



The closer one checks to one of the poles in the scale, the more heavily weighted is his response in terms of the particular extreme. A particular numerical value is assigned on this basis for computation of the results. For example, starting with 0 as the midpoint, each scale may have a value of +1, +2, and +3 (immediately contiguous to the positive side of the adjectival pole), or -1, -2, and -3 (immediately contiguous to the negative side of the pole). Using the technique of factor analysis, researchers have found evidence indicating that the judgments tend to cluster into three main domains of connotative meaning, including the dimension of *evaluation* (e.g., good-bad, positive-negative), *potency* (strong-weak, dull-sharp), and *activity* (fast-slow, difficult-easy). By employing the semantic-differential technique, it is possible to compare reactions to different concepts on a positive-negative continuum rather than by means of binary choice. Used properly, the semantic differential can be a useful tool for getting at subjective reactions to speech and speech concepts.

The typical problem with questionnaires used to elicit subjective reactions involves the disparity between expressed attitudes and overt behavior. In an effort to look at the responses between these two poles, Fishman has designed an instrument labeled the *Commitment Measure*. His study, carried out with respect to bilingualism, sought to determine 'whether commitment items show any greater relationship to pertinent language behavior criteria than do more traditional dispositional or role playing language use and language attitude items' (1969: 5). In addition to the traditional types of attitudinal responses asked on his questionnaire, Fishman included a ten-item commitment scale in which a person's willingness or commitment to respond or perform a particular type of activity with respect to language was measured. The type of questions Fishman asked were calculated to measure a person's willingness to maintain and strengthen the use of Spanish on a personal and community level in New York City, and ranged from willingness to participate in a small-group discussion on the topic of improving the person's command of Spanish to willingness to contribute money to help finance the activities of an association for building up the use of Spanish in New York. When the commitment questions were correlated with the previously given noncommitment attitude scale, a significant difference arose. Commitment measures as a data-gathering technique are more useful than traditional attitude questionnaires because they can more directly get at behavioral tendencies rather than eliciting simple cognitive or evaluative responses.

So far, we have only referred to subjective reactions made on the basis of a fieldworker's questioning or a written questionnaire. But we can also use other types of stimuli in eliciting subjective reactions to speech. The elicitation of responses from tape-recorded samples of speech is one of the current techniques used to considerable extent in the study of social dialects. One such method, originally developed by Lambert and his

colleagues at McGill University for evaluating personality traits of bilinguals, has been labeled the *Matched Guise Technique*. In this procedure, a select group of subjects evaluates the personality traits of speakers' voices played to them on the tape recorder. The recording is made by a speaker who has considerable ability in producing different language or dialect varieties. The subjects are not told that the different varieties heard on the tape belong to one speaker, but are simply asked to judge certain traits of the speaker. . . . The major advantage of this technique is that it controls a number of variables such as the voice quality and personality of the speaker. One of the disadvantages is that it is sometimes difficult to find speakers who have acquired nativelike control of the various social dialects we might require to produce such a tape.

Rather than use one speaker, some researchers have had speakers from different social groups simply read the same passage. This is the technique that Bryden (1968) used in his study of the identification of social class and race in Charlottesville, Virginia. The use of a tape-recording in this case sets up an artificial situation, however, because most speakers are unable to read in a natural speaking manner. For this reason, other investigators have simply extracted topically comparable passages (e.g. TV programs, games, etc.) from tape-recorded spontaneous interviews rather than using identical passages that have been read. Although variables such as content and voice quality are much more difficult to control, this has the advantage of authenticity. This is the type of stimuli that was used by Shuy, Baratz, and Wolfram in their study of speech identification in Detroit and Washington (1969). In this study 20 to 30-second portions were excerpted for the interviews of four socioeconomic classes of whites and blacks in Detroit. At the conclusion of the main passages, a number of short portions (one sentence of from 3 to 5 seconds) were included in order to determine reactions on the basis of much shorter stimuli. For each of the longer passages, subjects were asked to identify the race of the speaker, as well as the relative socioeconomic class, and to make some attitudinal judgments on a semantic differential. This was presented as follows:

- a. What is the race of this speaker? Black ( ) White ( )
- b. What is the educational/occupational level of this speaker?
  - ( ) 1. College graduate usually with graduate training.
    - ( ) Dentist, mechanical engineer, personnel manager.
    - ( ) High school graduate, probably some college or technical school. Printer, post office clerk, small business owner or manager.
  - ( ) 3. Some high school or high school graduate.
    - ( ) Bus driver, carpenter, telephone lineman.
    - ( ) 4. Not beyond 8th grade.
      - ( ) Dishwasher, night watchman, construction laborer.

c. Rate the speech sample on each of the following scales:

awkward	.....
relaxed	.....
formal	.....
thin	.....
correct	.....
graceful	.....
tense	.....
informal	.....
thick	.....
incorrect	.....

In most cases, repeated passages of from 20 to 30 seconds were more than adequate for making judgments of the type we asked above. In fact, fairly accurate identification (over 70 percent) of race and social class was often made just on the basis of the 3 to 5-second sentence. It should be noted that questions concerning a wide range of reactions may be asked on the basis of tape-recorded passages. For example, we have used tape-recorded passages as the basis for obtaining data on language and employability. Labov asked questions about masculine virtues such as toughness on the basis of tape-recorded passages and concluded on this basis that the use of nonstandard dialects has a positive effect on this deducting some societal roles that call for expressed toughness. The types of reactions that we may have subjects make on the basis of recorded speech samples are almost limitless.

Recent studies of language attitudes have also utilized videotapes to some advantage (e.g. Williams, Whitehead, and Miller 1971; Williams 1973). In the study of language attitudes and stereotyping reported by Williams (1973), stereotyping was investigated by using videotapes from three different ethnic groups: black, white, and Chicano. In one of the exercises, the respondents were shown side views of children speaking. The respondent could observe the person speaking, but was unable to lip-read what he was saying. Audiotapes of Standard English were then dubbed onto the videotapes of the children from the three different groups to create a type of *ethnic guise*. Stereotyping was measured by looking at the extent to which the visual picture determined a particular reaction despite the constancy of the Standard English. Modern technology affords the creative researcher a great deal of variety in designing ways of 'teasing out' various dimensions of subjective reactions to language differences.

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