of the role of language in increasing feelings of social distance in intergroup conflict situations and under different conditions reflecting varied degrees of perceived "ethnic threat". Empirical investigations of speech divergence in intergroup situations have been too limited as most linguists and sociolinguists have displayed greater interest in speech convergence, the tendency for an individual to shift his speech in the direction of that of an interlocutor. It is time that scholars, interested in language as it functions in social interaction, begin focusing their attention on speech divergence, ethnocentric speech being one specialized type of speech divergence, as opposed to confining their efforts to research regarding speech convergence.

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