The Burden of Choice: Deciding Between English and French Education in Quebec

Jennifer Ryan

A Thesis
in
The Department
of
Education

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts (Educational Studies) at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

March 2016

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
School of Graduate Studies

This is to certify that the thesis prepared

By: Jennifer Ryan

Entitled: The Burden of Choice: Deciding Between English and French Education in Quebec

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts (Educational Studies)

complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Signed by the final examining committee:

_____Adeela Arshad-Ayaz_____ Chair

_____Ailie Cleghorn_____ Examiner

_____Arpi Hamalian_____ Examiner

_____David Waddington_____ Supervisor

Approved by _____
Chair of Department or Graduate Program Director

_____
Dean of Faculty

Date ___March 30th, 2016_____

ABSTRACT

The Burden of Choice: Deciding Between English and French Education in Quebec

Jennifer Ryan

The laws governing public and government-subsidized education in the province of Quebec, Canada, make for a unique situation in which few parents have the luxury – or the burden, as the case may be – of choosing the language of instruction that their child will receive. The decision-making process is often fraught with concerns over which system – French or English – will better serve the child as he or she prepares for a future in the province. The following thesis reports on how parents experience deciding which system best suits their children and the parents' perspectives on the outcomes of their decision.

Acknowledgements

Merci à Robert; your unwavering support saw me through all of the ups and downs of this endeavour. Je t'aime.

Thank you to Richard for being my constant cheerleader and to Mom and Dad for encouraging me to always follow my heart in my studies.

Thank you to Ailie for helping me shape, finalize and submit my thesis proposal so many moons ago; to Arpi for your feedback and advice during my proposal and thesis defences, and of course to David for your patience, feedback, and encouragement, which kept me going and allowed me to see this through to the end.

Dedication

For Mom, Ayrton, and Baby Girl Lestourneau

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter One: Introduction

> (…) a community's education of its young is one of the building blocks on which its future is founded. If it leaves the education of its young people to others, others will eventually define its cultural values and choose its social priorities" (*Task Force on English Language Education*, February 1992, as cited in Jedwab, 2004, p. 32)

Over the last fifty years, there has been much debate about language policy in the province of Quebec, particularly when it comes to policy surrounding the language of instruction in the province's primary and secondary schools. Said debate is largely grounded in the concern that the prevalence of the English language, particularly in North America but also globally as a *lingua franca*, poses a threat to the vitality of the French language and French-Canadian culture in the province of Quebec. One significant reaction to this perceived threat was the enactment of The *Charter of the French Language* in 1977, more commonly referred to as "Bill 101" or "La loi 101". One of the primary outcomes of Bill 101 was the restriction of access to English-language education in Quebec; under the bill, access to English public and government-subsidized primary and secondary schools is currently granted only to those who meet one of the following very specific criteria (Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, 2016d, Section 2):

- Those who have received the major part of their elementary or secondary school instruction in English in Canada;

- Those whose brother or sister did the major part of his or her elementary or secondary studies in English in Canada;

- Those whose father or mother did the major part of his or her elementary studies in English in Canada;

- Those whose father or mother attended school in Quebec after August 26, 1977, and could have been declared eligible for instruction in English at that time.

This last criterion is at the heart of much of the lack of understanding surrounding the law, and that lack of understanding is one of the issues that will be addressed in the present discussion.

Bill 101's restriction on access to public and government-subsidized English-language primary and secondary educational institutions means that the majority of Francophones and Allophones in the province do not have the right to receive instruction in English in Quebec at the elementary and high school levels; access to English-language education in the aforementioned populations is therefore largely reserved for those who can afford to send their children to an English-language school that is not subsidized by the Quebec government. It also means that only a relatively small number of Quebec parents can choose between English and French as the language of instruction for their children. It is important to emphasize that only one of a child's parents needs to meet one of the last two criteria of eligibility for English-language instruction outlined above for a child to receive a certificate of eligibility for English-language instruction in Quebec and thereby attend an English public or government-subsidized school; this means that the child of a Francophone-Anglophone couple has the right to English education in Quebec provided that one of his or her two parents – most often the Anglophone parent (Jedwab, 2002, p. 21; 2004, p. 30) – fits the abovementioned criteria. These so-called "mixed-language" or linguistically exogamous couples are therefore faced with a choice, a choice that might seem relatively banal to those outside of Quebec but that nonetheless epitomizes the language debate that has deep emotional roots in the province: "Do we, a couple who represents both sides of Quebec's linguistic divide, send our children to school in English or in French?"

Choosing between English-language and French-language instruction surely results in a dilemma for some of these "mixed-language" families since "choosing a side" (McAndrew & Eid, 2003a, p. 224) risks being interpreted by the couple's entourage as a lack of loyalty to one linguistic group or the other (Darby, 1997 as cited in McAndrew & Eid, 2003a, p. 223). How, then,

in this potentially stormy context, do these parents decide whether to send their children to French or English school? What are the major factors that influence the decision? How do these families experience the outcomes of the decision? These are important questions, and they are questions that have yet to be fully answered, particularly from a qualitative standpoint. While a solid amount of research has been done on the so-called "crossing of the linguistic border" or "traversée frontière" (McAndrew & Eid, 2003a, p.223) within the Quebec school system, most of this research has been quantitative, concentrating on the numbers of Francophone students who attend English schools and the numbers of Anglophone students who attend French schools (Jedwab, 2004; McAndrew & Eid, 2003a, 2003b). This quantitative research, while of course important and useful, leaves part of the story untold for the statistics tell us very little about the motivations and experiences behind the choices that these parents make for their children's education.

Research has shown that there are three main factors involved in the so-called "traversée frontière" (McAndrew & Eid, 2003a, p. 223) within the Quebec school system. First of all, Bill 101 obligates Anglophone immigrants (i.e. those who were not educated in English in Canada) to attend French schools in Quebec; second, a significant number of Francophones who attended English school pre-Bill 101 transferred their eligibility for English-language education to their Francophone descendants and third, a significant number of Anglophones choose to enrol in the French sector despite being eligible for English school, and they can do so without losing their eligibility for instruction in English (MEQ, 1999; Norris, 1999, as cited in McAndrew & Eid, 2003a, p. 225). This last point regarding the retention of the right to English-language education is especially important as it is a major concern for many Quebec Anglophone parents and therefore will be revisited later on in the present discussion.

Despite the three factors cited above, however, if we are to fully understand this "traversée frontière" (McAndrew & Eid, 2003a, p. 223) we must learn more about what drives people to

choose one language of instruction over the other in the Quebec context. For instance, some of the quantitative research conducted by McAndrew and Eid (2003a) demonstrates that the motivation to choose one language of instruction over the other, especially within the Anglophone community, is largely related to a desire to increase the marketability of these Anglophones upon entering the job market in Quebec (p. 250). A 2013 CBC-commissioned EKOS poll supports this assertion, showing that 39% of 1001 Anglophone parents polled felt that their children "would be better off at a French school" (CBC News, 2013, para. 2). As Mélanie Richard, principal of a French-language elementary school in Montreal's heavily Anglophone West Island area puts it, "the main reason (Anglophones enroll their children in French school) is because they want them to have better work opportunities. They want them to be able to speak in both languages" (CBC News, 2013, para. 11). About a third of students enrolled in Richards' school between 2009 and 2013 came from Anglophone homes (CBC News, 2013, para. 10). Furthermore, a 2014 study conducted amongst secondary 4 and 5 students in Quebec demonstrates that over 60% of respondents acknowledged that a solid knowledge of French is important for career success (in Quebec) (Roy-Mercier, 2014, p. 16). The preceding findings are backed up by the marked increase in the rate of bilingualism in Quebec's Anglophone community, which went from 37% in 1971 to 67% in 2001 (Marmen & Corbeil, cited in Lamarre, 2007, p. 111), to 80% in 2007 among Anglophones 15 to 24 years of age (Lamarre, 2007, p. 111). Despite this perceived importance of French when it comes to preparing young people for the job market, McAndrew and Eid (2003a) also contend that a qualitative analysis of the "traversée frontière" between the English and French systems might reveal that the motivation of parents who choose to send their "rights-bearing" children to French school goes beyond the idea of marketability (p. 250).

Since Francophone-Anglophone parental couples share the experience of having to decide between English and French schooling for their children, the present study took a

phenomenological approach to understanding how these families make those decisions and how they deal with any concerns that they have about the eventual outcomes of those decisions. My aim was to flesh out the story told by the statistics by examining the motivations behind the "crossing of the linguistic border" within the Quebec school system from a qualitative perspective. Using the aforementioned study conducted by McAndrew and Eid (2003a) as a starting point, I sought to shed light on whether the motivations of Francophone-Anglophone parental couples, when it comes to choosing a language of instruction for their children, go deeper than the question of practicality and marketability. For instance, when it comes to making the decision, does the potential marketability of the child generally trump maintaining loyalty to "one's side", and if so, is this more the case for Anglophones or Francophones? This study aimed to answer such questions.

Many people, from parents to policymakers, have much to gain from possessing a better understanding of the factors that motivate the decision to choose between French and English as the language of instruction in the linguistically complex context that characterizes the province of Quebec, and this study aimed to increase said understanding.

My Perspective

I would like to first say a few words about what motivated me to study parents of mixed linguistic backgrounds and the choices they make regarding the language of instruction of their children. The answer lies, in part, in my own educational background in Quebec. My parents are both Anglophones; my mother grew up in Montreal and my father in Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Quebec. When I was born, my parents were living in the Montreal area. From a very young age I had informal exposure to French through playing with Francophone children in my neighbourhood. I started attending an English-language nursery school when I was four, and a year later we moved to Ontario where I completed kindergarten through fifth grade in English. We came back to Montreal the summer before I started sixth grade, which is the last year of elementary school in Quebec.

Given that we had never attended school in the Quebec school system, my parents had to obtain English-language education eligibility certificates for my younger brother and me upon our return to the province so that we could be enrolled in an English public elementary school. My parents wanted us to become bilingual because they felt it would open many doors for us, especially growing up in Quebec, so they enrolled us both in Greendale Elementary School's French immersion program on the West Island of Montreal. My parents admit, however, that their decision to put us in French immersion went beyond the idea of making us more "marketable" citizens of the province. The school we were to attend told my parents that their French immersion program was typically populated by so-called "stronger students" and this assertion, whether well-founded or not, made the French immersion program even more attractive for my parents naturally wanted us to be surrounded, challenged and influenced by these so-called "stronger students".

Starting French immersion in the 6th grade was a bit of an uphill battle for I had to catch up with students whom had been in the program for several years. It quickly became apparent that the French Second Language education I had received in Ontario left a lot to be desired; I was starting grade 6 and I had never even learned to conjugate verbs. My 6th grade teacher was surely discouraged at first, but I ended up catching up sufficiently and continued on in French immersion in high school.

Although it was a struggle at times, I am infinitely grateful for the choice my parents made, for being fluent in French has indeed opened many doors for me over the years. I cannot, however, speak to the truthfulness behind the idea that I was surrounded by "stronger students" in the immersion program. Furthermore, while my experience in French immersion gave me a solid foundation on which to build, once I was out in the working world I realized that I still had much catching up to do in my second language. Working with Francophones and listening to them talk amongst themselves left me lost; the formal, academic register I was used to did not initially serve me very well in the "real world" and I had to work hard to become comfortable with the more colloquial, everyday French being spoken by my colleagues.

In light of my "real-world" experiences with my second language and my parents' desire for my brother and me to be bilingual, I find it interesting that they chose for us to learn French by being immersed in the language within the English school system. Having us learn French by putting us in the French school system never crossed their minds for as Anglophones it seemed "natural" to them that their children attend school in the English system.

The decision my parents made as Anglophones therefore makes me wonder about parents who come from different linguistic backgrounds. While both parents likely want their children be bilingual (Lamarre, 2008), each parent perhaps feels – like my parents did – that sending their children to school on their respective side of the linguistic frontier would feel most "natural"; and

although I now feel quite comfortable in French and have always been able to communicate in French well enough to obtain the jobs I have sought, I do sometimes feel that I am still catching up, especially in those more informal contexts, which has made me wonder whether I might have been "better off" in a French school after all. This concern regarding fluency in one language or another is one that many Quebec parents have when choosing whether to send their children to English or French school. Of course, that those children who are eligible for English-language instruction might end up in French school because their parents feel that it will provide them with a higher level of fluency in French is arguably problematic for the future vitality of the English school system in Quebec (Lamarre, P., 2008).

How, then, do these "mixed-language" parental couples negotiate this potentially rocky terrain? Given my own experiences and the motivations behind the educational decisions my Anglophone parents made on behalf of my brother and me, I decided to look at how parents who come from mixed linguistic backgrounds (i.e. Francophone and Anglophone) experience making decisions regarding their children's language of instruction in the Quebec context, the kinds of concerns that characterize the decision-making process, and how they experience the outcomes of the decisions they made.

Chapter 2: Historical Context and Literature Review

The first half of the 19th century was a period of significant development on the educational front in what would soon become the province of Quebec (Magnuson, 2005). For instance, legislation that was passed two decades before the 1867 Confederation set the scene for the development of a public school system in Lower Canada; the core of said legislation was "the idea of a school system common to all children, whether they were French, English, Catholic or Protestant" (Magnuson, 2005, p. 219). This legislation, however, included a 'dissenting clause', a "provision designed to give educational relief to religious minorities in exceptional circumstances'" (p. 219). This provision wound up undermining the idea of the "common school". As Roger Magnuson (2005) puts it,

> To the surprise and disappointment of the government, religious minorities increasingly invoked the right of dissent, which allowed them to withdraw from the common schools and set up their own schools. In effect, French Catholics and English Protestants were telling the government that they preferred to be educated apart rather than together (p. 219).

The public reaction to the dissenting clause resulted in the formation of a public school system along denominational lines, namely Protestant schools for the English population and Catholic schools for the French population (p. 219). This denominational system and denominational school rights for Roman Catholics and Protestants, which were protected by section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867 (Young & Bezeau, 2003, Section 2, para. 1), would influence the future of public education in Quebec and characterized a setback for "French and English political leaders, who saw in the common school a vehicle for bridging the broad differences between the two peoples" (Magnuson, 2005, p. 219). Confederation in 1867 created the province of Quebec and the first education act in 1869 confirmed the denominational educational

system as well as the divide between the two sectors of the public system as each side championed for more autonomy at the administrative level (Magnuson, 2005, p. 219; Corbeil, Chavez & Pereira, 2010, p. 63).

Over the next century language policy in the province of Quebec remained on the backburner, both as far as language of instruction in schools was concerned and in society at large (Smith & Donahue, 1999; Behiels & Hayday, 2011), largely due to the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in French society. As Hayday (2011) puts it,

> Until the 1960s, the close association between the Roman Catholic Church and the French language in Quebec and throughout French Canada and Acadia allowed for the preservation of the French language and culture. This *survivance* was aided by the Catholic Church's insistence on large families and its administrative control over the educational, health, and social service institutions operating throughout French Canada (p. 418).

Wright (2000) describes this pre-1960s Quebec era as one in which "Quebec's two principal linguistic groups enjoyed 'consociational democracy'" (p. 271) which is defined as allowing "two or more distinct ethnic, linguistic, religious and/or cultural groups living in the same political space to pursue a segregated existence mediated by institutionalized élite accommodation and by more or less clearly understood 'rules of the game'" (Lijphart, as cited in Wright, 2000, p. 271).

By the 1960s, however, it was becoming increasingly evident that this "segregated existence mediated by institutionalized élite accommodation" was threatening the position of the French language in Quebec society, especially on the island of Montreal. As Levine (1997) notes, the city of Montreal in the 1960s was on the road to becoming both "multicultural and English-speaking" (as cited in Lamarre, 2007, p. 111). Quebec's so-called "consociational democracy" started to crumble in the 1960s, however, as several factors contributed to a change in the collective attitude toward both the status and the future of the French language and French culture

in the province (Wright, 2000, p. 271). These factors included an increasing determination to change the status quo with regard to the fact that Francophones possessed less economic clout than their Anglophone and English-speaking Allophone counterparts (Behiels & Hayday, 2011). Essentially, the "laissez-faire policies of the Duplessis government (1936-39, 1944-59) had accentuated the control of English-speaking American and Canadian businesspeople over Quebec's economy" (Hayday, 2011, p. 419) and concerns surrounding this control led the province's politicians to recognize that steps had to be taken to secure the future of the French language and culture in Quebec, steps that included the implementation of language laws.

As Behiels and Hayday (2011) put it,

> (…) an interventionist Québécois state could be used to overturn the dominance of Anglo-Canadians and English-speaking allophones in the economic life of the province, especially in the metropolitan region of Montreal, which was home to the majority of the Anglophones and allophones who constituted 20 percent of Quebec's population (p. 384).

To understand this complex story, however, it is necessary to first explore the sociohistorical context of the death of conservative Quebec Premier Maurice Duplessis which served as a catalyst for the aforementioned major political and ideological shift in Quebec in the 1960s. Following Duplessis' death in 1959, Paul Sauvé, who had worked closely with Duplessis for 30 years, succeeded him as premier of Quebec. Sauvé, with his famous declaration, "Désormais" (henceforth), was determined to bring about change in the province; he declared that while he would continue his predecessor's work, he would also take a new approach to accomplishing that work. Sauvé's rise to power was therefore met with the hope that a new era would soon begin in Quebec (Audet, 1969, p. 13; Virtual Museum of Canada [VMC]).

Paul Sauvé would only serve as premier for about 3 months, however, as he died suddenly in January 1960. Nevertheless, his time as premier has been nicknamed "the 100-day revolution" (VMC), for in his short time in office, Sauvé managed to bring positive change to many spheres, including the civil service, healthcare, transportation, and education. The changes he either implemented or set in motion "shook up Quebec, setting the province on a new path" (VMC).

As mentioned earlier, however, an ideological movement was taking hold beyond the confines of the Quebec National Assembly in the early 1960s, a movement that was challenging the "traditional, conservative, rural-oriented values of Quebec society and the close links between church and state" (McWhinney, 2008, pp. 5-6). This popular movement, coupled with the push for change within the government itself, would come to be known as "The Quiet Revolution" and it quickly got the attention of "Anglo-Canadian political elites with its implications for the future of the Canadian federal constitutional system and Quebec's place in it" (McWhinney, 2008, pp. 5-6). Brochu (2000) describes "The Quiet Revolution" in the following way,

> More than anything, the Quiet Revolution is characterized by a sudden and widespread awareness of the situation imposed on the French Canadians of Québec by the framework of the Canadian Federation. The keen awareness of backwardness in areas key for modernity—education, the economy, industry and services—provoked an unprecedented public reaction. It all happened as if the death of Maurice Duplessis and the need for a realignment of political and social forces freed a hitherto unknown space for maneuver and gave rise to a new outward-looking attitude on the world. This new awareness was inevitably accompanied by a metamorphosis in perceptions about language. The poet Roland Giguère called this new era, inaugurated by the disappearance of the moral and religious constraints that had encouraged Québec submission in the face of their age-long destiny, the 'age of the word' (p. 324).

One important catalyst for The Quiet Revolution in Quebec came in 1960 when Jean-Paul Desbiens published *Les Insolences du Frère Untel* (*The Impertinences of Brother Anonymous*)

under the pen name “Frère Untel” (“Brother Anonymous”) in which he criticized the province’s education system for its many failings, which included failing to properly teach French as a mother tongue. The long-term consequences of these many failings, Desbiens warned, would be catastrophic for the future of the province (Leblanc, 1972, p. 177). As Leblanc (1972) puts it,

> Had these reflections been made by an ordinary mortal, their impact would have been of limited consequence. Considering, however, that Desbiens was a young Roman Catholic teaching brother, his highly personal study prodded a major furore and, at the same time, created a Quebec bestseller (p. 177).

Back in the Quebec National Assembly, changes were also taking place at a rapid rate. Antonio Barrette, who had succeeded Paul Sauvé as premier of Quebec, lost the 1960 provincial election to Jean Lesage’s Liberal Party, which was made up of strong members such as future Quebec Premier René Levesque (McWhinney, 2008, pp. 5-6). Upon coming into power, the Lesage Liberals took the first steps toward reforming the Quebec education system with the adoption of a number of laws under the *Grande charte de l’éducation*; one of said laws allowed for the creation of The Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec, later known as the “Parent Commission”, which was chaired by Monseigneur Alphonse-Marie Parent, the Vice-Rector of the Université de Laval in the early 1960s (Lenoir, 2005, p. 643).

The Parent Commission report, which was published in 5 volumes between 1963 and 1965, outlined many recommendations for the province’s education system, ranging from the creation of the Ministry of Education to the unification of school boards, to the creation of CÉGEPs (Collèges d’enseignement général et professionnel)[1] (Smith & Donahue, 1999; Henchey, 1972, p. 110). The

[1] Created in 1967, CÉGEPs are post-secondary pre-university and vocational colleges exclusive to the province of Quebec, Canada. Students who graduate from Quebec high schools are generally obligated to obtain a CÉGEP diploma if they want to pursue university studies in Quebec.

Parent Commission had a profound and lasting effect on the Quebec education system. As Smith and Donahue (1999) put it,

> (The) values and vision (of the Parent Commission) inspired the modernization of the entire system. With the notable exception of unified school boards, the organization of education in Québec today reflects the structures recommended by the Parent Commission (p. 37).

Jean Lesage, who won re-election in 1962 and would govern until 1966, coined a now-famous slogan early on in his time in power: nous sommes *Maîtres chez nous* (we are "masters in our own house"). This slogan reflected the atmosphere of the province at the time, which was driven toward "change and progress" (Chevrier, 1997, p. 7). As Chevrier (1997) puts it,

> Opening careers in the public service and in companies to francophones, expanding the means of the Québec State, giving it the stature and structure of a modern government, separating Church and State more appropriately, reforming education, nationalizing electricity, providing Québec with a universal pension plan and more - that was the program and the ambition of the governments of the time, driven by the people's impatience and expectations (p. 7).

In sum, the changes the province was undergoing in the early 1960s touched all aspects of daily life, not the least of which was education. The changes were also happening at lightning speed. As Hubert Guindon (1988) states, "In every respect except calendar time, centuries – not decades – separate the Quebec of the 1980s from the Quebec of the 1950s." (Guindon, 1988, as cited in Seljak, 1996, p. 109).

The First Push for School Board Reform and the Saint-Léonard Crisis

As mentioned above, one of the Parent Commission's recommendations was the unification of school boards which, to reiterate, had been up to that point divided along religious lines, namely Catholic and Protestant (Henchey, 1972, p. 110). In the early 1960s, however, this religious division no longer reflected the reality of Quebec society. Quebeckers saw the denominational system as "being increasingly irrelevant to their needs and aspirations" (Young & Bezeau, 2003, Section 2, para. 1). Norman Henchey (1972) describes the situation in the schools themselves in the following way,

> In the Catholic sector, (…) religious instruction had become much less explicit and more oriented to general ethical and social issues, and there was little agreement even on the definition of a Catholic school. (…) On the other hand, Protestant education was not very Protestant; its identifying characteristics were more the culture, language, and tradition of its schools than any common set of religious beliefs. The crucial division in Quebec society was now one of language and culture rather than one of religion and there appeared to be two options open for school board reform; a division by language or unified boards. The success of either option would depend on the degree of trust between French and English Quebecers and the mutual trust which had traditionally depended on the preservation of the two solitudes was rapidly breaking down (p. 111).

The English-speaking community felt increasingly nervous about the growing provincial control over education and as a result lobbied for "a division on a language basis, with strong school boards, and the possibility of a transfer of the constitutional guarantees from religion to language" (Henchey, 1972, p. 111). It is important to reiterate that denominational school rights for Roman Catholics and Protestants were protected by section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867; Anglophones therefore wanted that a transfer of that protection to their linguistic rights (Young & Bezeau, 2003, Section 2, para. 1; Henchey, 1972, p. 111).

The French community, on the other hand, lobbied for unified school boards for it was becoming increasingly aware of the importance of its "majority status in Quebec and the need for a unified perspective for the development of the Province" (Henchey, 1972, p. 111). Francophones also felt that there were unjust disparities between the English and French school systems and that that which the English called "rights" were actually "privileges" (Henchey, 1972, p. 111).

To try and resolve the school board issue, the Quebec government set up the Pagé Committee, which was comprised of "civil servants, administrators, teachers, and parents to make recommendations for reorganizing the school boards of the Island of Montreal". In 1968 the Pagé Committee "reported that the majority (of the committee members) proposed a division of French and English boards with a powerful central council to coordinate education for the whole Island" (Henchey, 1972, p. 111). Alongside this majority report, however, many minority reports came out rendering the gap between the points of view of the two groups more and more apparent (Henchey, 1972, p. 111).

The end of the turbulent decade that was the 1960s was marked by what is commonly known as "The St-Léonard Crisis" which served as yet another catalyst for the language policies that would follow and which would culminate in the enactment of Bill 101. One factor at the root of the St-Léonard Crisis was the completion of the Métropolitain Highway in 1960 which led to the rapid expansion of the eastern Montreal suburb of Saint-Léonard. Many of those who came to populate the suburb were Allophones, specifically of Italian heritage (Robert, 2000, p. 244).

In 1963, Saint-Léonard's local school board opened bilingual classes to meet the increased demand from the Allophone population. In 1967, however, school commissioners decided to replace those bilingual classes, which were populated by 90% of the Allophone population, with unilingual French classes. The goal was to abolish bilingual classes over the next 6 years, a solution which the school commissioners hoped would address the fact that over 85% of the

Allophone students in the bilingual classes went on to attend high schools in the English system. The school board's move was met with ire from the community's Allophone parents, however, so the board postponed implementing the change for one year (Robert, 2000, p. 244).

In 1968, with the founding of the *Mouvement pour l'intégration scolaire* (MIS), the issue surrounding the tendency of Saint-Léonard's Allophones to go on to attend English high schools resurfaced. Headed by lawyer Raymond Lemieux, the mandate of the MIS was to ensure that immigrants integrated into the Francophone school system. After the local school board elections in May 1968, Saint-Léonard's school board found itself largely controlled by members of the MIS who then adopted a resolution that made French the obligatory language of instruction for new students in all Saint-Léonard elementary schools for the following school year (Robert, 2000, p. 244).

In addition to the resolution adopted by the local school board, however, logistics surrounding the building of schools prompted the regional school board to suggest that the only secondary school in Saint-Léonard, Aimé-Renaud, be converted to an Anglophone school, a move that would force Francophone students to be bussed to high schools in a neighbouring community. In protest, Francophone students, with support from the MIS, occupied Aimé-Renaud for 10 days in 1968, from the end of August to the beginning of September, attracting the attention of the media (Robert, 2000, pp. 244-245). The media attention given to the events taking place in Saint-Léonard led to tension between Francophones and Anglophones in the rest of Montreal. Robert (2000), describes the situation in the following way,

> The beginning of the school year was marked by the refusal of parents to send their children to French-language schools. The English-speaking media took the side of Allophone parents and alleged that the Canadian Constitution conferred the right to freely choose the language of instruction (p. 245).

At the end of 1968, in an attempt to quell the tension in Montreal, Jean-Jacques Bertrand's Union Nationale government, which had come to power in 1966, tabled Bill 85, which gave parents the right to choose the language of instruction for their children; the tabling of Bill 85, however, resulted in a backlash from the Francophone community; in response to this backlash the Bertrand government pulled back on Bill 85 in the spring of 1969 (Robert, 2000, p. 245). As tensions between the communities continued to rise, the Bertrand government, which was "wracked with internal dissension during this crucial period, was incapable of action" (Cruickshank, 1981, p. 12). Public demonstrations on language rights took place both at McGill and in St-Léonard in the spring and fall of 1969 respectively. The latter demonstration got out of hand, pushing the Quebec government to invoke the Riot Act (Robert, 2000, p. 245; Noël, Section 3, para. 1) and then to present Bill 63, *An act to promote the French language in Québec*.

Passed in November 1969, Bill 63 was the "first real language law in modern-day Quebec" but it was a "sectoral law that only concerned the area of teaching" **(**Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute [OLBI], n.-d., Section 4, para. 1)**.** The different sections of Bill 63 were as follows:

> Section 1: the minister had to "ensure a working knowledge of the French language to children to whom instruction (was) given in the English language".
>
> Section 2: recognized the right of parents to freely choose the language of instruction for their children when registering them for school.
>
> Section 3: required the Immigration Department to take the necessary steps to ensure persons settling in Quebec learned the French language.
>
> Section 4: gave monitoring, research, and advisory powers to Office de la langue française **(**OLBI, n.-d., Section 4, para. 2).

While the Anglophone and Allophone communities were satisfied with Bill 63 as a solution to the crisis, the Francophone community was outraged. Bill 63 was problematic because it was, as Marc Chevrier puts it, “contradictory in its aims”,

> On the one hand, (Bill 63) called on school boards to provide instruction in French; on the other hand, it gave parents free choice in the language of instruction, with school boards having to guarantee children registered in English-language classes a knowledge of the use of the French language. (It) also charged the authorities of Québec's immigration department with seeing that immigrants settled in Québec learned French. But Bill 63 did not seem able to maintain the delicate linguistic balance in Québec, especially in Montréal, where English-language schools attracted many immigrants and where the free choice of the language of instruction had set anglophones, allophones and francophones against one another (1997, p. 8).

Despite its unpopularity, however, Bill 63 remained in effect for the next 5 years (Robert, 2000, p. 245; Anctil, 2007; OLBI, n.-d., Section 4, para. 3).

Commissions of Inquiry on the Linguistic Situation

The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.

At this point it will be helpful to backtrack somewhat to explore how the language laws of the 1960s and 1970s were catalyzed by two commissions of inquiry set up by the federal and provincial governments respectively. First, in 1963, frustration regarding the aforementioned “Anglo-centric character of Canada’s political, economic and social institutions” urged the Canadian federal government to create the Laurendeau-Dunton Commission or The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (RCBB) (Smith & Donahue, 1999, p. 55). The mandate of the Royal Commission was “to review the existing ‘state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada’ and to ‘recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian

Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races'" (as cited in Chevrier, 1997, p. 7). In its 1965 preliminary report the Commission asserted that Canada, "without being full conscious of the fact, is passing through the greatest crisis in its history" (as cited in Chevrier, 1997, p. 7). The Commission also underlined "how deeply dissatisfied francophones were, convinced they were victims of unacceptable inequalities" (as cited in Chevrier, 1997, p. 7). As Marc Chevrier puts it,

> It was shown that Anglo-Canadians of British origin dominated the economy; they held the most influential and best paid positions. In Québec, the French Canadian had an income 35% lower than the Anglo-Quebecer. And even bilingual Quebecers earned less than unilingual Anglo-Quebecers. The commission consequently recommended that 'in the private sector in Québec, governments and industry adopt the objective that French become the principal language of work at all levels' (as cited, 1997, p. 7).

The final report put out by the Royal Commission, which was published in 5 volumes between 1967 and 1970 (Department of Justice, n.-d., footnote) "reaffirmed Canada's bilingual and bicultural reality – much to the disappointment of the leaders of other groups in Canada" (Smith & Donahue, 1999, p. 55). This disappointment was summed up in the following way: "Only an active policy based on pluralistic principles would protect ethnic minorities from discrimination in housing and jobs, let alone allow them the right to pursue their cultural heritage" (Fleras & Elliott, 1992, as cited in Smith & Donahue, 1999, p. 55). The reaction to the Commission's report on bilingualism and biculturalism led to a "new policy of 'multiculturalism within a bilingual framework'" which was proposed by the federal government under Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in October 1971 (Smith & Donahue, 1999, p. 56).

With regard to education more specifically, however, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism granted a critical role to French and English schools in minority

contexts, describing them as the basic agency for maintaining language and culture, thus setting the stage for constitutional reform of educational rights (RCBB, Book 2, 1968, foreword, as cited in Lamarre, 2008).

The Gendron Commission.

In the wake of The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (The Laurendeau-Dunton Commission) and The Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec (The Parent Commission), the province of Quebec began its own study of the language situation in the province: The Gendron Commission (Quebec, 1972, as cited in Lamarre, 2008). The Gendron Commission marked the first time the Quebec government made a move toward defining minority rights to education within the province (Mallea, 1984, as cited in Lamarre, 2008, p. 64).

The Gendron Commission was created in December 1968 to "enquire into and report on the status of French as a language of use in Québec" (Chevrier, 1997, p. 8). In its 1972 report, the Gendron Commission, like the Laurendeau-Dunton Commission that preceded it, concluded that the English language was dominant in the Quebec workplace and that "numerous inequalities separated francophones from anglophones: Francophones earned less in general, held less important positions, benefitted little from their bilingualism and often worked in English, in a proportion that did not reflect the high number of francophone workers" (Chevrier, 1997, p. 8). To remedy the situation, The Commission recommended "that a series of measures be adopted to make French the common language of Quebecers" (Chevrier, 1997, p. 8).

Bill 22

In 1970 Robert Bourassa's Liberal Party came to power; four years later, Bourassa replaced Bill 63 and "its contradictory aims" (Chevrier, 1997, p. 8) with Bill 22, also known as *The Official Language Act*, making French the official language of Quebec (Chevrier, 1997, p. 3). Bourassa "drew his inspiration from some of the Gendron Commission's recommendations and, unlike the artisans of Bill 63, he was of the opinion that language policy could not be based on incentive alone but should also include coercive measures" (Chevrier, 1997, p. 8).

With respect to education specifically, Bill 22 allowed parents to continue to choose the language of instruction their children would receive provided that their children "had a sufficient knowledge of the language of instruction" (Chevrier, 1997, p. 9). Students entering school would therefore undergo language tests, the results of which would determine whether they would attend French or English school (Chevrier, 1997, p. 9). These new measures were strongly opposed by the Anglophone and Allophone communities. As Coleman, (1981) explains, Bill 22 "was seen by Anglophones as a betrayal by 'their' party" (as cited in Pettinicchio, 2012, p. 8); in response, 600,000 Quebeckers signed a petition urging the Canadian government to cancel Bill 22, but "the federal government responded by stating that English minority-language rights in Québec were still better protected than the French minority-language rights in other provinces" (Tetley 1982, as cited in Pettinicchio, 2012, p. 8).

Many Francophones, for their part, saw Bill 22 "as a loyal attempt at linguistic reform", but others saw it "as an inapplicable law that went only half way and failed to give French the primacy it was due" (Chevrier, 1997, p. 9). For the reasons stated above, Bill 22 was unsuccessful in stabilizing the situation in the province's schools and assuaging public opinion (Lamarre, 2008; Anctil, 2007).

Soon after beating Robert Bourassa's Liberal Party in the late 1976 provincial election, the Parti Québécois government, led by René Lévesque, declared its intention to revise Bill 22, but soon decided to come up with a new bill altogether (Chevrier, 1997, p. 9). According to Camille Laurin, Quebec's Minister of Cultural Development in the late 1970s, "Law 22 made the mistake of having two divergent objectives at the same time: the one, the Francization of Québec and the other, institutional bilingualism" (as cited in Plourde, 2000, para. 1); due to these divergent objectives, Bill 22 could not be reformed (Plourde, 2000, para. 1).

The Parti Québécois and *The Charter of the French Language*

As Anctil (2007) points out, and as is apparent in the history outlined above, the tension between Anglophones and Francophones in Quebec was approached very differently by The Union Nationale Party (in government from 1966-1970), by The Liberal Party (in government from 1970-1976), and by The Parti Québécois, which first came to power in 1976. The Parti Québécois, or "PQ", which was founded by René Lévesque in 1968 (he had left the Lesage Liberals the year before), rose to power in 1976 armed with a platform that was centered on Quebec independence. As Pettinicchio (2012) explains, the PQ's success, among other things, "signalled the growing ineffectiveness of Anglophone voice" (p. 8) in Quebec in the wake of the Quiet Revolution.

The defense and promotion of the French language and the question of the language of instruction of the province's immigrant children were also of utmost importance for the newly elected party (Anctil, 2007). During its first months in power, the PQ proposed ways to resolve the linguistic tensions that had been plaguing Quebec society for over a decade (Anctil, 2007), leading them to adopt *The Charter of the French Language* (Bill 101) in 1977 (Lamarre, 2008, p. 64).

Like Bill 22, *The Charter of the French Language* declared French the official language of Quebec. It also outlined certain "fundamental language rights", such as:

- The rights of workers to carry on their activities in French, and of consumers of goods and services to be informed and served in French.

- French was declared the language of the legislature and the courts in Québec, although judgments and proceedings could be in another language, if the parties so agreed.

- (French) was declared the language of communications of the government, its departments and affiliated agencies as well as of government-owned firms and the professional corporations.

- The administration of municipal, school and health bodies could be carried out in both French and another language if these bodies served a clientele where more than half speak a language other than French.

- As for commerce and business, French became the mandatory, but not the exclusive, language for labels and the only language for signs and posters and commercial advertising. In making an exception to the principle of unilingual French signs and posters, the 1977 law authorizes firms employing not more than four people to display signs and posters in both French and another language, provided that French is at least as prominent as the other language. The same kind of exception applies to the cultural activities of ethnic groups and advertising by non-profit organizations.

- The law also made French the only language for firm names, bilingualism being accepted for the legal names of ethnic non-profit associations.

- Finally, The Charter abolished the eligibility criteria for English schools prescribed by Bill 22. Henceforth, a child whose father or mother received his or her elementary instruction in English in Québec could receive instruction in English, as could a child whose father or mother, on the date of the coming into force of the law, had received such instruction elsewhere in Canada and those already enrolled at English schools, and their younger brothers and sisters (Chevrier, 1997, pp. 9-10).

Many of the abovementioned original elements of *The Charter of the French Language* have been challenged on a legal basis over the years and have therefore been modified to varying degrees (Chevrier, 1997, p. 10). Of particular interest to the present discussion is the fact that in 1984 section 73 of *The Charter* "was deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of Canada because it contravened section 23 of the (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms) adopted in 1982 on the right to education in the language of the minority" (Corbeil et al., 2010, p. 63). Bill 101 was then modified to include what came to be known as the "Canada Clause" so that Anglophone parents who gone to English elementary school anywhere in Canada could enrol their children in English school in Quebec (Corbeil et al., 2010, p. 63).

Again, none of the language laws discussed thus far was met without resistance, especially in multilingual, multicultural Montreal, and especially when it came to the sphere of education. The idea of forcing future immigrants to attend French elementary and secondary school was fiercely opposed both by the allophone communities who were on their way to becoming anglicized and by the city's established Anglophone community (Anctil, 2007, p. 192). The tense atmosphere created by the adverse reactions to the new language laws brought to the fore two important linguistic issues that had laid dormant for many years in Montreal society and that would dominate the political discourse for the decades to come, namely: What measures Francophones could use to ensure that their language achieve and maintain a predominant position in Montreal and second, what means Francophones should employ to convince new immigrants of the importance of this goal (Anctil, 2007, p. 193).

Linguistic School Boards Revisited and The Estates General on Education: The 1980s and 1990s

In the 1980s, the idea of linguistic school boards was revisited. As David Young and Lawrence Bezeau (2003) explain, because this change to school board structure had to be made while respecting section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867,

> Many of (the plans to shift to linguistic school boards) were highly imaginative, such as forcing school boards with denominational rights to retreat to their 1867 boundaries. Unfortunately for the reformers, the constitutionally preserved rights included the right of denominational minorities to dissent, that is, to break off from an existing school board and create a new one based on religion. This proved to be the Achilles heel of all reform attempts within the then existing set of rights and privileges (Young & Bezeau, 2003, Section 2, para. 3).

A decade later in April of 1997, by amending the constitution, all denominational rights and privileges respecting education in the province of Quebec were eliminated (Young & Bezeau, 2003, Section 1, para. 1).

On July 1st 1998, the denominational school board structure in Quebec was replaced by a linguistic school board structure. For the most part, schools that were English-language under the denominational system were transferred to English school boards and formerly French-language schools were transferred to French boards. The total number of school boards was reduced from 156 to 72. (Freeland, 1999, pp. 246-247).

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Legislation: 2000-2010

A series of pieces of legislation from 2000-2010 addressed a major loophole in Bill 101, the loophole being that parents of any linguistic background could essentially buy their children eligibility for English-language instruction in Quebec by paying to send their children to non-

subsidized English private schools (also known as ‘écoles passerelles’ or ‘bridging schools’) for a year or so, apply for a certificate of eligibility, and then switch their children to one of Quebec’s public, subsidized English schools. This loophole resulted in a boost in enrolment in Quebec’s English public schools. To deal with this situation, the Parti Québécois passed Bill 104 in 2002 with the support of the opposition Liberal Party, the result being that children could no longer gain eligibility for English instruction by attending an English private school (Bourhis & Foucher, 2012, p. 13).

Bill 104 was successfully challenged, however, in the Canadian Supreme Court and the Quebec court of appeal by a few Allophone and Francophone parents on the basis that it violated the Article 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Bourhis & Foucher, 2012, p. 13). In its October 2009 ruling, The Canadian Supreme Court, while acknowledging Quebec’s right to protect the French language, told the province’s government that it had one year to draft a new law that would “limit access to English schools without violating article 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms” (Bourhis & Foucher, 2012, p. 13).

Section 23 of The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms states that three classes of persons have a right to minority language education; people belonging to these classes cannot be denied access to education in their language. These classes of persons are, with regard to the Quebec context:

1. citizens whose language first learned and still understood is English, **(this clause, however, is not applicable in Quebec because it has not been approved by the Quebec National Assembly)**;

2. citizens whose primary instruction has been obtained in English in Canada;

3. citizens whose children have received or are receiving primary or secondary instruction in English in Canada (Foucher, 2008, p. 26).

In response to the Canadian Supreme Court ruling on Bill 104, the Quebec Liberal Government proposed Bill 103, "*An Act to amend the Charter of the French language and other legislative provisions*", whose objective was, according to Education Minister Michelle Courchesne on June 3rd 2010, 'to have as few (children) as possible (approved)" (as cited in Bourhis & Foucher, 2012, p. 14).

To pass Bill 103 before the October 2010 deadline, the Quebec Liberal Government invoked the closure procedure in the Quebec National Assembly, thereby suspending the normal rules for debate and as a result adopted a shorter modified version of Bill 103 known as Bill 115 on October 19, 2010 (Bourhis & Foucher, 2012, p. 61). The essence of Bill 115 is the following:

> Bill 115 allows pupils, not eligible to attend public English schools in Quebec under Bill 101, to potentially obtain that right after studying three consecutive years in a private non-funded English school. Each pupil must also undergo a personal evaluation by a panel of four civil servants from the Ministère de l'Éducation du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) who will rule, using a point system, whether the pupil applying for inclusion in the English public school system was engaged in a "legitimate educational pathway" in English (as cited in Bourhis & Foucher, 2012, p. 61).

In 2011 The Quebec English School Boards Association stated that "it had yet to identify a single student who had entered English public schooling as a direct result of these provisions" (Bourhis & Foucher, 2012, p. 61).

While Foucher (2008) argues that since English has a lot of clout in North America, including within Quebec, "languages other than English (…) need special legal protection" (p. 19), he also contends that English-language education should neither be seen as a threat to the French majority in Quebec nor as a way for students to furtively learn English in the province (Foucher, 2008). English language education is, rather, "a key institution necessary to preserve and promote

the unique culture of a particular national minority within the province of Quebec. It is truly a collective right; although it is granted to individuals, its 'true beneficiary' is the community itself. It is a minority right" (Foucher, 2008, p. 27). Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects this right; in the words of Chief Justice Dickson of the Supreme Court of Canada,

> The general purpose of s. 23 is clear: it is to preserve and promote the two official languages of Canada, and their respective cultures, by ensuring that each language flourishes, as far as possible, in provinces where it is not spoken by the majority of the population. The section aims at achieving this goal by granting minority language educational rights to minority language parents throughout Canada (as cited in Foucher, 2008, p. 27).

Eligibility for English Instruction and the Crossing of Linguistic Borders – The Statistics

To reiterate, one of the many aims of Bill 101 is to restrict access to English-language education in Quebec; under the bill, and in keeping (in part) with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, access to English public and government-subsidized primary and secondary schools is now granted only to those who meet one of the following very specific criteria:

- Those who have received the major part of their elementary or secondary school instruction in English in Canada;
- Those whose brother or sister did the major part of his or her elementary or secondary studies in English in Canada;
- Those whose father or mother did the major part of his or her elementary studies in English in Canada;
- Those whose father or mother attended school in Quebec after August 26, 1977, and could have been declared eligible for instruction in English at that time (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir, et du Sport, 2016d, Section 2).

Yet as noted earlier, studies have shown that a significant number of those children who are eligible to attend English school, the "rights-holders" or "ayants droit" (McAndrew & Eid, 2003, p. 255), nevertheless attend French school (McAndrew & Eid, 2003, p. 255), often because they want to improve their marketability on the Quebec job market (McAndrew & Eid, 2003a, p. 250). Francophones cross linguistic borders as well, however, making use of their eligibility for English-language instruction. McAndrew and Eid (2003a) support this observation in their work; they contend that despite the restrictions on English language education put in place by Bill 101, the crossing of linguistic borders within the school system by one community (Anglophone) or the other (Francophone) is a real phenomenon, one that the province is only beginning to recognize (p.225). The statistics reveal that the sharing of educational institutions by Francophones and Anglophones is more widespread than popular discourse would lead us to believe (pp. 225-226).

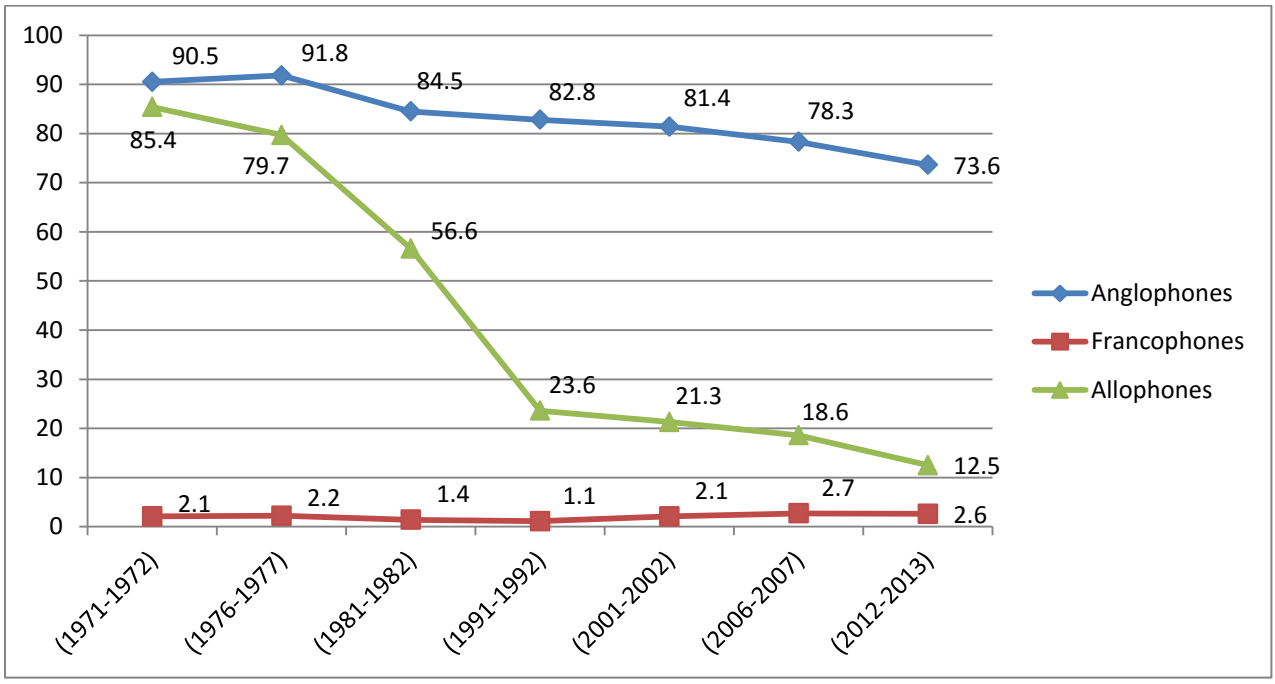
The number of Francophones and Anglophones attending school on the other side of the so-called "linguistic frontier" is just about equal in Quebec: 18,104 and 17,412 respectively (McAndrew & Eid, 2003a, p. 227). Given the unequal demographic representation of these two communities, however, it is important to note that these numbers are not equally proportionate to the weight of their populations (p. 227). Moreover, given the legal restrictions on access to English schools in Quebec, it is important to emphasize that the motivations of these different groups are likely quite different, as are the regulatory obstacles; Anglophones can freely attend French school while Bill 101 makes it more difficult for Francophones to attend English school (p. 227).

Overall, there has been a drastic change in numbers of students eligible for English instruction since the early 1980s. The total number of students eligible for instruction in English fell between 1983-1984 and 2010-2011, going from 139 461 to 114 642. Interestingly, however, the number of Francophones eligible for English instruction has risen slightly over the last 30 years, from 1.4% to 3.4% (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, p. 22).

Francophones Crossing Linguistic Borders

Jack Jedwab (2002, 2004) also points out that the number of Francophone students in the English school system has steadily increased over the years, as is demonstrated by Table 1, below. The majority of Francophone "ayants droit" (78%) are located outside of greater Montreal, a percentage that represents an increase of 60% over the mid-1980s (Jedwab, 2004, p. 30). This increase, according to Jedwab, is largely the result of a greater number of Francophone-Anglophone marriages and the abovementioned transfer of eligibility for English-language education from (generally) the Anglophone parent to the child(ren) (Jedwab, 2002, p. 21; 2004, p. 30).

Table 1. Percentage of students in English pre-school, primary and secondary schools in the province of Quebec, by mother tongue: 1971 to 2013
(Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, p. 14)

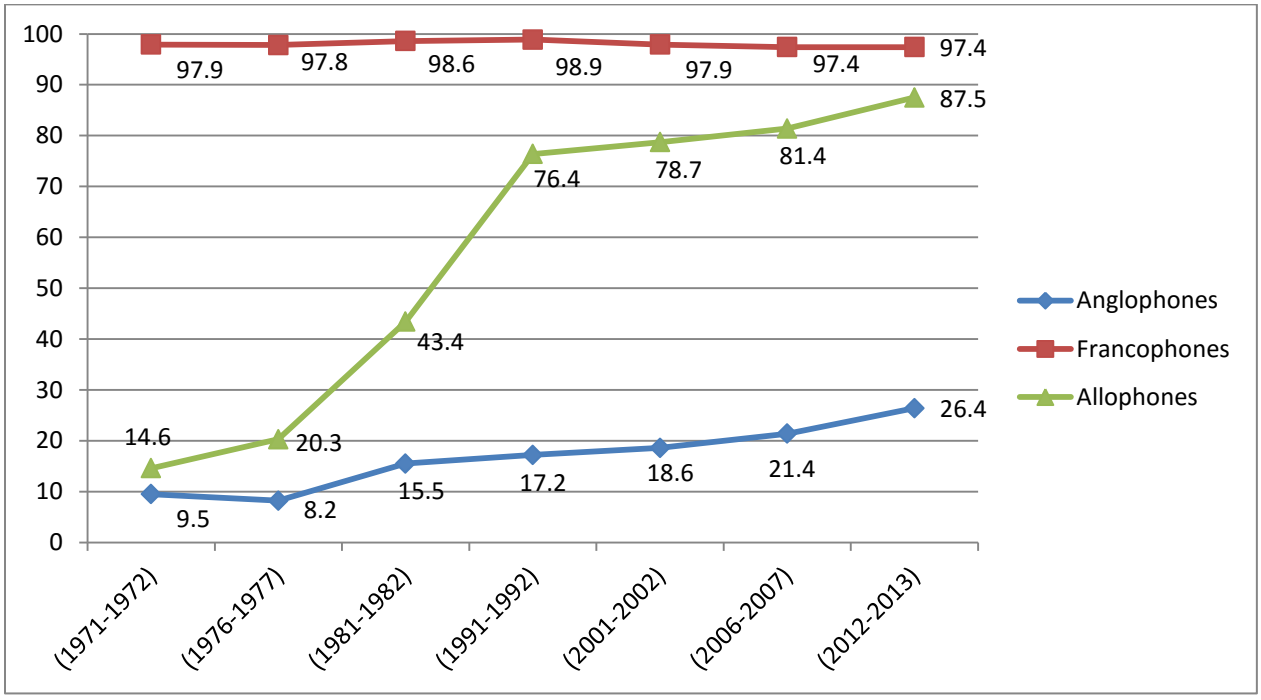


Anglophones Crossing Linguistic Borders

Table 2 (below) shows that between 2002 (the adoption of Bill 104) and 2013 (three years after the adoption of Bill 115), the number of Anglophones enrolled in French schools went from

18.6% (17,585 students) to 26.4% (19,688 students), which represents an increase of 2,103 students (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013; Bourhis & Foucher, 2012, p. 39). Looking back at Table 1, the numbers of Anglophone students in the province's English schools during the same period went from 81.4% in 2002 (76, 818 students) to 73.6% (62, 409 students) in 2013 (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, p. 14).

Table 2. Percentage of students in French pre-school, primary and secondary schools in the province of Quebec, by mother tongue: 1971 to 2013
(Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, p. 13)



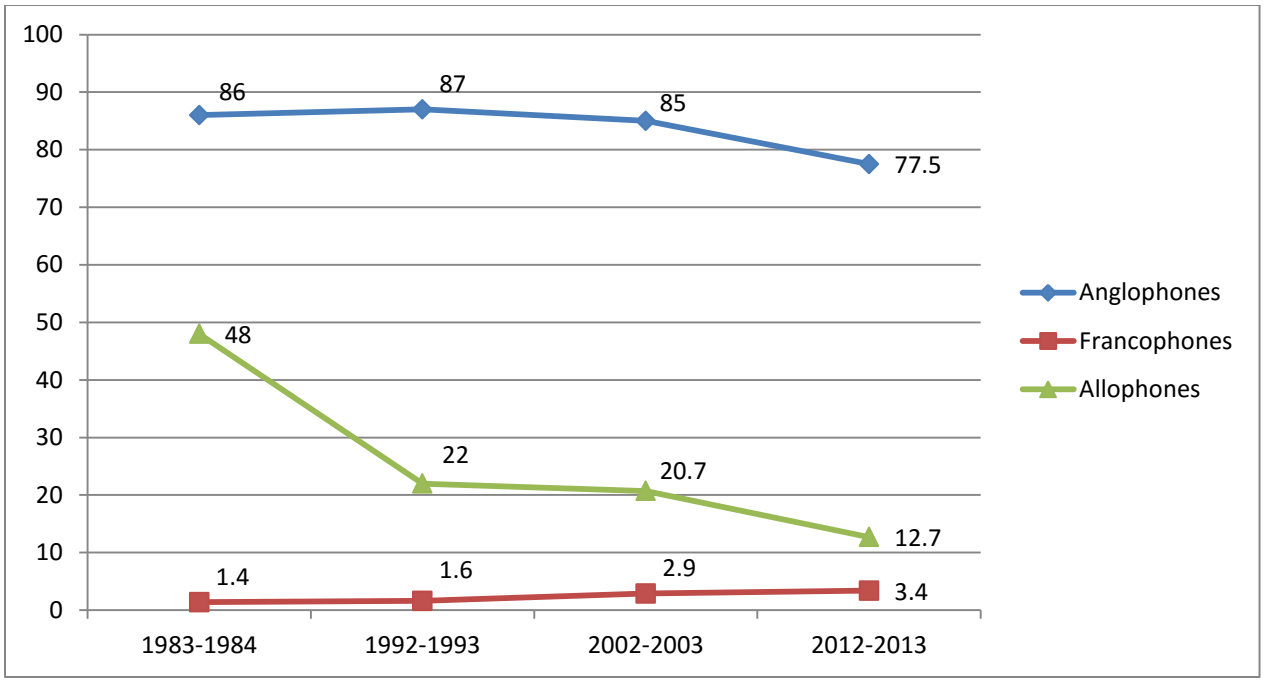
Do these numbers point to an increased interest in French-language instruction on the part of parents of Anglophone children? Bourhis and Foucher, citing the same data from the same tables in 2008, state the following,

> That this many 'rights holders' to English schools have chosen to attend French schools attests to the growing drawing power of the French majority school system in the Province and the concern of Anglophone parents to maximise the French-English bilingualism skills of their children. Despite the prevalence of French immersion in the Quebec English school system, anecdotal evidence

> suggests that these English school 'rights holders' are switching to the French school system to gain stronger spoken and written French fluency as individuals (Bourhis & Foucher, 2012, p. 39).

However, according to the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (2013) the linguistic groups in Tables 1 & 2 above are defined by the students' mother tongue and do not take into account whether the students are eligible for English-language instruction (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, pp. 13-14). To reiterate, a student can be "Anglophone", i.e. have English as a mother tongue, and still not be eligible for English-language instruction in Quebec. Perhaps an additional explanation for the overall decline in enrolment in English schools, therefore, is that the criteria for eligibility for English-language instruction, which have become more stringent with the "narrowing" of the "écoles passerelles" loophole via Bill 115, have simply had a negative effect on the numbers of students who are eligible to attend English schools. As is demonstrated by Table 3 below, the number of Anglophone students eligible for instruction in English in Quebec has dropped significantly since 1983, from 86% to 77.5%. The number of eligible Allophone students has dropped even more significantly over the same period, from 48% to 12.7%. Once again, however, running counter to this trend is the number of Francophones eligible for English instruction, which has risen slightly over the last 30 years, from 1.4% to 3.4% (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, p. 22).

Table 3. Percentage of students eligible for English-language instruction in Quebec public schools in the province of Quebec, by mother tongue: 1983-2013
(Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, p. 22)



The Relationship between Eligibility and Choice

Currently in Quebec, among the total number of students who are eligible for instruction in English, 9 out of 10 opt, on average, to enrol in English school (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, p. 3). Sixty percent of the some 11600 new students enrolled in English schools annually are admitted on the basis of their parents having attended primary school in English in Canada (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, p.4).

Francophones.

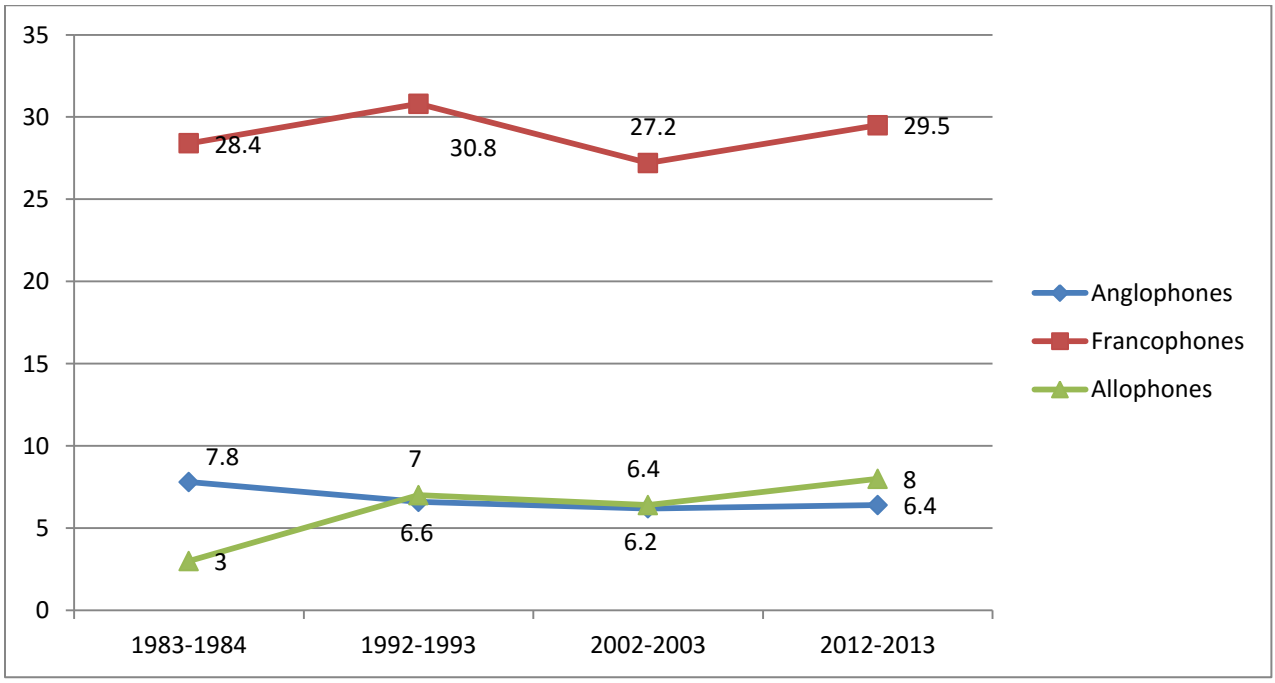
Table 3 above illustrates that during the 2012-2013 school year in the province of Quebec 25, 380 (3.4%) of Francophones were eligible for English-language instruction but Table 4 below demonstrates that only 7,484 (29.5%) of said Francophone "rights-holders" chose to attend French-language schools that year. These percentages have been relatively stable since the early

1980s, fluctuating by a few points one way or the other (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, p. 22) and seem to suggest that, given the choice, Francophones are more likely to choose English schools in Quebec.

Anglophones.

Table 3 above illustrates that on the Anglophone side during the 2012-2013 school year in Quebec, 65, 698 students (77.5%) were eligible for English-language instruction (Table 4 below illustrates that 4, 206 students (6.4%) chose to attend French-language schools that year. The latter percentage has also been relatively stable since the early 1980s, and although it declined about a percentage point in the 1990s it has remained at about 6% since that time (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, pp. 22-23).

Table 4. Percentage of students eligible for English-language instruction who choose to study in French in Quebec public schools in the province of Quebec, by mother tongue: 1983-2013 (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, p. 23)



Declining Enrolment and the Future of the English School System

The effect of Bill 101 on Quebec's English school system was almost immediately noticeable. In 1975, two years prior to the enactment of Bill 101, enrolment in the English school system in Quebec peaked at 16.7%. In 1977 this percentage had fallen to 16.3% and was almost halved to 9.6% in 1992. Throughout the nineties, however, this downward trend was reversed; in 2004 enrolment in the English sector had risen to 11.2% (Béland, 2006, p. 1). Despite the slightly upward trend in recent years, the overall decrease in enrolment in English schools in post-Bill 101 Quebec has led to the closure of many English schools, especially in the public sector (Lamarre, 2008, p. 67).

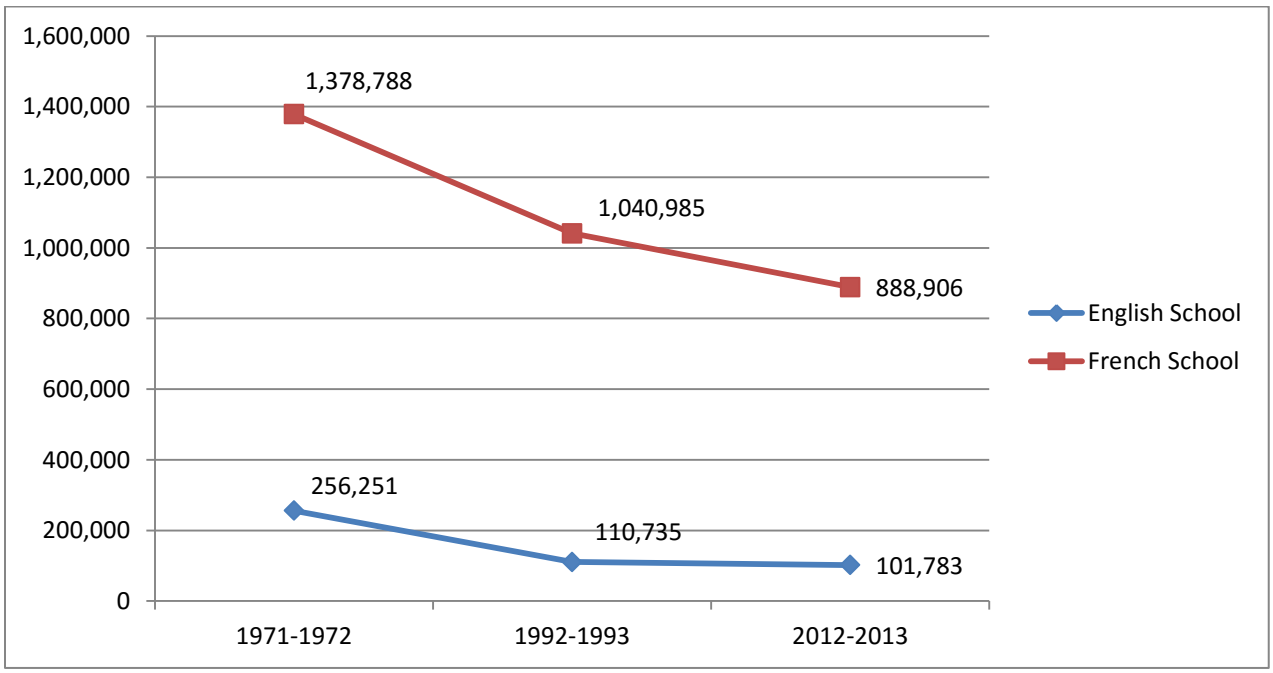
Regardless of the reasons behind it, declining enrolment in the province's English schools is a reality and is concerning for the future of the English school system in Quebec, for it threatens the "institutional vitality of the English school system across the Province" (Bourhis & Foucher, 2012, p. 39). In 1992, The Task Force on English Language Education echoed this message when it put forth the following cautionary message regarding Quebec's Anglophone community: "if it is prevented from renewing itself, it will simply fade away. Continuing to shut it off from its from its [*sic*] traditional sources of replenishment can and will be construed as a delayed but deliberate death sentence." (*Task Force on English Language Education*, February 1992, as cited in Jedwab, 2002, p. 2).

The abovementioned increase in the number of Francophones eligible for English-language instruction, however, has led to an increased enrolment of Francophones in the province's English schools, which has helped the English community's schools stave off the decline in their population (Jedwab, 2002, p. 21; 2004, p. 30; Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013). In fact, during the 2012-2013 school year Francophones represented a hefty 20% of the

population of Quebec's English schools (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, p. 14).

When talking about a drop in enrolment in English schools and its impact on the future of the English school system, it is important to also understand and acknowledge that the Quebec school system as a whole has experienced a significant drop in enrolment over the last 40 years. As Table 5 below demonstrates, the total number of students in Quebec French preschool, elementary and secondary schools was 1,378,788 in 1971-1972. Over 40 years later, the population of schools at the same levels has fallen to 888,906 in 2012-2013. The total number of students in Quebec schools has gone from 1,635,039 in 1972-1972 to 995, 260 in 2012-2013, which represents a decrease of almost 40% (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, p. 7).

Table 5. Numbers of Students enrolled in Quebec preschool, elementary and secondary schools in the province of Quebec: 1971-2013
(Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, p. 7)



The Linguistic Situation in Contemporary Quebec

Almost forty years after the enactment of Bill 101, research demonstrates that the French language is much more prevalent in Montreal than it once was (Béland, 1999 & Levine, 1997, as cited in Lamarre, 2007, p. 111) which can be in part attributed to changes in "language policy and legislation" in the province (Lamarre, 2007, p. 111). That being said, the subject of education is still a sensitive issue in the province of Quebec (Lamarre, 2007 as cited in Foucher, 2008). For instance, a study conducted jointly in 2003 by the Association of Canadian Studies and a private research group revealed that 55% of all Quebecers agreed that the future of the French language and French culture was very or quite assured in Quebec in 2003. When divided along linguistic lines, however, the numbers are quite telling: 53% of Quebec Francophones and 81% of Quebec Anglophones felt that the status and future of the French language and French culture in Quebec in 2003 was at least somewhat secure. These numbers show that, despite the progress that has been made by the French language in the province over the last 30 years, many Quebec Francophones feel that the struggle to preserve their language in their own backyard continues (Anctil, 2007, p. 198).

While feelings regarding the future of the French language in Quebec vary by linguistic group and while a fraction of Quebec parents today thinks that being functionally bilingual is sufficient, for the most part Quebec parents want their children to "graduate from high school fully bilingual and biliterate" (Advisory Board on English Education [ABEE], 1995 & Laperrière, 2006, as cited in Lamarre, 2008, p. 72). After all, the benefits of being bilingual are multifarious; as far as young Quebec Anglophones are concerned, for example, being bilingual both improves their employment prospects and allows them to feel more comfortable in present-day French Quebec. Increased bilingualism will essentially "allow the next generation of young Anglo-Quebecers to

stay and be employed in the province and hopefully feel like full citizens" (ABEE, 1995 & Laperrière, 2006, as cited in Lamarre, 2008, p. 72).

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

As mentioned earlier, the present study was conducted using a phenomenological research design. I have already discussed that which led me to research the topic in question, and the approach of phenomenology is a good fit for said topic since a phenomenological study, as J.W. Creswell puts it,

> describes the meaning for several individuals of their ***lived experiences*** of a concept or a phenomenon. Phenomenologists focus on describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon (e.g., grief is universally experienced). The basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (a 'grasp of the very nature of the thing,' van Manen, 1990, p. 177, as cited in Creswell, J.W., pp. 57-58). To this end, qualitative researchers identify a phenomenon (…and …) the inquirer then collects data from persons who have experienced the phenomenon, and develops a composite description of the essence of the experience for all of the individuals (pp. 57-58).

My aim in this study, therefore, is two-fold: to look at the phenomenon of how linguistically exogamous parents experience choosing between French and English-language instruction in the Quebec context and to gain a better qualitative understanding of its "universal essence".

Furthermore, phenomenology seeks to explain "human situations, events, meanings, and experiences as they are known in everyday life but typically unnoticed beneath the level of conscious awareness" (Seamon 2000, as cited in Seamon & Sowers, 2008, p. 43). The goal is to look at that which is "obvious but unquestioned and thereby questioning it" (Seamon & Sowers, 2008, p. 43). The experiences that mixed-language families have when it comes to making decisions for the education of their children is one such "obvious human situation" that has gone largely "unquestioned" from a qualitative standpoint (McAndrew and Eid, 2003a, p. 250).

I modeled my approach toward the study of the motivations behind choosing between English and French-language instruction in the Quebec context on psychologist Moustakas' (1994) approach as outlined in Creswell (2007). The steps I took in the present study were, therefore, as follows:

- Determining whether phenomenology was the best approach for the research problem, which was that there is a gap in the qualitative research regarding the reasons for which parents (who are able to do so) choose between English and French school in Quebec.

- Finding "a phenomenon of interest to study" which, in this case, was how linguistically exogamous couples experience choosing between English and French school in the Quebec context (Creswell, 2007, p. 60).

- Collecting data from at least 5 people who have experienced the phenomenon through various means, which could include in-depth interviews; journals; various forms of art; formally written responses, etc. (Polkinghorne, 1989 and Van Manen, 1990 as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 60)

- Asking the participants two broad, general questions (Moustakas, 1994, as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 61), namely: What have you experienced in terms of the phenomenon? What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences of the phenomenon? While these two broad questions "focus attention on gathering data that will lead to a textural description and a structural description of the experiences, and ultimately provide an understanding of the common experiences of the participants" (Creswell, 2007, p. 61), participants in the present study were also asked other open-ended follow-up questions to help clarify statements and elaborate on them (Creswell, 2007, p. 61).

- Going through the interview transcripts and identifying "'significant statements' sentences, or quotes that provide an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon", a process to which Moustakas (1994) refers as ***horizonalization*** (Creswell, 2007, p. 61). This process also involves suspending the researcher's personal assumptions and preventing "the researcher's meanings and interpretations or theoretical concepts (from entering) the unique world of the informant/participant" (Creswell, 1998, pp. 54 & 113; Moustakas, 1994, p. 90; Sadala & Adorno, 2001, as cited in Groenewald, 2004, p. 18)

- Developing ***clusters of meaning*** from these significant statements into themes (Creswell, 2007, p. 61) while continuing to bracket "presuppositions in order to remain true to the phenomenon" (Groenewald, 2004, p. 19).

- Using the abovementioned significant statements and themes to "write a description of what the participants experienced (***textural description***) (and a) description of the context or setting that influenced how the participants experienced the phenomenon (…) (***structural description***)" (Creswell, 2007).

- Using the abovementioned textural and structural descriptions to put together "a composite description that presents the 'essence' of the phenomenon, called the ***essential, invariant structure (or essence)***" focusing mainly on those experiences that are common to the participants (Creswell, 2007). The idea here is that "all experiences have an underlying ***structure*** (grief is the same whether the loved one is a puppy, a parakeet, or a child)" (Creswell, 2007). The goal of this ultimate description is for "the reader should come away from the phenomenology with the feeling, 'I understand better what it is like for someone to experience that' (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 46, as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 62).

Creswell (2007) points out that in Moustakas's approach (1994) there is also a step in which the researcher "write(s) about (his or her) own experiences and the context and situations that have influenced (his or her) experiences" (p. 62). Creswell states, however, that he prefers to do this separately from the analysis of the participants' statements; I decided to largely follow Creswell's approach on this front to keep my assumptions and experiences as removed from the analysis of the interviews as possible (Creswell, 2007, p. 62). I therefore reserved my reflections for the very beginning and very end of the present discussion.

Data for this study was collected through extended, unstructured interviews with 3 Anglophone-Francophone couples and one Francophone single mother whose children have an Anglophone father. All participants were residents of the Greater Montreal area when the interviews took place. Each interview lasted about an hour. Couples were recruited either through peer and colleague recommendations or through Internet sites such as Craigslist and Kijiji.

Participants were asked two broad interview questions and prompting follow-up questions throughout the interview. The two broad questions were:

1. How did you and your spouse go about deciding between French and English-language schooling for your children?

2. Are you generally satisfied with the decision you made?

In keeping with the typical phenomenological research design, each interview was tape recorded and transcribed (McMillan, 2004, pp. 275-275) and I listened to each interview and read each transcript multiple times while keeping my own beliefs in check to help me identify "significant statements" (Moustakas, 1994, as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 61) to get to "the 'essence' of (the) account" and "'a practical understanding' of meanings and actions" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 8).

In sum, the goal of this study, as a phenomenological study, was to "attempt to represent the experiences of the observed accurately" rather than trying to influence the opinion of those who would eventually consume the information generated by the study (Anderson, 1998, p. 122).

Chapter Four: The Interviews

Anne and Mike

The first couple interviewed were in their thirties at the time of the interview with three children under the age of ten. The father, Mike[2], a Francophone, was educated in French at both the primary and secondary school levels, but chose to attend an English-language CÉGEP (Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel). He also completed his university studies in English. The mother, Anne, an Anglophone, went to a French primary school and attended an English high school where she was enrolled in French immersion. She attended CÉGEP and university in English. Two of Anne and Mike's three children, Ellen, aged 8 and Jessica, aged 5, were enrolled in school at the time of the interview; the former was in second grade and the latter was in kindergarten, both at a French school.

Anne and Mike: Significant Statements.

Regarding the reason for which they chose French school for their children, Anne and Mike agreed that they felt it would be "easier for (the children) to learn French earlier". Anne elaborated, "in the English system they're not fully immersed in (French, even in the French immersion program) and I wanted them to get the basis of (French) as early as possible and it's way easier to get it when they're young than when they're older". She added, "I wanted them to be perfectly bilingual and I'm not sure that coming out of the English school system that you (are) perfectly bilingual". Mike continued, "(Based on) our experience, most people we know, if you don't learn French early, you don't learn it as well, later". Anne elaborated, "By just reading and (…)

[2] Participants' names have been changed to protect confidentiality.

"structure de phrase" and all that stuff (…) if you're not immersed in it, you may know French words but when you put them in a sentence you don't necessarily put them in the right order".

When asked whether they were concerned about the quality of the education in the English system, Anne answered,

> I know that the quality of French … not that the quality's not good (in the English system) just that it's not … they're not going to be at the same level. Going at a French elementary school and an English elementary school they're for sure not coming out with the same level of French.

Anne then elaborated, "French immersion in (and English) high school is a joke". Mike chimed in, "You did French in class and the minute you walked out of class … (you didn't speak French anymore)". Anne continued, "But even at that, it was a joke, especially coming out of French elementary school (…) the verbs and stuff we were doing in high school was … we were doing more (…) in grade 5 and 6 (in the French school) than we were doing in grade 8, 9, 10 (in the English school)". Anne continued on about their approach to sending their children to French school,

> What I did know was that they were never going to do bilingual (…) even if we had considered the English school system they would never have done the 50/50, they would have always gone (into immersion) within the English school (…). My only concern at one point was, with the French system (…) sometimes they're very traditional, like, you get the older (style) sitting in rows and it's very (… strict …) so that was a little bit of a concern (…) at one point, but we didn't even go and visit the French school (…) we'd heard good things within the community and that was just what we were going to do and at a certain point, come grade 2 or grade 3 if they really were unhappy with it, then we could pull them out. But we knew we couldn't do the reverse. We couldn't put them (…) in the English school and then go with the French school after because they wouldn't be able; they wouldn't be up to par with where the other kids were at (… the adaptation …) would be much more difficult (in the other direction)".

As to whether the children would continue on in French at the high school level, Anne and Mike explained that they had not yet made up their minds, “We’re not there yet, we have no idea what we’re doing for high school at this point”, Anne said. Asked whether they were interested in giving their children the choice between French and English at the high school level, Anne explained that their older daughter had already expressed the desire to attend an English high school, “I don’t know if that’ll change as she gets older and realizes that her friends, who are going to be with her in grade 5 and 6 are not going to be going to the English school, um, so that may change as she gets close-knit friendships …”. Despite her daughter’s wishes, however, Anne also expressed her belief that high school was a bit early to be given the choice between French and English and that said choice would be more appropriate at the CÉGEP level. “CÉGEP for sure they’ll have a choice; like he (referring to Mike) went to CÉGEP in English, and I mean to speak to him you’d never know that he was French”, Anne said. Mike, however, seemed to disagree, “(High school is) early (to make the switch from one language of instruction to another) and it’s late. By the time you’re at grade 6 you’ve done 6 years in French and suddenly you’re being asked to switch to English that you’ve only really done at home, and very little of in school, that’s a big switch”, he said.

Asked about why they thought their child seemed interested in attending high school in English, Mike responded, “Fear. She gets stressed with school and stuff, and then she gets comfortable … when she gets stressed and tired she wants only to do English”. Anne was visibly unsure of this point of view but Mike continued, “I’ve seen it. The only time (Ellen’s) ever mentioned (wanting to go to English school) to me is when she’s had, like, a rough day or a rough week, when she’s tired”. Anne continued,

> Ellen’s very very hard on herself (…) she’s a perfectionist (…) but (…) all of her friends from daycare all went to the English school so when she started at

> the French school she knew nobody, so she went in, (…) first day and (…) there was nobody that she - in that yard to play with … and that brought a lot of (…) anxiety and (…) I was nervous for her (…) and I tried to kind of (say), 'No, you'll be fine, and you're going to French …' and she ended up being fine; she's super easy-going and makes friends quickly but (…) that was my fear, (that) she's going to go to school and have nobody, you know, and then she's going to be "the English kid" on the playground that no one's going to want to talk to, you know, and be ostracized which … it didn't happen.

Anne and Mike's younger daughter had a harder time adjusting to her new school, despite the fact that she, unlike her older sister, had been in a French daycare. Anne explained,

> (Jessica) just happens to be a shyer kid. (…) She just (…) didn't want to speak; it took until about (the) end of October / beginning of November where she would start to speak at school and (…) let her needs be known. But her French, it's all been up here the whole time, it's just now it's starting to come out.

When Anne and Mike's first child, Ellen, was born, they decided that Anne would speak to her in English and Mike in French. When, at about 9 months of age, Ellen wasn't showing any signs of speaking, the couple became worried that they had "confused" her and switched to speaking to her only in English. Anne explained,

> I was like 'it's not working' so we stopped and we both started speaking English to her, and then she was fine, and then I realized that was like the dumbest thing ever, so when Jessica (their second child) was born, we're like okay no, we're going to go back, we're going to start over, so, with Ellen (Mike) speaks to her in English a lot of the time, now with homework and school and stuff he'll speak to her in both. With Jessica he speaks to her only in French and with Timothy* (their youngest child) he speaks only in French.

Anne then related a story about Ellen's teacher,

> It was really nice this year Ellen's teacher said, she didn't know she was Anglophone, her name's (a French name) so you wouldn't necessarily know from her name, but to hear her speak, her teacher had no idea, she said 'I had no idea she's Anglophone' which is like the biggest compliment to us, (…) I was like 'oh, that's good' (…) you can't tell one way or another if she's Anglophone or Francophone, so at that point that means, to me, she's bilingual basically, I mean she's still lacking in, in more advanced language and stuff, that'll come as she reads and stuff more … Language is huge (…) and, I mean even me, I went through the French elementary school and then I went to English high school and you lose a lot of it … and when I was working and teaching, I taught in French for a while and when I was really doing it, yeah I had it, and then you stop using it; I went on maternity leave 3, 4, 5 years in a row, and then I (…) I lost a lot of it, and then you start to doubt yourself; I don't want them to do that.

The parents were clearly proud of the fact of the teacher "not knowing" their daughter was an Anglophone, which highlights the notion (held by these participants and others) that it is desirable for one's mother tongue to be indiscernible. I will revisit this idea later on in my analysis.

Asked whether she had noticed any discrimination or negative attitudes toward the children, Anne said

> (…) the media (gives the impression that), especially with French teachers, that they look down on the English kids and Ellen's teacher (…) we just met with her two weeks ago for interviews and (…) she was so supportive and she said 'Oh, it's good that you speak English and she spoke to me at one point in English during the interview, which (…) I don't think that that's always the case, but she's (…) probably an exception or maybe that's a perception from the media. And she said 'oh, you should learn all the languages in the world, learn English, learn French, learn Spanish, so I found that really interesting (…) because (the media gives us the impression) that (…) these French teachers (feel that) everybody has to only learn French; but I think that's a perception that we have whereas I was even surprised that your family's (speaking to the father) not, like separatist because I always thought that all Francophones are separatists and that's not the case at all, I mean, there's tons of Francophones that live out here who (don't want to separate).

Anne continued,

> We've really been lucky with the school that we're in and the teachers that the kids have had they've been really welcomed and (…) in kindergarten they offer 'francisation' so both girls did that and, uh, they offered I think in grade 1 too but Ellen didn't need it (…) anymore (…) and Jessica, well, we'll see how it goes.

With respect to the eligibility for English instruction as laid out by Bill 101, Anne said,

> I think a lot of people are unaware that (…) that you're able to send your kid to the French system and still keep their rights and the rights for their children to go (to English school) (… for example, when we first started looking into French schools) someone would say (something to me about losing the right to attend English school and) that's the one thing that would have maybe changed my mind (…). And so I did a lot of research and (…) then I called because I wanted to confirm that at least that they would still have choice. Granted, who knows what's going to happen in the next 25 years they could totally take all of that away.

This idea of "losing the right" to English instruction is an interesting theme that I will revisit in the next chapter.

On the subject of the health and future of the English school system in Quebec, Anne had this to say,

> (…) I hope the English system is going to still be okay (…) at least within special needs kids and (…) kids who don't have the ability to learn two languages, those for sure will have to keep some kind of the English system alive and (…) I don't see everyone going to the French system. I won't tell them to (laughing … I'll say) 'No, I send my kid there but that's only because my husband's Francophone'.

On the subject of the marketability of their children and whether that drove their decision to send their children to a French school, Anne explained,

> (Marketability) is not (…) driving me at this point at all (…) it's a gift to have two languages (…) yeah it'll make them more marketable within Quebec versus someone who doesn't have any French, but it's not something that I've really even thought about.

Mike added,

> Everybody should be bilingual (…) rather than saying that they want to stay in Quebec therefore they need to be Francophone (…) I'm not looking at it like that. I don't think there's any reason for them not to be bilingual. Same as if you were in the States I would expect you to also know Spanish, you know?

Anne continued,

> I just wanted them to (…) have the best of all the worlds, all the worlds that we can give them, you know? That's, that's what I would want. They're going to grow up perfectly bilingual and to me that's a huge gift. And I guess it does make them more marketable.

Mike interjected, "Well, at the end, but that's not the main reason for it". Anne then continued on,

> (The government doesn't even want the Quebec people to be) bilingual, right? The laws want them Francophone, which is their losing out in the end, because the Anglophones are becoming more marketable in the sense that they're becoming bilingual and the Francophones are staying French, so it's … they're kind of screwing themselves in the end.

Mike added,

> (…) it just doesn't make sense. Like, why not (learn another language)? (…) they're learning so it doesn't hurt them to (…) learn a second language uh, and when it comes to marketability yes, of course it's going to be a benefit to have two languages – you basically open up twice as many opportunities! (…) even if they're *(sic)* at least have two (languages) when (they are) deciding what they want to do in college, if the best program is in French, yes it might be harder if

> they (went) to English high school or vice versa, but at least they'll be able to adapt to it, rather than just saying 'oh, I can't do what I really want to do (because I only speak one language).'

Anne also discussed another difference between the English and French system that she has observed. She explained, "the French school boards are very quick to put (kids who struggle) out the door. And I know that from working in the English school system that we get a lot of (English) kids that didn't hack it in the French system (…); they don't put up the same with special needs kids". She elaborated, "English school's very 'integration' whereas French school's not as much". She went on, "if we had a child that was really struggling to learn, I don't know that I would have put them in the French system, they probably would go to English because why would I make it (worse)?"

Jacques and Cynthia

A second couple interviewed, Jacques and Cynthia, were in their late 40s and early 50s at the time of the interview and had older children, a girl aged 17 and a boy aged 18, both recent high-school graduates at the time of the interview. Jacques, a Francophone, attended kindergarten in English but the rest of his education was in French. He did about a year of CÉGEP (in French) but did not complete his diploma. Cynthia, an Anglophone, was educated in the English system in Quebec but was enrolled in French immersion in high school. Cynthia went straight into the workforce upon finishing high school; she did not attend CÉGEP.

Jacques and Cynthia: Significant Statements.

Regarding her own educational background, Cynthia said, "I was able to learn French easily because it wasn't … I don't want to use the word 'shoved down my throat'; it was presented

to us as an option and it was wonderful". Cynthia went on to explain why her parents had enrolled her in French immersion. She said,

> because my father, who worked for the Royal Bank, was Anglophone and my mother also … he was offered to leave to go to Toronto during the big "swoop" when we were all leaving (referring to the mass exodus of Anglophones post-Bill 101) and the reason we stayed (…) is because he wanted us to learn the French; because he would have easily gotten picked up, packed the bags and taken us all up the 401, but he wanted us to have that education. So that is the only reason we really stayed here in Montreal because he was offered many positions to go, and he probably would have had better positions; he was basically demeaned by staying here, but he did it, you know?"

For his part, Jacques discussed his experience in the French system. He said,

> It was strict. (…) Back then, a teacher grabbing my neck and leaving nail marks and (…) my mom (…) said 'well, next time just listen!' (… and …) religion was the same thing I remember questioning something (…) we had uh, the "cathéchisme"? And I remember questioning one thing and they said, 'don't question, just learn it to remember it' and I thought, 'well that's pretty stupid' (…).

Regarding how they approached language in the home with their children, Jacques said,

> When the children were born (…) we had a discussion about this and I said, 'Well, I will speak to them in French, and you speak to them in English, and then (…) we'll just give them the benefit of both languages.' But, life takes over. So, at home, we speak English. And we've done that since they were born. The only time I speak French is when I'm upset at them (laughing) (…) If the French comes out, they know that … I'm not happy.

Cynthia elaborated,

> We had good intentions of speaking more French at home; even myself, I tried, because I was still in the working world where I was using my French a lot more, but because we (the parents) converse in English, I think if we had conversed more French and English between us as a couple we probably would have spoken more French to them. But they do, they knew enough (French), even as young kids.

Jacques then explained how his family perceived the couple's children,

> So today they … they speak French, but with a thick English accent which, (…) when they started communicating with my family, that upset my family; (my family had) that 'how could you let this happen' type thing, but … it is what it is. I mean, my kids, I think, when they finish their studies, will know enough French that when they apply for a job that requires bilingualism, they'll be alright.

When asked to clarify, Jacques said that the disapproval or reaction he sensed from his family had less to do with the language of instruction he and his wife chose for their children and more about, he says, "(me) not putting more effort (at home) to make sure that they could converse (…) really well in French (…) there were never any open comments but I can sense … I can sense it". Cynthia continued,

> "And the children sensed it too; the children sensed that they were not, maybe as comfortable with (…) 'dad's family' (…) and it was only because of the French issue, really, you know, because they were just as loving and caring as my side of the family, but because of the French side, (the children) didn't feel … they were shy, so they were less likely to get involved and understand jokes, and stuff like that".

Jacques interjected, "Yeah, you're right (…) because of that divide, my kids would (…) even physically (…) because they couldn't communicate that well, and (it was) the same for the other side, so it created a bit of a gap".

Jacques and Cynthia's children attended English school but were enrolled in the French immersion program in which the curriculum was delivered exclusively in French up until grade 4.

With respect to the reason for which they chose to send their children to English school, Jacques said, “When it came to school and religion I deferred to her. Because to me, it could have been one or the other, it wouldn’t have made a difference to me”.

> Cynthia: because of the political situation, you had to have somebody in the household that had that certificate saying that you were allowed to go to English school … I wanted to … and (to the father) I don’t remember to be honest, if … how much we did discuss it, but for me it was important that my children were going to get the same certificate so that they would have a choice when their children grew up. And it was more for that … that we didn’t want … because if they had gone to French school exclusively…
>
> Jacques: Then you lose that …
>
> Cynthia: They lost that ‘right’ (to attend English school). And it was more for the ‘right’ … to protect the ‘right’ than anything else. I wasn’t worried about our children learning French or English, that I wasn’t really worried, it was more for the ‘right’ for them, so that (…) will have that certificate saying that their children, no matter where they go, will have the ‘right’ …
>
> Jacques: The same “right”, yeah.
>
> Cynthia: So it was for the “right” rather than anything else.

This belief regarding the potential loss of the “right” to receive instruction in English is important and I will revisit it in the next chapter.

As to whether or not they researched the differences between the school systems and the particular schools in their neighbourhoods themselves, Cynthia explained, “As a mom, talking to everybody in the community (was my research). Who was going where, why were they going there …”. Jacques elaborated, “it wasn’t about the quality of the system as much as uh, you know the neighbours, the kids they play with … ‘Oh, you’re going to that school, you’re all going there?’ (…) (It was) important that they would be in a familiar environment”. Cynthia then added the importance of proximity and zoning in their choice of school:

> (... The school system …) designate(s) where you're allowed to go, and where you fit in, and if you don't fit in there, if you choose another school, you are basically put on the waiting list for that school. (… And …) the school we chose (…) was also quite close to (…) the house, so we could walk there, which made a difference also, you know? Financially I didn't need a second car to drive them, you know, and they could actually, they could walk on their own as they got older.

Speaking of bilingualism making their children more marketable in Quebec, Cynthia said, "(…) we wanted our children to be able to survive in Quebec, but also, having bilingualism in their back pocket (and it) comes back like riding a bicycle; it will come back when you're put into that situation, so no matter where they go, they'll be able to use that". Jacques continued, "Professionally, personally, socially … (for example) my son: if he was unilingual English how can he have the option of meeting a French girl?" Cynthia continued,

> I can't understand how somebody cannot want their children to learn both (… languages …) and (as for) putting your children in the French system; like I said, for us, the only reason we put them in the English system … it wasn't because I was English, it was to give them the 'right' (to be educated in English themselves and to pass the "right" to English-language education on to their children).

Jacques continued, "(My wife and I) see (learning two languages) as opportunity (…) and other people say 'no' because the English is still kind (of) the 'enemy'; (some Francophones think to themselves) '(Anglophones) are trying to suppress us, so we don't need their language'". Cynthia elaborated,

> We looked at the big picture. Even though (…) our children might stay in Quebec the rest of their lives, we wanted to give them room to grow … anywhere, whether it's on the Internet, anything (…) it opens doors. I think the Americans are now looking at the same type of thing learning Spanish, you know? They're starting to

> study that very intensely and I think that's a huge … you know? If I lived in the States and I wanted my children to be bilingual, they would be bilingual English and Spanish.

Emily and Sylvain

The third couple interviewed were in their forties at the time of the interview and have two daughters: Caroline, who was in 10th grade at the time, and Melanie, who was in 8th grade. The mother, Emily, an Anglophone, was educated in English and French at the elementary level, and then completed high school and university in English. Being born very close to the cut-off date for school admission, Emily jumped ahead from grade 1 to grade 2 halfway through the grade 1 school year, and was switched to a French elementary school in grade 4, so she spent a total of 3.5 years at an English elementary school and 3 years at a French elementary school. The father, Sylvain, a Francophone, was educated in French in Quebec from elementary school through university.

Emily and Sylvain: Significant Statements.

When asked about how she experienced choosing between English and French school for her children, Emily said,

> Originally I was going to send Caroline to French school (…) that was the plan, only because (…) the people around me were saying 'oh, well French is a harder language to learn, (the girls) should go to French school', and I felt … kind of a family pressure, not, not from Sylvain, though, funny enough, he would have sent them to English school originally (…) it was from other family members, even on my side of the family, I guess my dad, mostly, but (…) I just felt that maybe it would be better if I sent them to French school, maybe it is a harder language to learn … but I wasn't completely comfortable with that.

Emily continued, explaining that after initially signing Caroline up for French school, a series of events encouraged her to change her mind,

> One week following signing her up, I met three different people, not even people I even knew, who told me about the local English school. I had never even heard of it before, it was just a very weird thing (…) I didn't even know where it was (…) so I went to visit it (…) I brought the girls with me and, immediately I walked in, and I liked it. (…) it was a warm place (…) and they were very nice and (…) I had that immediate feeling where I felt like I was at home. (…) also, there was an article that came out (…) in *Today's Parent*, which is a Canada-wide magazine, of the top 40 schools in Canada, and that (English school that I had visited) was one of them! It was very weird (…).

When asked whether there was opposition at home and amongst family members when she changed her mind about sending Caroline to French school, Emily said she "braced herself" because she was expecting Sylvain to react negatively. After all, she explained, things were "all set"; their daughter was already enrolled in a certain school and now Emily was flip-flopping on the decision they had made. After explaining her point of view to Sylvain, however, he came around quite quickly and agreed to send the girls to the local English school. Sylvain explained, "Pour l'école primaire, Sarah était inscrite pour l'école française et anglaise. Nous avons opté pour l'école anglaise à cause des commentaires et des éloges de cette petite école bien établie". And in the end, Sylvain is happy with the decision they made. He said, "Je crois que la qualité de l'enseignement de (l'école que mes filles aient fréquentée) était supérieure à ce que mes filles auraient eu dans les écoles françaises de notre région".

Emily also said that she felt good about her decision to change to the English system because in the French school Caroline would have attended at the time, English was not part of the curriculum at all until the 3rd grade and Emily was concerned that that was a long time to go without any exposure to English in an academic setting. The English school in question, on the

other hand, had more French than the French school did English and the level of French in the English school seemed to be quite high. Emily explained her thought process at the time,

> I'd rather her have both languages than just focus on one language and this way she's going to learn to read and write in both languages at a decent level; whereas I know that sending her to French school she'd come out of there perfectly French, with French written and reading, but not at a level of English, unless she did it on her own, not at a level of English that I would have been happy with.

Emily added that another reason she wanted to send her children to English school was to "keep their right" to send their own children to English school. She explained,

> When I did make the decision to send (Caroline) to English school and I called (… the ministry …) there was an issue because (the government) said 'well, you can't send her to English school because you (Emily) haven't had enough English education'. What had happened was, in grade … kindergarten, grade 1, 2 and 3 I did in English but 4, 5, and 6 I did in French and I (…) I did grade 1 & 2 the same year (because I skipped ahead to grade 2 halfway through the school year), so technically I only had 3 years of English elementary education and you need to have a minimum of 4 (years) elementary education (in an English school in Canada to be eligible to send your children to English school, so) even though I did all my secondary in English, because I'd had only 3 years of English elementary, they weren't going to allow (me to send my girls to English school) and (I said to myself) 'wow, all this time I thought I had a choice and I didn't'; but then they asked me the question, 'were her grandparents educated in English in Quebec?' and I said, 'well, her grandmother was', so that's when I (said to myself) 'Oh my gosh, I almost didn't have the right … and then I was even more (… determined to send her to English school …); to preserve (her right) she's got to go to English school too, so, (…) there were so many things, so many aspects of it, it wasn't just one thing, or one reason (…).

Emily further explained that the element of "choice" was very important to her, that she wanted to give her daughters the choice between English and French, including with respect to where they wanted to go to high school. She said,

> (I asked them) 'do you want to continue in (high school) in English, or do you want to go into French?' and Melanie wanted to go into French (…) but she wanted to go to (a particular school with) a particular program so she had to pass an exam (…) and she didn't pass it (…) they were only taking (…) 5% of the kids anyways (…) so then she said 'you know what, I'm just going to go to the English school' and I said 'well, that's fine', but I wanted them to have the choice and when they go to CÉGEP again they have the choice and I think their French is strong enough that they could do either one of them.

Sylvain, meanwhile, said that he would have liked their daughters to switch to French for high school, for a couple of reasons. He explained, "j'aurais aimé qu'elles poursuivent leurs éducations secondaires en français pour faciliter la transition au CÉGEP. Avoir un bon français écrit n'est pas chose facile".

Sylvain also commented on the fact that their eldest daughter, who, to reiterate, was in grade 10 at the time of the interview, had already expressed the desire to eventually attend an English-language CÉGEP. Regarding the logistics of her choice, Sylvain said that given where he and the girls' mother live, the commute to the English CÉGEPSs Caroline is considering means a daily commute by public transportation of at least an hour each way. He said, "Dommage, j'habite tout près (d'un collège francophone)". Regarding the reason Caroline has chosen an English CÉGEP' Sylvain said, "Elle se dit plus à l'aise en anglais. Mais je crois que la vraie raison est plutôt qu'elle veut garder son même cercle d'amis".

Regarding the importance of bilingualism, Emily said,

> They can function in both languages; the neighbourhood where we live is very French, so any activities they do outside of school are in French, so they really

> got a solid base; plus at their father's house, it's all French, so, they've got both languages, way easier than I did, I mean I did graduate with a bilingual certificate from high school, but I didn't really speak French outside school at all, and my French was okay … it wasn't until I moved into a French neighbourhood and had a French husband that my French got a lot better.

Sylvain had the following to say about bilingualism, "Le bilinguisme est une richesse. Je voulais absolument que mes filles soient bilingues. À la maison, ça a toujours été en français avec moi et en anglais avec Emily".

Emily admitted that her girls' oral fluency and general comfort level in French has little to do with the education they have received in the English school system and much more to do with their Francophone father and the exposure they have had to French in the neighbourhood in which they live. She said,

> Their oral French – the fact that they're comfortable with French – that didn't come from school. (…) I know that from (their Anglophone stepbrother), I know that from my own experience; I graduated (with a bilingual certificate) but I wasn't comfortable in French when I graduated. (… my stepson) is not comfortable in French; his marks are great – he can read, he can write, we know he can speak it – but he's not comfortable at all (…) even though he's done well in French in school, in the real world, his French, he doesn't feel, is good enough or he feels shy about it.

Andréanne

Andréanne is a Francophone who attended French school from elementary school through to university. She has 3 children--2 sons, Scott and Jason, who were in CÉGEP and grade 11 at the time of the interview, and a daughter, Emma, who was in grade 9 at the time of the interview. Andréanne's ex-husband, an Anglophone, was educated in English from elementary to university. Andréanne was interviewed alone about her thoughts on English versus French school for her children; she and her children's father are no longer in contact.

Andréanne: Significant Statements.

Asked about how she and her ex-husband decided whether to send their children to English or French school, Andréanne said that at the time the children's father was still at home with them and that since they spoke mostly English to the children it "wasn't even a question to send them (to school) in English)". The children started at an English elementary school in the French immersion program.

Andréanne then explained that her eldest son, Scott, who has Asperger's Syndrome, found the stress of French immersion too much to handle in kindergarten and grade 1 so Andréanne and her ex-husband decided to switch him to the English-only stream. Jason and Emma, who are 2 and 4 years younger than Scott, followed in the footsteps of their older brother.

When her youngest was in kindergarten and her two sons were in grades 3 and 5, Andréanne moved to an Anglophone area of the island of Montreal. She said, "They then went to a bilingual school (which I like better than immersion) and then went to high school in English. Their French is still good as all three of them won the French medal when graduating grade 6 and my son (who has Asperger's) won the most proficiency awards (5) when graduating high school and he is now in his 2nd year (of CÉGEP)".

Asked whether there was any tension in her family with respect to the fact that she had chosen to send her children to English school, Andréanne said, "no because I was closer to my in-laws (whom) were all English. My mom didn't live near me so my 'world' was mostly English. I'm glad they ended up switching school to bilingual though as it's a happy middle between immersion and English only". She then added, "I only regret not speaking to them in French only as that would've made them perfectly bilingual".

When asked to identify which skill her children struggled with most in French, Andréanne was quick to respond, “Speaking. My mom lives with us now and doesn’t speak English so (the children do) speak it but you can tell they’re English”. She continued,

> “My mom was more bothered (about the children being more “Anglophone”) when (the children) were younger. Actually my youngest son’s name was supposed to be (a popular Anglophone name) but she couldn’t say it. Lucky for her the name didn’t suit him when he was born! (But) she has been living with us for about 6 years now and has never brought up (the fact that my kids are more Anglophone than Francophone). She speaks to them in French and they understand and speak it well enough to talk to her and surprisingly enough she’s picked up a little bit (of English) too. I actually think my (mom was bothered by the fact that my children were more Anglophone when they were younger because) her then-boyfriend was bothered as he (was) a big separatist so I don’t think she really cared. (But in any case) she’s not the nurturing kind so she doesn’t interact all that much with (my children)”.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Findings

Essential Themes

The Desire for Bilingualism.

All couples interviewed, regardless of their children's language of instruction, expressed a desire for their children to be French-English bilingual. The idea that being bilingual "opens doors" – i.e. increases a person's marketability by making finding a job easier – appeared to be one reason for this desire. Beyond the question of marketability, however, the couples interviewed seemed to want their children to "fit in" and "be accepted", especially by members of the French-speaking population of Quebec, and being bilingual, it seems, is one way in which to achieve said "acceptance". The idea that being bilingual "is a gift"; "is beautiful"; "est une richesse" and that there "is no reason to not be bilingual", especially in the Quebec context, were also ideas that came out of the interviews.

The positive attitudes toward English-French bilingualism expressed by the participants in this study are representative of the attitudes of many people throughout Quebec and Canada, although positive attitudes toward English-French bilingualism in Canada are generally highest in Quebec itself and the provinces closest to and sharing a border with Quebec. Attitudes towards English-French bilingualism are lowest in the western provinces, including British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba (Adsett & Morin, 2005, p. 5).

Despite the fact that positive attitudes toward English-French bilingualism are highest in Quebec, French immersion programs in Canadian schools outside of Quebec are "bursting at the seams", even in western provinces where attitudes toward French-English bilingualism are the least favourable (Adsett & Morin, 2005; Hutchins, 2015). As Aaron Hutchins from *Maclean's Magazine* puts it, "when it comes to getting kids into French immersion programs—which have

come to be seen by many as a free private school within the public school system—there is nothing, it seems, that a Canadian parent won't do" (2015). As Hutchins points out, the drive to enrol children in French immersion outside of Quebec has been bolstered by studies that show that French immersion students have better working memory and reading scores than students in English-only programs. Furthermore, a study from The University of Guelph demonstrated that bilingual men and women outside of Quebec, even if they do not use their second language on the job, earn respectively an average of 3.8% and 6.6% more than men and women who are unilingual English; those numbers are even more significant in Quebec itself (2015). These numbers, however, while still noteworthy, are perhaps slightly skewed by the fact that bilingual men and women are likely bilingual in part because they perhaps come from, for example, families that have a higher social status that led them to obtain better educations in general. As the researchers involved in the abovementioned study admit,

> a possible interpretation for why bilingual employees tend to earn more money than unilingual employees is that second-language skills may indicate those individuals are stronger in unmeasured labour market characteristics such as ability, cognition, perseverance and quality education. These unmeasured characteristics can potentially have a bearing on labour productivity and increase the wages of bilingual individuals (University of Guelph, 2010).

Contrary to what certain participants in the present study believe, attitudes toward bilingualism and specifically bilingual education are quite different in the United States. The United States – whose *de facto* official language is English – is currently, as Carlos Ovando (2003) puts it, in a "dismissive period" when it comes to bilingual education; he explains that "the battle against bilingual education (in the United States) began to gain strength during the 1980s (… and …) the politics of language education during the Reagan and George H. W. Bush administrations

provided the context for the anti-bilingual seeds that were sown during the 1980s and continued in the 1990s" (p. 12).

At the root of this reticence toward bilingual education are, according to Ovando, "nativistic and melting pot ideologies that tend to demonize the 'other'" (p. 14). He elaborates,

> Because bilingual education is much more than a pedagogical tool, it has become a societal irritant involving complex issues of cultural identity, social class status, and language politics. Is language diversity a problem? Is it a resource? Is it a right? On the surface, these issues seem quite remote from the day-to-day realities of bilingual classrooms across the United States, yet they are the basis on which bilingual education is either loved or hated (Ovando, 1990, as cited in Ovando, 2003, pp. 14-15).

Ovando was writing in 2003 but today, twelve years later, American attitudes toward Spanish are still quite negative. Research out of Purdue University (Hopkins, Tran & Williamson, 2014) for example, demonstrates that "even subtle uses of Spanish can serve as primes of anti-immigration sentiment among certain sub-groups" (p. 45). For instance, "when Obama voters in the Massachusetts exit poll were exposed to a single line of Spanish, (those voters) became seven percentage points more likely to want to decrease immigration" (p. 45).

Mariana Souto-Manning (2006), a bilingual elementary school teacher and mother of a bilingual child, sums up her point of view on the state of bilingualism and bilingual education in the United States in the following way,

> Instead of thinking of bilingualism as a malady that affects part of the population, against which teachers need to fight, we, educators, and parents, need to start promoting bilingualism as augmenting and sophisticating children's thought processes, and serving as a resource for all children (…). In the United States, bilingualism is still reticently associated with minority populations (…). (People need to) recognize that bilingualism can add to, and not subtract from, the schooling and lives of all children (pp. 573-574).

Mark Hugo Lopez and Ana Gonzalez-Barrera (2013) of the Pew Research Center point out, however, that the "the story of the Spanish language in the U.S. is still unfolding" (Lopez and Gonzalez-Barrera, 2013).

Beyond their views of the merits of bilingualism, the couples interviewed differed in opinion as to the best way to achieve bilingualism, specifically French-English bilingualism in Quebec. While one couple, Anne and Mike, felt that sending their children to French school was the only way to ensure that they become "perfectly bilingual", another couple, Cynthia and Jacques, felt that French immersion in the English system was quite adequate for their children to "know enough French that when they apply for a job that requires bilingualism, they'll be alright". Emily and Sylvain, on the other hand, are very happy with the level of bilingualism that their girls have developed having attended English school, but credit this development less to the school and more to living in a very French neighbourhood and being exposed to French in their father's home and with their father's family on a regular basis. Lastly, Andréanne, whose children are products of the bilingual program of an English school, says that she regrets "not speaking to them in French only (herself at home) as that would've made them perfectly bilingual".

Perhaps the standard for that which constitutes "bilingualism" is really at the heart of the difference here. Again, while Andréanne, Anne and Mike expressed the desire for their children to be "perfectly bilingual", Cynthia and Jacques were satisfied with the idea of their children being "bilingual enough" to get a job for which bilingualism is a criterion, and Emily and Sylvain put emphasis on the importance of having strong speaking skills and the degree to which strong speaking skills were representative of one's bilingualism. As Emily said, speaking of herself, "I did graduate with a bilingual certificate from high school, but I didn't really speak French outside school at all, and my French was okay … it wasn't until I moved into a French neighbourhood and had a French husband that my French got a lot better". Emily also spoke to the idea of being

"comfortable" in French as being representative of her daughters' bilingualism; "being comfortable" is a criterion for bilingualism that was also touched upon by the other participants.

So what does it mean to be "bilingual"? Is it being able to get hired and able to "get by" in a job that requires both of the languages in question? Is it being able to "fit in" in a culture that embodies both of them? Is it being able to effortlessly switch back-and-forth between them? Is it being able to speak both languages without an accent? The situation is, of course, far from cut-and-dried. As François Grosjean (2010) explains,

> If one were to count as bilingual only those people who pass as complete monolinguals in each of their languages (they are a rarity), one would be left with no label for the vast majority of people who use two or more languages regularly but who do not have native-like fluency in each. The reason they don't is quite simply that bilinguals do not need to be equally competent in all of their languages. They usually acquire and use their languages for different purposes, in different domains of life, with different people.

Furthermore, whether the English or the French school system in Quebec is best equipped to turn out bilingual graduates, especially given the constraints set out by *The Charter of the French Language* is debatable and, according to some, a non-issue. Ici Radio-Canada (2013) points out that at The English Montreal School Board,

> on propose trois modèles d'enseignement du français au primaire : le modèle de base, le modèle bilingue et le modèle d'immersion française. Les écoles qui offrent le modèle de base donnent 70% de l'enseignement en anglais, alors que les 30% restants se font en français, ce qui donne un total de 2000 heures de français à la fin des années du primaire. L'enseignement en français de base que reçoivent les élèves anglophones est donc beaucoup plus important que l'enseignement en anglais reçu par leurs camarades francophones. La loi québécoise permet en effet aux anglophones d'enseigner différentes matières en français, ce qui n'est pas vrai chez les francophones qui ne font pas partie d'un programme d'immersion spécial. Ces derniers doivent donc se contenter de leurs seuls cours d'anglais.

The emphasis on French in the province's English schools has become a fundamental part of their curriculum. The Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE) is a provincial government organization whose mandate is "to advise the Minister of Education, Higher Education and Research on all matters affecting the educational services offered in English elementary and secondary schools and adult and vocational education centres" (Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Énseignement supérieur, 2016a, Section 1, para. 1). In a 1999 report entitled "Culture and English Schools in Play", the ABEE points out that "English schools (in Quebec) put enormous emphasis on turning out bilingual graduates" (ABEE, 1999, p. 31), and they do so in part to prepare Anglophone students for the job market but also to ensure "the survival and health of English Québec's community institutions, which must strive to retain their anglophone character and culture but whose integration into the wider community depends on their perceived usefulness to society as a whole" (ABEE, 1999, p. 31). These efforts have been fruitful; research has shown that overall, Anglophones in Quebec are generally satisfied with the level of French taught in the province's English schools. According to a 2013 survey commissioned by the CBC and conducted by EKOS Research, up to 70% of respondents, depending on age, felt that their children were receiving or had received sufficient French-language instruction (Ici Radio-Canada, 2013).

French schools, on the other hand, do not aim to produce bilingual graduates. In fact, according to the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation (2014), the goal of the French school system in Quebec is to produce graduates with a functional level of English. In 2014, the Conseil published a report on how to improve English instruction in Quebec's French schools in which it states,

> il ne faut pas perdre de vue que le but du système scolaire francophone au Québec n'est pas de rendre les enfants bilingues, au sens où ils seraient aussi à l'aise en anglais qu'en français. L'objectif est de leur donner les outils de base pour communiquer dans la langue seconde (p. 6).

In the same report, the Conseil acknowledges that the linguistic context in Quebec society makes the issue of English-language instruction in Quebec's French schools somewhat touchy,

> La société québécoise (…) tiraillée entre son désir de donner à ses enfants les meilleurs outils (intérêt individuel) et sa crainte de compromettre sa volonté de vivre en français en Amérique du Nord (intérêt collectif), elle traverse régulièrement des périodes de débat où l'on oppose la qualité et la pérennité du français et l'apprentissage de l'anglais, langue seconde (p. 6).

The Conseil continues,

> si l'on constate qu'il faut optimaliser l'enseignement de l'anglais, langue seconde, pour permettre à chacun d'atteindre le niveau visé par le programme, il est nécessaire de tenir compte du contexte linguistique nord-américain pour s'assurer de ne pas compromettre la qualité de la maîtrise du français ni son usage comme langue commune (p. 7).

The province's French schools are, therefore, navigating a different terrain than the province's English schools: Teaching a significant amount of English as a second language in Quebec's French schools is seen as a slippery slope prospect for the future vitality of French in North America while teaching a significant amount of French in Quebec's English schools is essentially seen as the secret to the English system's survival.

It would, of course, be too simple to come to the conclusion that Quebec's English schools are therefore best equipped to turn out bilingual graduates. After all, to produce bilingual graduates a school needs to concentrate not only on the students' second language but also on the students' skills in their mother tongue, the latter of which seems to be an issue in Quebec's English schools. In 2007, two round table discussions were held by the Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities during which "stakeholders in English-language education in Quebec" talked about some of the issues facing Quebec's English-language schools (Pilote, Bolduc & Gérin-Lajoie, 2008, p. 1). One conclusion that came out of said round table discussions was the idea that

Quebec's English schools "do not provide students with the language skills, particularly the writing skills, to become fully bilingual"; the perception is that it is their English skills, and not so much their French skills, that are particularly lacking (Pilote et al., 2008, p. 4). As one participant put it, "'I find that kids (in the English system) speak French extremely well, but they are not very good at writing it. And they speak English so-so, they write it so-so. So, I would say there is a difference between being bilingual and functional'" (Pilote et al., 2008, p. 4).

The situation in Quebec's French schools is not, however, any simpler when it comes to students' skills in their mother tongue. To reiterate, several interviewees felt that attending French school would better ensure that their children would graduate with a mastery of French. As Sylvain said, in explaining why he would have liked his children to attend French high school, "Avoir un bon français écrit n'est pas chose facile". The idea that attending a French school will necessarily teach one to write better writer in French (or that attending an English school will necessarily teach one to write better in English) may seem to be common sense, but the quality of French taught in Quebec's French schools, just like the quality of English taught in Quebec's English schools, has long been a subject of concern; this concern has been expressed by many sources, including the government, the media, and educational institutions themselves (Lord, 2007). Marie-Andrée Lord (2007) has the following to say about the situation, "Certes, la qualité de la langue écrite pose problème pour moult élèves du primaire au collégial comme pour nombre d'étudiants universitaires. Cette situation n'est d'ailleurs pas récente, comme en témoignent toutes les études et enquêtes des 30 dernières années" (p. 42). In her article, Lord (2007) cites the final report of the Commission des États généraux sur la situation et l'avenir de la langue française au Québec, also known as the "rapport Larose", which was published in 2001. Chaired by professor and activist Gérald Larose, the Commission had some worrying things to say about the state of French-language teaching in the province, including that, "Le système québécois d'enseignement

s'acquitte mal, de l'avis de beaucoup d'intervenants, de sa responsabilité d'assurer la maîtrise du français tant à l'oral qu'à l'écrit" (Larose, 2001, p. 39). The report continues,

> À la fin du primaire, donc aux portes du secondaire, la maîtrise de l'orthographe grammaticale et d'usage est l'élément de l'épreuve de français où les résultats sont les plus faibles : 52,5 % des élèves sont classés fragiles ou incompétents en écriture. En 3e secondaire, 59,8 % des élèves ont une compétence minimale ou insuffisante en français ; leurs difficultés les plus sérieuses sont, ici encore, liées au fonctionnement de la langue (Larose, 2001, p. 39).

Furthermore, as Marie-Andrée Lord (2007) puts it, "Maitriser le français, ce n'est pas seulement faire montre de certaines habiletés grammaticales et lexicales, c'est se donner les moyens de penser et d'agir, car la langue est l'assise même de la culture" (p. 44).

In the end, a balance needs to be struck between fostering students' mother-tongue skills and fostering their second-language skills and it would seem that it is on this last score that the two school systems, both French and English, meet.

The Perception of the French System as Significantly Different (and Possibly Better and More Rigorous) than the English system.

Several of the interviewees expressed a feeling that the French system in Quebec is very different from the English system. The words "more traditional" came from Anne and the word "strict" came out in two of the interviews. For her part, Emily mentioned that she felt more "at home" upon visiting the English school and that the people working there were very "warm". Is there an historical basis for this perception? Does this perception have a basis in reality?

The historical basis for the perception of the French system's rigour and traditionalism is likely linked, at least in part, to the historically strong ties between the Catholic Church and French schools in Quebec. As Norman Henchey (1972) explains and as was addressed earlier in the

present discussion, prior to the 1960s and the Quiet Revolution in Quebec "public education was divided into two parallel sectors, one Catholic and largely French and the other Protestant and largely English" (p. 98). These two sectors approached education very differently. Henchey says that on the French-Catholic side,

> (…) kindergartens were virtually non-existent (… and …) the normal route to the university was through the classical colleges (through which) the French élite invariably passed on its way to the university and the professions - the clergy, law, and medicine. (…) From elementary school through the B.A., authority was clearly defined, teaching was under the supervision of the clergy and religious orders, and religion, in the spirit of the papal teachings, permeated all phases of education" (1972, p. 99).

On the English-Protestant side, on the other hand, "kindergartens were more readily available and the elementary schools were more open in regime and curriculum (…); public high schools were available to most students and the curriculum was oriented to university admission" (Henchey, 1972, p. 99). Protestant schools were, therefore, more accessible, and geared toward everyone obtaining a university education. Catholic schools, particularly beyond the elementary level, were apparently more elitist because they were reserved for those who could afford them.

Does the perception that the French system is superior have a basis in reality? Not necessarily, at least not if one takes graduation and retention rates as an indicator of superiority. Studies have shown that graduation rates are 7.5% higher in Quebec's English-language public schools than they are in Quebec's French-language public schools (Dion-Viens, 2015). If one looks at the island of Montreal specifically, for example, there is "nothing in the socio-economic circumstances of students in the French and English boards would explain the difference in graduation rates" (Bagnall, 2013). After all, as David Birnbaum, former executive director of the Quebec Association of English School Boards points out, "The English School Board of Montreal covers almost to a 'T' the same territory as the Commission Scolaire de Montreal" (as cited in

Bagnall, 2013). Despite covering almost the same territory, however, "the difference in graduation rates for the two Montreal Island boards is striking. For the 2006 cohort, 78.6 per cent of EMSB students graduated in spring 2012, but only 45.3 per cent of CSDM students did" (Bagnall, 2013).

In fact, it would appear that the Protestant (English) school system, at least historically, was the superior system, in part because it was fully autonomous and of a higher quality because of

> the economic strength of its members. At the time, residential, commercial and industrial property taxes levied by Protestant school boards were entirely used to finance Protestant schools, and they gave the Protestant school sector—especially in the Montréal area—a superior status within the Quebec education system (Rudin 1985 & Martel 1991, as cited in Corbeil et al., 2010, p. 63).

While one system's objective superiority over the other is perhaps debatable, there are still observable differences between the schools in the two systems.

In the abovementioned 1999 report entitled "Culture and English Schools in Play", the ABEE asserts that there are "two main reasons" for which English schools in Quebec are different "in ethos" from French schools in Quebec. The first is the emphasis that English schools place on producing bilingual graduates, and the second is that the English communities of Quebec lack a single, unifying "culture" to serve as a foundation for their schools; the Board says,

> Every English school in Québec is a microcosm of the community it serves. Québec's English schools can be almost as different from each other as they are from their French-language counterparts. English schools are a product of their surroundings and of who attends them. They are not monolithic. The linguistic and cultural affinities they share do not form a mould into which they all fit. They are shaped by their clients and the communities in which their clients live, the newspapers they read, the radio stations they listen to, the associations they belong to, the churches they attend, and the cultural and demographic mix of their neighbourhoods (as cited in Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2010, p. 12).

A decade later, in 2010, the ABEE published a report entitled “Educating Today’s Québec Anglophone” in which it noted that “a single characterization” of the English-language school in Quebec is “difficult” and pointed out other differences between the two school systems:

> in broad terms, they have different organizational cultures. (…) while French-language schools seem to be more hierarchically structured, more reliant on top-down decision-making, and have a more distant relationship amongst staff and parents, English-language schools, with the historical need to deal with diversity, have always been more flexible, have dealt with change less rigidly and more quickly, have been more independent of authority, and have encouraged the involvement of parents as volunteers and participants in school life. One Advisory Board member summarized these differences as philosophy and pragmatism (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2010, p. 12).

Research conducted by Marie-Odile Magnan (2012) with Francophone and Anglophone students who had attended school in the English system supports the assessment above. Magnan explains that the students she interviewed expressed a sense that they were a group with its own culture and that the students,

> décrivent le groupe anglophone de Québec comme une grande famille dans laquelle les membres se soutiennent. L’importance accordée à la famille et au respect des traditions sont les valeurs les plus souvent mentionnées par les jeunes. La tolérance et l’ouverture seraient également des valeurs qui les différencient, selon eux, des élèves fréquentant l’école française. Les jeunes interrogés ont également la perception d’avoir une culture scolaire différente de celle des élèves fréquentant l’école française. Ils mentionnent avoir développé un « esprit d’école » plus fort. Selon eux, cet « esprit d’école » encourage fortement la réussite scolaire ainsi que l’implication dans les sports, les activités parascolaires et le bénévolat. Les jeunes ont également l’impression que les interactions dans les écoles anglaises sont davantage respectueuses et formelles (p. 2).

There is, perhaps, a caveat to be added to the interpretation of the above findings since the young people interviewed do not necessarily have a solid grasp of the realities of the French school system and also may have a tendency to valorize their own practices.

The Loss of the "Right" to be Educated in English in Quebec.

A third emergent theme is that there seems to be much confusion surrounding Quebec's *Charter of the French Language* (Bill 101) and its restrictions on English-language instruction. A few couples expressed, for example, a concern that sending one's child to French school meant "losing the right" to attend English school forever after; Anne, however, stated that she was not worried about this issue anymore as she had done "a lot of research and (…) called because (she) wanted to confirm that at least that (the children) would still have choice (between English and French school)."

Cynthia, on the other hand, was under the impression that her and Jacques' children would have lost the right to English school and based their choice to send their children to English school, at least in part, on that belief. Protecting the choice between English and French school therefore seems quite important, regardless of one's intention to attend English school.

Several questions arise with respect to the idea that one can lose the right to English instruction. First, is there any documentation of this problem anywhere else? Why does this myth seem to exist and what fuels it? What is the reality of the situation? And, finally, how does this myth relate to the overall feeling of precariousness of the English-language minority in Quebec?

The root of this myth regarding the potential loss of eligibility for English-language instruction is unclear – perhaps it stems from a distrust of the Quebec government and its attitude toward the English language and English-language education. As Anne said, "who knows what's going to happen in the next 25 years they could totally take all of that away", referring to the government doing away with the right to receive instruction in English altogether. As discussed

earlier, however, the right to minority-language education is protected by section 23 of The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, so as long as Quebec remains a province in Canada, it seems unlikely that the right to English-language education in Quebec will disappear. The major threat to receiving instruction in English, it would seem, is the declining enrolment in English schools, which is leading to their subsequent closure (Lamarre, 2008, p. 67). One can have the right to attend an English school but of course there is nothing that can be done if there is no English school to attend.

Regardless of whether there is an English school to attend and regardless of whether a child actually attends English school, obtaining an eligibility certificate is crucial to protecting a person's right to English instruction in Quebec as well as the right of that person's descendants. The language of section 73 of *The Charter of The French Language* is quite clear: Eligibility is protected for those "whose father or mother attended school in Quebec after August 26, 1977, and *could have been* (my emphasis) declared eligible for instruction in English at that time" (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2016d, Section 2). Furthermore, section 76.1 of the law states that "persons *declared eligible to receive instruction in English* (my emphasis) under any of sections 73, 76 and 86.1 *are deemed to have received or be receiving instruction in English for the purposes of section 73* (my emphasis)" (Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, 2016e). In essence, if one obtains an eligibility certificate for English instruction in Quebec that person can transfer his or her eligibility to his or her descendants, regardless of whether or not that person was actually educated in English in Canada. Furthermore, on its website, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education states the following,

> If your child has been issued a certificate of eligibility for instruction in English, and if this eligibility has been declared under section 73, 76 or 86.1 of The Charter, his or her right to receive instruction in English will be maintained and will be transferable to his or her brothers, sisters and children, regardless of the language of your child's instruction. This right is protected under section 76.1 of

> the Charter (of the French Language) (Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, 2016b, Section 7).

Concerns over Children Being Perceived as "The Other"

A fourth theme that came out of the interviews is related to the concerns and discomfort parents expressed at the idea of their children being perceived as "the other" and therefore not being accepted amongst their Francophone peers and / or family members. Anne, for example, spoke of fearing that her daughter would "have nobody" at (her French) school and would therefore end up being "'the English kid' on the playground (…) and be ostracized".

Anne also expressed pride in the fact that her eldest daughter's teacher found her daughter's accent indiscernible; to reiterate, Anne said that "it was really nice" that her daughter's teacher didn't know that she was an Anglophone, that it was "the biggest compliment (for Anne and her husband)". This sentiment is echoed in a recent piece done by CTV News in Montreal in which an Anglophone mother, who sends her children to French school, expresses the following sentiment: "I like to think that I'm providing my kids with the opportunity to have something like 'linguistic camouflage'. I want people to hear them when they're speaking French and to not know that they're Anglophone" (as cited in Luft).

The ideas expressed above are reminiscent of the concept of "passing", which has its roots in race relations of the United States (Monzo & Rueda, 2009) and can be defined as,

> a type of border crossing, one that normally involves a movement from social disadvantage to advantage or from a socially stigmatised position to one that grants some privilege, or at least allows avoidance or evasion of group classification. Passing is distinct from other identity performances in that it generally refers to a surreptitious transgression of widely accepted social practices. That is, the passer normally masks the fact of his or her 'true' identity—he or she might rely on subterfuge or might remove him or herself from a telling context or simply suppress information that might lead to

> disclosure of his or her identity—in order to cross social boundaries (Rooney, 2010, p. 1).

Writing about the phenomenon of Latino immigrant children in The United States looking to pass "for English-fluent", Lilia D. Monzo and Robert Rueda (2009) suggest that doing so "may be both a strategy of self-preservation and a form of resistance" (p. 20). Monzo and Rueda (2009) draw on the work of Goffman, who asserts that "most people select fronts that are considered socially acceptable and often the front represents aspects of an ideal identity, what the actor aspires to becoming. Furthermore, fronts selected often coincide with people's aspiration for social mobility" (Goffman, 1959, as cited in Monzo & Rueda, 2009, p. 21).

To maintain this "ideal identity", Goffman posits, individuals constantly engage in "'passing' and 'management' activities" (p. 21). Individuals who want to "pass as having a particular identity manage the contexts around them and construct elaborate scenes that provide support to the front identity" (p. 21). As Monzo & Rueda (2009) point out, "Goffman's work points to the need to be perceived in socially acceptable ways and posits passing as evidence of agency" (p. 21).

The children born of Anglophone-Francophone couples in Quebec, straddling the divide between the province's two historical linguistic cultures as they do, might feel the need to "pass" as a full-fledged member of the dominant, Francophone class but also, depending on the context, as a member of the Anglophone class. There are, it seems, consequences for failing to "pass" adequately. For their part, Cynthia and Jacques noticed a divide between their children and Jacques' unilingual-French family members, a divide that clearly made both the children and their parents uncomfortable. Jacques remarked that it wasn't the school choice that upset his family per se but his children's "thick English accent"; Jacques sensed a "how could you let this happen?" kind of attitude toward the situation, as though Jacques' family felt that he had not made enough of

an “effort to make sure (the children) could converse (…) really well in French”. In addition, Andréanne spoke of her Francophone mother being bothered by the fact that her children being more “Anglophone” when the children were younger and that while her children do speak French, “you can tell they’re English”.

The couples also used language related to “survival” and “making it” in Quebec. For example, speaking of the importance of learning French Cynthia said, “(…) we wanted our children to be able to survive in Quebec”. This sentiment seems to be shared by other Anglophone parents: A mother from the same CTV News piece mentioned above expressed the following, “it’s a very paradoxical decision. If you want your child to stay here and be part of the Anglo community (in Quebec), they’re better off learning French” (as cited in Luft).

As was discussed earlier, a 2013 CBC-commissioned EKOS poll showed that 39% of 1001 Anglophone parents polled felt that their children “would be better off at a French school” (CBC News). The decision to send one’s Anglophone children to a French school, however, comes at a cost. As one parent cited in the CBC article said, “(Sending our Anglophone children to French school is) so politicized. In a way, I have to admit, I felt like I’d be going against my flock. Even though it shouldn’t be like that” (CBC News, 2013). This particular mother explained that her English education in Quebec left her without enough proficiency in French to pursue a career in medicine and so “she believes the French system will give her son the tools he needs to be successful in Quebec (…) ‘because the fact is, we’re in this province and we’re not moving’”, she said (CBC News, 2013).

The sense that Anglophones need to find a way to “survive” in Quebec is also echoed in Quebec’s Anglophone popular culture by the likes of Josh Freed in his *Montreal Gazette* newspaper column and in his widely popular 1983 *Anglo Guide to Survival in Quebec* (illustrated by renowned *Montreal Gazette* caricaturist Terry Mosher, aka Aislin), and by Mordecai Richler in

an infamous 25-page *The New Yorker* article in 1991 on Quebec's French-English relations and in his follow-up book *Oh Canada! Oh Quebec!: Requiem for a Divided Country*, published in 1992. The divide between the French and English communities in Quebec is also seen reflected in Quebec literature in, for example, Hugh MacLennan's famous 1945 novel *Two Solitudes*. The novel had such an impact that "the expression 'two solitudes' took on a life of its own, in both English and in French, as the national metaphor for Anglophone and Francophone relations in Canada (…) it has come to mean the complete refusal of the other, a kind of no man's land of cultural non-communication" (Jettmarová, Pym & Shlesinger, 2006, pp. 101-102).

On the Francophone side, meanwhile, there may be similar reasons to worry about ending up on the "wrong side" of the linguistic frontier. As Marie-Odile Magnan (2012) explains,

> L'unique fait de fréquenter l'école anglaise (et ce même pour les *ayants-droit* qui ont le français comme langue maternelle ou deux parents parlant français) semble constituer le marqueur d'une appartenance au groupe anglophone". Les interactions entre les élèves des écoles anglaises et françaises, tel que raconté par les jeunes qui ont fréquenté l'école anglaise, engendrent des catégorisations entre les membres et non-membres des deux groupes. Le comportement perçu parfois comme agressif des uns envers les autres contribue au renforcement de la frontière entre les groupes scolaires anglophone et francophone – les élèves de l'école anglaise se définissant par le fait même comme des « anglophones » et non comme des « francophones ». Ces rapports révèlent des tensions linguistiques – des tensions menant certains jeunes ayant fréquenté l'école anglaise vers un sentiment d'exclusion de la part de la majorité francophone du Québec (p. 2).

Therefore according to Magnan (2012) it would seem that Francophone children who attend English school, even those Francophones who have two French-speaking parents, run the risk of finding themselves ostracized to some degree by Francophones in their communities who did not attend English school; they run the risk of being classified as "Anglophones" solely by virtue of the language in which they were educated. Magnan's findings therefore echo statements made by

Darby (1997) and McAndrew and Eid (2003a) who were cited earlier in the present discussion as saying that "choosing a side" (McAndrew & Eid, 2003a, p. 224)–in this case the "English" side–may be seen as a lack of loyalty to his or her native linguistic group (Darby, 1997 as cited in McAndrew & Eid, 2003a, p. 223).

The Essential Structure of the Experience

The following section, using the textural and structural descriptions, will serve as "a composite description that presents the 'essence' of the phenomenon, called the ***essential, invariant structure (or essence)***" focusing mainly on those experiences that are common to the participants (Creswell, 2007). The goal of this ultimate description is therefore for "the reader should come away from the phenomenology with the feeling, 'I understand better what it is like for someone to experience that' (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 46, as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 62).

The Textural Description of the Experience — A Summary.

To summarize the textural description provided above, all participants, Francophone and Anglophone alike, expressed a desire for their children to be French-English bilingual, which supports previous research (Laperrière, 2006, as cited in Lamarre, 2008, p. 72). Furthermore, as posited by McAndrew and Eid (2003a), the findings of this qualitative analysis of the "traversée frontière" between the English and French systems reveal that, for example, the motivation of parents who choose to send their "rights-bearing" children to French school goes beyond the idea of simple marketability and extends to the idea of being able to "survive" in Quebec and "blend in" with the province's French-speaking majority. The hope appears to be that being able to "blend in" will somehow allow said children to develop a proper sense of belonging as citizens of the province, a hope that also confirms findings from previous research (Laperrière, 2006, as cited in

Lamarre, 2008, p. 72). Furthermore, however, those participants whose children were considered "Anglophone" seemed particularly concerned with the idea that their children would be able to "blend in", which, again, points to the idea of "passing", which involves moving "from a socially stigmatised position to one that grants some privilege, or at least allows avoidance or evasion of group classification" (Rooney, 2010, p. 1).

In addition, regardless of whether they sent their children to school in English or in French, all of the Anglophone participants in the present study demonstrated a significant level of concern regarding the retention of the "right" for their children and potential grandchildren to be educated in English in the Quebec. Understanding of the details of the law restricting access to English education in Quebec was mixed, however, and as a result many misconceptions were present in the points of view expressed on the subject.

The Structural Description of the Experience.

Contemporary Quebec, though quite far-removed from the turbulent days of the Quiet Revolution, is still a minefield in which citizens from both sides of the English-French linguistic divide deal daily with issues of belonging and issues surrounding the vitality of their respective communities. Observing the pervasiveness of English both in terms of popular culture and in terms of the attraction of the massive amounts of English-language information disseminated daily on the Internet, Francophones are concerned about their children becoming anglicized. Anglophones, on the other hand, are concerned about their children being able to "pass" as Francophones in a province in which employment opportunities and the ability to fully participate in civil society are largely contingent upon being Francophone.

Are the concerns of these groups warranted? Arguably yes, at least to a certain degree. As noted above, Levine (1997) points out that the city of Montreal in the 1960s was on the road to

becoming both “multicultural and English-speaking” (as cited in Lamarre, 2007, p. 111). One therefore has to wonder what the city would look like today were it not for the Quiet Revolution, the Francophone community’s drive to protect their culture and language, and the legislation that ensued. Anglophones have reason to be concerned as well, however, given that the vitality of their community institutions and their community itself in the Quebec context is largely dependent on the desire of young Anglophones to stay and make their lives in the province and to do that, they arguably need to be more than functional in French.

The issue of belonging is also crucial to the context in which the participants in the present study made decisions about their children’s schooling. The same 2014 CBC-commissioned EKOS poll mentioned earlier in this discussion reveals that fewer (52%) Anglophones “feel welcome and integrated” in Quebec than they did (in 2013)”, when the percentage was 58% (CBC News, 2014). 68% of Allophones and 91% of Francophones, on the other hand, “feel “welcome and integrated” in the province (CBC News, 2014). As one woman interviewed said, “‘We are English, but we are also Quebecers. Just because we are English, it doesn’t mean we don’t belong. It just creates the feeling sometimes.… We don’t feel as accepted’” (CBC News, 2014). Sending one’s children to French school is, therefore, one way to ensure said sense of belonging, but in any case, the learning of French seems imperative to all Anglophone parents as they would like to see their children feel as though they are part of Quebec society and they see being able to speak French fluently as the best way to do so.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The present study is meant to be a starting point for further research, a pilot study that provides indications of areas that are worthy of study in a more in-depth analysis. Such areas include the reasons behind the concern surrounding the potential for the loss of the right to English instruction in Quebec; the perception of the French system as different and perhaps more rigorous, and the roots and implications of the idea that it is desirable to be able to "pass" as a member of the other linguistic group. I will discuss each of these briefly in turn.

First, one area that would be important to explore further is the reason for which the law governing the accessibility to English education in Quebec is so poorly understood when it is a law that affects the everyday lives of most citizens in the province. For instance, why do so many Anglophones seem convinced that they must send their children to English school or else those children will "lose the right" to attend English school themselves and/or the right to have their children or grandchildren attend English school? To reiterate, the language of section 73 the *Charter of The French Language* is unequivocal: Eligibility is protected for those "whose father or mother attended school in Quebec after August 26, 1977, and could have been declared eligible for instruction in English at that time" (Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, 2016d, Section 2). Furthermore, section 76.1 of the law also states that "persons declared eligible to receive instruction in English under any of sections 73, 76 and 86.1 are deemed to have received or be receiving instruction in English for the purposes of section 73" (Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, 2016e). Therefore possessing an eligibility certificate for English instruction in Quebec allows a person to transfer his or her eligibility to his or her descendants, even if that person does not use that eligibility for himself.

Nonetheless, there is a significant level of government mistrust on the part of the Anglophone population that would be interesting to examine in-depth. Conducting a survey, for example, of Anglophones the Montreal region to get a handle on the numbers of people who believe that their children's and grandchildren's eligibility is at risk if their children do not attend English school would be a first step and then following up with in-depth qualitative ethnographic research with Quebec Anglophones to understand the root of the fear of losing the right to English education.

Starting out with this research I was quite convinced that I wanted to send my children, the eldest of whom will start school about 3 years from now, to French school. Again, having myself graduated with a "French immersion certificate" from an English high school in Quebec without being entirely comfortable in French, especially in more informal contexts, I was sure that the French system was the best place for my own children, not only if they are to stay in Quebec but regardless of where life takes them; being skilled in French will open doors that would be closed to them as unilingual Anglophones. The responses from the participants and the research I have done on this subject, however, have put me back on the fence on this issue.

The first question I have found myself struggling with is whether being in a French school will adequately foster my children's English skills. I too have bought into the popular idea that English, being as pervasive as it is, is somewhat easier to learn than French. Furthermore, I teach English as a second language myself, so am I not well-equipped to ensure that my children have a strong foundation in English? Yet I admit that the idea that the French system in Quebec seeks only to render students "functional" in English concerns me because I want more than that for my children and I don't necessarily want to be responsible for making up for a lack in their education.

Of course, as mentioned above, it is not immediately clear that the English system is any better equipped to ensure that my children properly master English. Again, with their increasing

emphasis on teaching French as a second language, observers have noticed that English schools are turning out graduates whose English skills –especially writing skills– are lacking (Pilote, Bolduc & Gérin-Lajoie, 2008, p. 4). To reiterate the point of view of one such observer, "'I find that kids (in the English system) speak French extremely well, but they are not very good at writing it. And they speak English so-so, they write it so-so" (Pilote et al., 2008, p. 4).

The idea of my children having English skills that are "so-so" is not terribly encouraging, which brings me to a second aspect that would be worthy of further research, namely that which we should expect from our education systems, both French and English, when it comes to language teaching, both with respect to the students' mother tongues and with respect to their second languages. Again, studies have shown that for the most part Quebec parents on both sides of the "frontière linguistique" want their children to "graduate from high school fully bilingual and biliterate" (Advisory Board on English Education / ABEE, 1995 & Laperrière, 2006, as cited in Lamarre, 2008, p. 72). Of course, as has been discussed, the two school systems do not operate under the same constraints: The English system is able to incorporate much more second-language instruction than is the French system. As it stands, therefore, the two systems have different mandates with the English system seeking to produce bilingual graduates and the French system seeking to produce graduates who are functional in their second language, which in this case is English. As the research cited in the present study posits, however, neither school system is living up to its potential, whether it be in terms of mother-tongue instruction or in terms of second-language instruction. Somehow, therefore, it seems that both systems need to look at striking a better balance between first- and second-language teaching, and the way in which said balance could be struck would be an interesting area of further research.

The third and final area of further research I would like to suggest is the idea that it is favourable to be able to "pass" as a member of another linguistic group, namely as a Francophone,

in the province of Quebec, and that attending French school helps one to do so. Hearing one set of mother say that she was "proud" of the fact that her child's English accent was indiscernible to her French teacher and then hearing other parents say that their children's English accents have been a source of tension with their Francophone families made me reflect, for instance, on issues I have faced with my own accent. Having been teased and singled out many times for sounding "like an Anglophone" and having seen and heard parodies of Anglophone accents in French media has made me at times wish I could more easily "pass" for something other than who I am; these experiences have made me wish that I could more easily "blend in" in the Quebec context. What is the source of this insecurity? I have no trouble making myself understood in French and am actually very fluent. The insecurity is, certainly, a product of the tension between the two linguistic groups, but what perpetuates said tension and what can be done to remedy it, if anything? What role can our schools play, for example, in bridging the divide between the two communities? Is there another way to approach education in this province so as to foster greater cooperation and understanding between the two groups? These are questions that would be interesting to address in a more in-depth analysis.

In the end, choosing between English-language and French-language education in Quebec is a luxury – or a burden, as the case may be – that few citizens of the province have. The aim of the present study was to shed some light on how linguistically exogamous (French-English) couples experience deciding whether to enrol their children in one school system or the other. As has been demonstrated, while there are essential, recurrent themes that are common to the experiences of the couples in the present study, the reasons behind their decisions are nonetheless varied and, as suspected, much more complex and emotional than the desire to simply increase their children's marketability in the province of Quebec.

References

Adsett, M. & Morin, M. (2005). Contact and attitudes towards bilingualism in Canada. In J. Cohen, K. McAlister, K. Rolstad & J. MacSwan (Eds.) *ISB4: Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism*. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press

Anctil, P. (2007). Sortie de crise linguistique au Québec : L'apprentissage du français par les immigrants selon les données du recensement fédéral de 2001. *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 41(2) (Spring), 185-212.

Anderson, G. (1998). *Fundamentals of Educational Research*. London & Philadelphia: The Falmer Press.

Audet, Louis-Philippe. (1969). Bilan de la réforme scolaire au Québec : 1959-1969. Leçons inaugurales de l'Université de Montréal, no. 5. Retrieved from: http://classiques.uqac.ca/contemporains/audet_louis_philippe/bilan_reforme_scolaire/bilan.html

Bagnall, J. (2013). Quebec's English school boards face many woes. *Montreal Gazette*. Retrieved from: http://www.emsb.qc.ca/emsb_en/pdf_en/media_en/mediaclippings/2012-2013/2013_01_22-Quebec%E2%80%99s%20English%20school%20boards%20face%20many%20woes.pdf

Behiels, M. D. & Hayday, M. (Eds.) (2011). *Contemporary Quebec: Selected Readings and Commentaries*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Béland, P. (2006). La fréquentation du réseau scolaire anglophone: une étude exploratoire des statistiques de 2000 à 2004. Québec: Conseil supérieur de la langue française. Retrieved from http://www.cslf.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pubf218/f218.pdf

Bourhis, R.Y. & Foucher, P. (2012). The decline of the English school system in Quebec. Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities. Moncton, New Brunswick.

Brochu, A. (2000). In M. Plourde (Ed.) *The French Language in Québec : 400 Years of History and Life*. Montreal, Fides/Publications du Québec. 324-338.

CBC News. (2013). Quebec Anglo parents divided on French vs. English schools: Some parents believe French education opens more doors. Retrieved from: http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-anglo-parents-divided-on-french-vs-english-schools-1.1402277

CBC News. (2014). Half of Quebec's anglophones polled feel they can succeed in the province. Retrieved from: http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/half-of-quebec-s-anglophones-polled-feel-they-can-succeed-in-the-province-1.2552990

Chaput, M. & Champagne, A. (2011). The vitality of Quebec's English-speaking communities: From myth to reality. *Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages*. Retrieved from: http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/411/ollo/rep/rep02oct11-e.htm

Chevrier, M. (1997). Laws and language in Québec: The principles and means of Québec's language policy. Retrieved from http://collections.banq.qc.ca/ark:/52327/bs43058

Conseil supérieur de l'éducation. (2014). L'amélioration de l'enseignement de l'anglais, langue seconde, au primaire : un équilibre à trouver. Retrieved from : http://www.cse.gouv.qc.ca/fichiers/documents/publications/Avis/50-0485.pdf

Conseil supérieur de la langue française. (2010). Avis sur l'accès à l'école anglaise à la suite du jugement de la Cour suprême du 22 octobre 2009. Retrieved from http://www.cslf.gouv.qc.ca/publications/avis204/a204.pdf

Corbeil, J.-P.; Chavez, B. & Pereira, D. (2010). "Portrait of official-language minorities in Canada - Anglophones in Quebec". Retrieved from : http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-642-x/89-642-x2010002-eng.pdf

Creswell, J.W. (2007). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cruickshank, J. (1981). “Scars of St. Leonard riot remain after 12 years”. *Montreal Gazette*, pp. 1&12. Retrieved from https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1946&dat=19810910&id=HwkvAAAAIBAJ&sjid=9qQFAAAAIBAJ&pg=3724,3857557&hl=en

Darby. J. (1997). *Scorpions in a bottle: Conflicting cultures in Northern Ireland*. London: Minority Rights Publications.

Department of Justice. (n.-d.). Cultural diversity in Canada: The social construction of racial difference. Retrieved from http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/csj-sjc/jsp-sjp/rp02_8-dr02_8/p2.html

Dion-Viens, Daphnée. (2015). Le taux de diplomation en hausse au Québec. Retrieved from http://www.journaldemontreal.com/2015/09/29/taux-de-diplomation-en-hausse

Freed, J. & Kalina, J. (1983). *The Anglo Guide to Survival in Quebec*. Montreal: Eden Press.

Foucher, P. (2008). Legal status of Anglophone communities in Quebec: Options and recommendations. In R.Y. Bourhis (Ed.). *The Vitality of the English-Speaking Communities of Quebec: From Community Decline to Revival*. Montreal, Quebec: CEETUM, Université de Montréal.

Freeland, E. (1999). Educational reform and the English schools of Québec. *McGill Journal of Education*, 34 (3), pp. 243-260.

Groenewald, T. (2004). A phenomenological research design illustrated. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 3 (1).

Grosjean, F. (2010). Who is Bilingual? Psychology Today. Retrieved from : https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/life-bilingual/201010/who-is-bilingual

Hayday, M. (2011). Bilingualism versus unilingualism: Federal and provincial language education policies in Quebec, 1960-1985. In M. D. Behiels and M. Hayday (Eds.). *Contemporary Quebec: Selected Readings and Commentaries*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Henchey, N. (1972). Quebec education: The unfinished revolution. *McGill Journal of Education*, 7 (002), 95-118.

Hopkins, D. J., Tran, V.C., & Williamson, A. F. (2014). See no Spanish: language, local context, and attitudes toward immigration. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 2 (1), 35-51.

Hutchins, A. (2015). Just say 'non': The problem with French immersion. *Maclean's Magazine*. Retrieved from: http://www.macleans.ca/education/just-say-non-the-problem-with-french-immersion/

Ici Radio-Canada. (2013). Les anglophones plutôt satisfaits de l'apprentissage du français de leurs enfants. Retrieved from : http://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelles/societe/2013/02/25/005-004-sondage-anglophones-enseignement.shtml

Jedwab, J. (2002). *The Chambers Report, Ten Years After: The State of English Language Education in Quebec, 1992-2002*. Montreal: The Missisquoi Reports, 4 (January). Retrieved from http://www.chssn.org/en/pdf/Education%20report.pdf

Jedwab, J. (2004). *Going Forward: The evolution of Quebec's English-Speaking Community*. Ottawa: Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

Jettmarová, Z., Pym, A., Shlesinger, M., Eds. International Conference on Translation and Interpreting. (2006). *Sociocultural aspects of translating and interpreting*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Lamarre, P. (2007). Anglo-Quebec today: Looking at community and schooling issues. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 185, 109-132.

Lamarre, P. (2008). English education in Quebec: Issues and challenges. In R.Y. Bourhis (Ed.). *The Vitality of the English-Speaking Communities of Quebec: From Community Decline to Revival*. Montreal, Quebec: CEETUM, Université de Montréal.

Larose, G. et al. (2001). Le français, une langue pour tout le monde. Une nouvelle approche stratégique et citoyenne. Québec : Gouvernement du Québec.

Leblanc, A.E. (1972). The educational literature of the quiet revolution. *McGill Journal of Education*, 7 (002), 175-188.

Lenoir, Y. (2005). Le «rapport Parent», point de départ de l'ancrage de l'école québécoise dans la logique anglophone nord-américaine. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 28 (4), 638-668.

Lopez, M.H. & Gonzalez-Barrera, A. (2013). What is the future of Spanish in the United States? Retrieved from: http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/09/05/what-is-the-future-of-spanish-in-the-united-states/

Lord, M.-A. (2007). Les jeunes du Québec ont du mal avec le français. Oui, mais que faire ? Formation et Profession : Bulletin du CRIFPE, 14 (1) 42-44.

Luft, A. "The enrolment drop in Quebec's English schools". CTV Montreal. Retrieved from http://montreal.ctvnews.ca/the-enrolment-drop-in-quebec-s-english-schools-1.1999020

MacLennan, Hugh. (1945). *Two Solitudes*. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce.

Magnan, Marie-Odile. (2010). Les frontières linguistiques à Québec : le rôle des interactions scolaires. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 41/42 (3-1), 109-130.

Magnan, Marie-Odile. (2012). L'expérience sociale de l'école anglaise au Québec : Construction identitaire linguistique des jeunes à travers les interactions intergroupes. Centre d'études

ethniques des universités montréalaises. Retrieved from : http://www.ceetum.umontreal.ca/documents/capsules/2012/ecole-anglaise-identite.pdf

Magnuson, Roger P. (2005). *The two worlds of Quebec education during the traditional era, 1760-1940*. The University of Western Ontario: The Althouse Press.

McAndrew, M. (2002). La loi 101 en milieu scolaire: impacts et résultats. In P. Bouchard and R.Y. Bourhis (Eds.). L'aménagement linguistique au Québec: 25 ans d'application de la charte de la langue française. *Revue d'aménagement linguistique*, numéro hors-série, 69-83.

McAndrew, M. & Eid, P. (2003a). La traversée des frontières scolaires par les francophones et les anglophones au Québec: 2000-2002. *Cahiers québécois de démographie*, 32 (2), 223-253.

McAndrew, M. & Eid, P. (2003b). Les ayants-droits qui fréquentent l'école française: caractéristiques, variations régionales, choix scolaires. *Cahiers québécois de démographie*, 32 (2), 255-271.

McMillan, C.M. (2011). Rights in conflict: Contemporary disputes over language policy in Quebec. In M. D. Behiels and M. Hayday (Eds.). *Contemporary Quebec: Selected Readings and Commentaries*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

McWhinney, E. (2008). Federal legacy of Quebec's quiet revolution. *Canadian Political Science Review*, 2 (3), 5-11. Retrieved from: http://ojs.unbc.ca/index.php/cpsr/article/viewFile/77/108

Melikoff, O. (1972). Parents as change agents in education. In W.E. Lambert & G.R. Tucker (Eds.), *Bilingual Education of Children: the St. Lambert Experiment*. (219-236). Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House.

Miles, M.B. & Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Ministère de l'Éducation. (1999). Culture and English schools in play. Retrieved from: http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/autres/organismes/CELA_culture-ecoles_a.pdf

Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport. (2010). Educating today's Québec Anglophone. Retrieved from http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/sections/publications/index.asp?page=fiche&id=1816

Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport. (2013). Indicateurs linguistiques dans le secteur de l'éducation - annexes. Retrieved from http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/PSG/statistiques_info_decisionnelle/PSG_indicateurs_linguistiques_2013.pdf

Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur. (2016a). Retrieved from: http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/organismes-relevant-du-ministre/abee/

Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur. (2016b). Retrieved from: http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/parents-and-guardians/instruction-in-english/frequently-asked-questions/

Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur. (2016c). Retrieved from: http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/parents-and-guardians/instruction-in-english/legislation/

Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur. (2016d). Instruction in English in Quebec. Retrieved from: http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/parents-and-guardians/instruction-in-english/eligibility/

Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur. (2016e). Retrieved from: http://www2.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/dynamicSearch/telecharge.php?type=2&file=/C_11/C11_A.html

Monzo, L.D. & Rueda, R. (2009). Passing as English fluent: Latino immigrant children masking language proficiency. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 40(1), 20-40.

Noël, Mathieu. (n.-d.). "Language conflict in Québec". McCord Museum. Retrieved from http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca/scripts/explore.php?Lang=1&elementid=103__true&tableid=11&contentlong

Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute (OLBI) (n.-d.)**:** University of Ottawa. Act to promote the French language in Quebec (1969). Retrieved from: https://slmc.uottawa.ca/?q=leg_act_promote_french_quebec

Ovando, C.J. (2003). Bilingual education in the United States: Historical development and current issues. *Bilingual Research Journal*, Spring 2003; 27 (1), 1-24.

Pettinicchio, D. (2012). Migration and ethnic nationalism: Anglophone exit and the 'decolonisation' of Québec. *Nations and Nationalism*, 18 (4), 1-25. Retrieved from: http://www.davidpettinicchio.com/uploads/1/5/4/8/15484818/3_nana513_ev_firstreview.pdf

Pilote, A.; Bolduc, S. & Gérin-Lajoie, D. (2008). English language schools in Quebec: Current status and new issues. Moncton: Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities.

Plourde, M. (Ed.) (2000). "Camille Laurin, Father of Law 101". *The French Language in Québec: 400 Years of History and Life*. Montreal, Fides/Publications du Québec, Inset 52. Retrieved from: http://www.cslf.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pubf156ang/part%20four%20i/chapter%2010/complement%2052/c52camille_laurin_father_of_the_101_law.pdf

Richler, M. (1992). *Oh Canada! Oh Quebec!: Requiem for a Divided Country*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Robert, J.-C. (2000). The Saint-Léonard crisis. In M. Plourde (Ed.) *The French Language in Québec: 400 Years of History and Life*. Montreal, Fides/Publications du Québec, Inset 43, 244-245. Retrieved from:

http://www.cslf.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pubf156ang/part%20four%20i/chapter%209/complement%2043/c43the_saint_laurent_crisis.pdf

Rooney, M. (2010). Introduction: passing, imitations, crossings. *Humanities Research*, 16 (1), 1-9.

Roy-Mercier, S. (2014). La langue française au Québec: perceptions du présent et visions d'avenir d'élèves de 4e et de 5e secondaire. *Canadian Journal of Education* / *Revue canadienne de l'éducation*, 37 (3), 1-21.

Seamon, D. & Sowers, J. (2008). Place and placelessness, Edward Relph. In P. Hubbard, R. Kitchen & G. Vallentine (Eds.) *Key Texts in Human Geography*. London: Sage, 2008, pp. 43-51. Retrieved from http://www.arch.ksu.edu/seamon/place_%26_placelessness_classic_texts.pdf

Seljak, D. (1996). Why the quiet revolution was quiet: The Catholic church's reaction to the secularization of nationalism in Quebec after 1960. Canadian Catholic Historical Association (CCHA). *Historical Studies*, 62 (1996), 109-124. Retrieved from: http://www.cchahistory.ca/journal/CCHA1996/Seljak.pdf

Smith, W.J. & Donahue, H.M. (1999). *The Historical Roots of Québec Education*. Montreal, Quebec: Office of Research on Educational Policy.

Souto-Manning, M. (2006). A critical look at bilingualism discourse in public schools: Autoethnographic reflections of a vulnerable observer. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *30*(2), pp. 559-577.

University of Guelph. (2010). Bilingualism translates into higher earnings, study finds. Retrieved from: http://www.uoguelph.ca/news/2010/08/bilingualism_pa_1.html

Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC). (2012). Retrieved from: http://larevolutiontranquille.ca/en/now.php

Wright, D. (2000). Trudeau and the politics of language. *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 35 (3), pp. 268-279.

Young, D. & Bezeau, L. (2003). Moving From Denominational to Linguistic Education in Quebec. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, 24 (February 28, 2003). Retrieved from https://www.umanitoba.ca/publications/cjeap/articles/youngbezeau.html