

Predicting Willingness to Communicate in French: Affiliation and Control Motives

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Introduction

- Why do some people use their second language (L2) more often than others?
- Individual difference variables predict this choice: lower anxiety, higher perceived competence, social support, motivation for L2 learning, self-confidence, opportunities for L2 interaction, etc.
- WTC plays a role, especially when there is choice in using or not using the L2 (Clément, Baker & MacIntyre, 2003)

Introduction

- Choice implies the exercise of personal control
 - Control (broadly defined as influencing the action of another person) is a basic motive (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei & Noels, 1998)
 - Control has not been studied often in L2 (except for ‘Machiavellian orientation’, Gardner & Lambert 1972)

- Changes in L1 and L2 identity may mediate the link between developing competence and WTC (Rubenfeld et al., 2006)

Research Questions:

- Is the link between perceived L2 competence and L2 WTC mediated by changes in L2 identity?
 - Fully, Partially, Not at all?

- Are control motives related to WTC in French?



Research Context

- English speakers learning French in a relatively monolingual context in Nova Scotia
- With less frequent contact in the French, choice becomes more relevant and a Francophone identity more difficult to construct and maintain.
- This implicates choice as a critical process.

Participants

- Undergraduate French Students
- (N = 108)
- 34.3% Male ; 63% Female ; 2.7% Missing
- 89.8% had English as their First Language
- 62.9% had at least partial French Immersion
- 65.7% said contact with French speakers was “Not at all frequent”

Scales and Reliability

- Desire for Control¹ ($\alpha = .76$)
- Spheres of Control² ($\alpha = .69$)
- Identification with Anglophones ($\alpha = .96$)
- Identification with Francophones ($\alpha = .95$)
- Willingness to Communicate ($\alpha = .96$)
- Perceived Competence ($\alpha = .94$)

1. (Berger, 1985)

2. (Paulhus & Van Selst, 1990)



Nine Speaking Contexts:

1. Teaching Assistant
2. Sales Clerk
3. Acquaintances at a Party
4. School Administration Clerk
5. Bus Driver
6. Close Friend about personal problems
7. Teacher
8. Restaurant Server
9. Close Friend about Aspirations

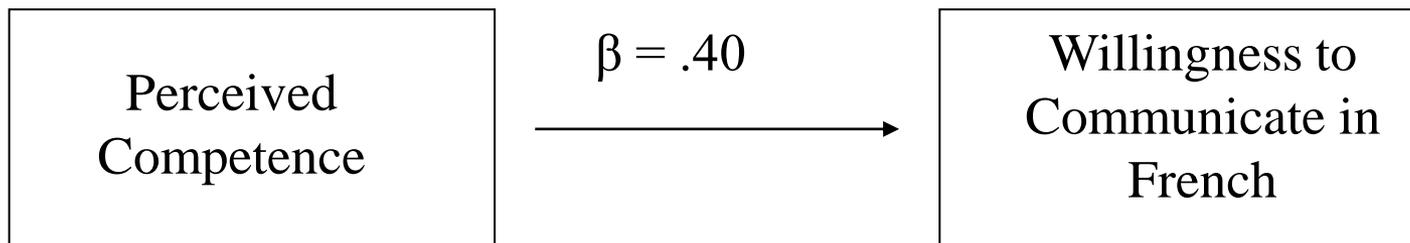
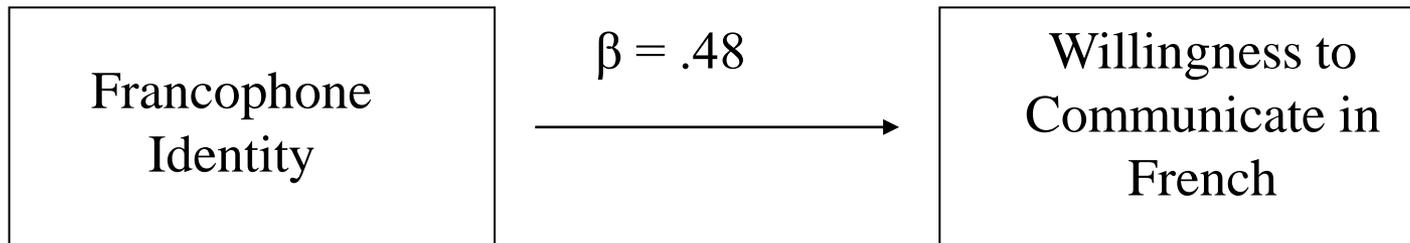
Questionnaire Example

1. You are talking with a teaching assistant whose first language is French about a course assignment

Not at all Anglophone	<u>(1)</u>	<u>(2)</u>	<u>(3)</u>	<u>(4)</u>	<u>(5)</u>	Very Anglophone
Not at all Francophone	<u>(1)</u>	<u>(2)</u>	<u>(3)</u>	<u>(4)</u>	<u>(5)</u>	Very Francophone
Not at all Willing to Speak French	<u>(1)</u>	<u>(2)</u>	<u>(3)</u>	<u>(4)</u>	<u>(5)</u>	Very Willing to Speak French
Not at all Competent	<u>(1)</u>	<u>(2)</u>	<u>(3)</u>	<u>(4)</u>	<u>(5)</u>	Very Competent

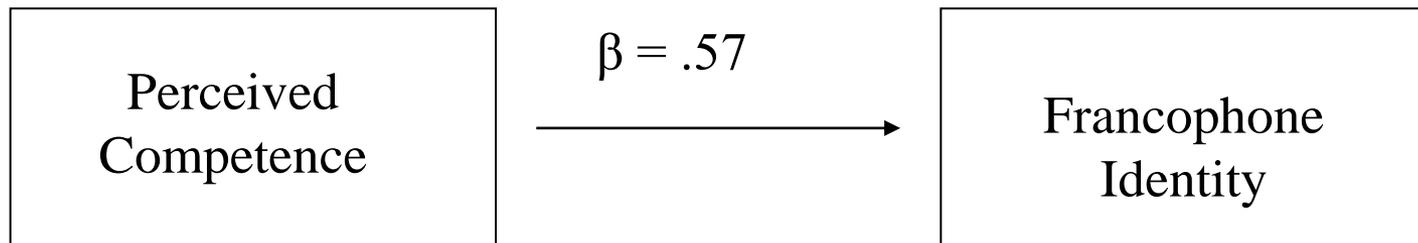
Results

- Both Perceived Competence and Francophone Identity predict WTC in French



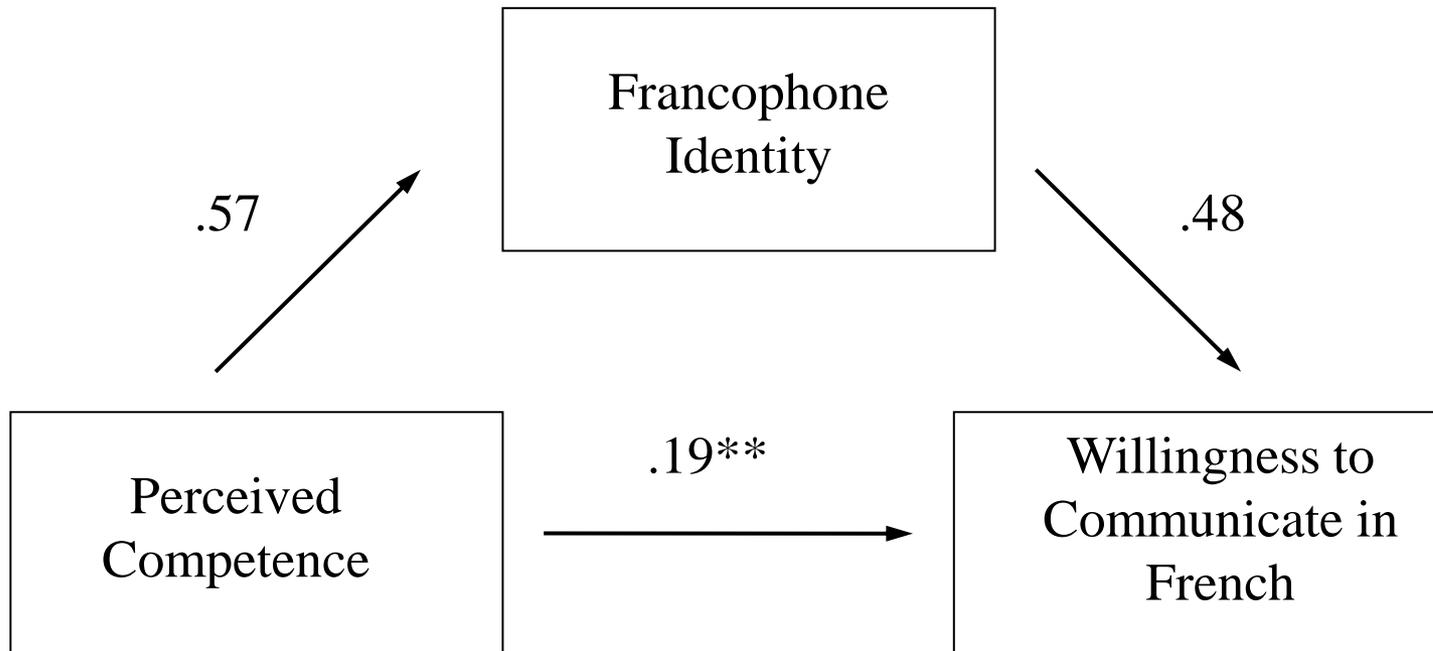
Results

- Perceived Competence is also a strong predictor of Francophone Identity. Based on these three results, mediation may be occurring.



Complete Mediation Occurs

- Sobel's Test = 3.74, $p < .0005$



** This regression is nonsignificant, $p > .05$

Anglophone Identity is Negatively Related to Francophone Identity

Note: Listwise deletion of missing values was used (N = 96):

$\chi^2 (96) = 5.77, p > .05$

$\chi^2 / df = 1.93$

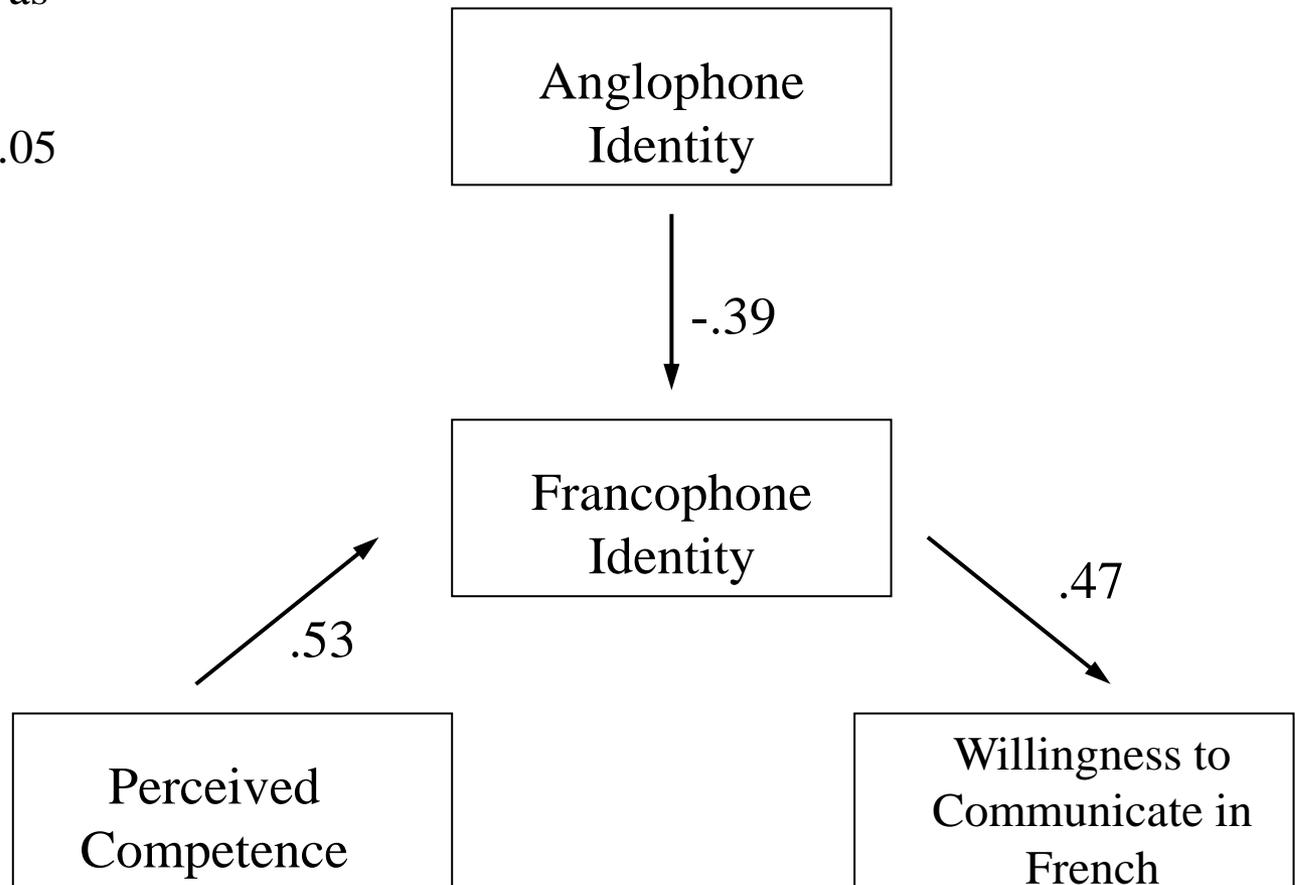
GFI = 0.97

aGFI = 0.90

NFI = 0.94

CFI = 0.97

RMSEA = .099



Control Motives Were NOT related to Willingness to Communicate in French

- Desire for Control
 - Exception: When talking to a Sales Clerk in French ($\beta = .25$)
- Spheres of Control
 - Exceptions: When talking to a Sales Clerk ($\beta = -.19$) or a Clerk for Course Enrollment ($\beta = .20$)
- Interestingly, control motives only seemed to have an effect when someone is doing something FOR you.
- However, future research is necessary: The findings on control motives are not particularly strong.

Discussion

- For Anglophones, L2 competence does not directly predict WTC in French.
 - Competence impacts the propensity to speak in a L2 if it leads to a positive identification with the L2 group

- This result is congruent with prior research (Clément, Baker & MacIntyre, 2003; Rubenfeld et al, 2006)

Discussion

- Anglophone and Francophone identities are negatively related in this sample, likely because the sample was drawn from a predominantly monolingual (English) community
- Control motives did not contribute significantly to predicting WTC, except in very specific situations
- Future research could examine the impact of control motives within a Francophone sample.