“And then one day I walked down the street and I realized that I felt like a minority. I felt like I was an English-speaking part of a group of Montreal and Quebec and that I was actually a minority. And it was the strangest feeling to be inside Canada that’s English, but inside Quebec that’s French. Inside Montreal or this area in English, and still be a minority inside of a majority.”  
(QEC/MTL/174:739)¹

1. **INTRODUCTION**

Over the past 30 years, the unparalleled success of Quebec’s language laws and the resulting “anglophone exodus” (Castonguay 1998:41) have fundamentally altered the relationship of English and French in the province.

¹Codes in parentheses represent location, speaker number, and line number of the utterance in the Quebec English Corpus.
The received wisdom is that English, *qua* minority language, has undergone contact-induced language change (Palmer 1995; Chambers and Heisler 1999), an outcome deemed worthy of front-page press coverage.² To date, however, there has been surprisingly little scientific evidence to support these claims. Much of the available literature (Fee 1991; Grant-Russell 1999; Hamilton 1975; McArthur 1992; Palmer and Harris 1990; Russell 1997) is preoccupied with gallicisms, the familiar catalogue of French lexical incorporations (e.g., dépanneur, autoroute, vernissage) assumed to be unique to Quebec English (QcE). These lists tend to be based on newspaper searches, to the neglect of the spoken language, where linguistic change originates and spreads.

Two assumptions of this research tradition bear revisiting. One involves change: the infiltration of gallicisms is widely considered to be on the rise (Grant-Russell 1999; Manning and Eatock 1983; Palmer and Harris 1990), yet with the exception of Palmer and Harris (1990), no explicit comparison of an earlier or pre-contact stage of English has been offered. The second implies that lexical manifestations of contact function as agents of structural change, an idea with no basis in scientific fact. Systematic research on nearly a dozen pairs of languages in contact (Poplack et al. 1988; Sankoff et al. 1990; and the papers in Poplack and Meechan 1998) reveals that, rather than changing the recipient-language grammar, borrowed items tend to be structurally adapted to it upon, or shortly after, their first use. Thus, while the lexicon of Quebec English may have been augmented through contact with French, we simply do not know whether this has affected its grammar.

In this paper we describe a large-scale project specifically designed to assess the impact of a majority language on the structure of the minority language in a situation of long-term contact. Focusing on spontaneous speech, we take a three-pronged approach. We investigate the existence and directionality of change (i) over (apparent) time, (ii) according to intensity of contact, and finally (though not the focus of this paper), (iii) by comparing variable linguistic structure, first among the contact varieties and then with that of the putative source: French.

In ensuing sections we detail the methods employed in selecting a sample and constituting a corpus suitable for this endeavour. We then characterize the speakers who participated in the project, as well as aspects of their speech. Finally, we illustrate the utility of the materials with an analysis of the sociolinguistic situation of the anglophone community in Quebec at the dawn of the 21st century, and a first empirical measure of the true impact of French lexicon on Quebec English.

²See for example the *Montreal Gazette* article (by Alexander Norris, “A dialect all our own”, June 3, 1999:A12) which inspired the title of this paper.
2. **CHOICE OF COMMUNITIES**

To assess the contribution of language status (majority vs. minority) to contact-induced change, we compare the English spoken in three urban centres in which the proportion of English mother-tongue claimants varies widely: Quebec City (1.5%) and Montreal (12%) in the province of Quebec, and as a control, Oshawa-Whitby, a mid-sized, heavily anglophone (86%) region in the Greater Toronto Area of Ontario, with very few (2%) French mother-tongue claimants (Statistics Canada Census 2001). If hospitality to contact-induced change is a function of language status, its effects should be most apparent in Quebec City, where native anglophones have constituted a tiny minority at both the local and provincial levels since at least 1791 (Dickinson and Young 2003:70). The three locations qualify as urban centres, albeit of different sizes; thus *ceteris paribus*, residents should have at least some exposure to ongoing changes affecting other varieties of Canadian English. This enables us to assess the extent to which a minority language resists mainstream linguistic developments.

3. **CHOICE OF INFORMANTS**

Only anglophones born, raised, and currently residing in each respective city qualified for inclusion in the sample. Participants were stratified according to the time at which they acquired English: either prior to the political and social upheavals of the “Quiet Revolution” of the 1960s (when English was the dominant if not majority language in Quebec); or after the passage of the *Charte de la langue française* (1977), popularly known as Bill 101, which ratified French as the sole and official language of the province. The socio-demographic status of the communities sampled, coupled with the temporal comparison afforded by the informant stratification scheme, enables us to determine whether distinctions between the English of older and younger anglophones are due solely to internal evolution, or more specifically to the contact situation. The distribution of sample members according to city of residence and time they acquired English is displayed in Table 1.

Given the multi-ethnic nature of Montreal (Germain and Rose 2000), as well as evidence from previous studies (Guy et al. 1986; Horvath and Sankoff 1987; Knack 1991; Labov 1966; Labov 2001:224–260; Laferriere 1979) that established ethnic groups may participate in ongoing change to differing degrees, we further distinguished Montreal informants according

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3 Anglophone status was determined via informant self-identification during the initial recruitment phase.
to three major ethnic origins: British (including English, Irish, and Scottish), Italian, and Jewish. No other stratification scheme was imposed at the sample constitution phase.

4. **Characteristics of the Sample**

Other explanatory variables include socio-demographic factors (age, sex, socio-economic status, occupation, educational attainment, linguistic market ranking), as well as other measures more pertinent to the contact situation: bilingual proficiency and effect toward French and francophones. These are described below.

4.1. **Age and sex**

As a result of the research design described above, most of the informants belong to two polar age groups. Table 2 shows that nearly half were aged 30 or younger at time of interview; 33% were over 65. The wide age differential should enhance the possibility of detecting linguistic change in apparent time, where operative.

4.2. **Socio-economic status**

Because the research communities were selected on the basis of the status of English in the environment, it was impracticable to control simultaneously for socio-economic factors, in the manner of Labov (1966), Sankoff and Sankoff (1973), or Sankoff et al. (1976). By characterizing the approximate socio-economic status of each participant, however, we can nonetheless take account of this factor in our analyses. We infer this information from measures generally considered to be correlated with socioeconomic status: occupation, education, and linguistic market ranking (Sankoff and Laberge 1978).

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4Ethnic categorization was based on informant self-identification.
Table 2: Distribution of sample members according to location, sex, and age at interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age at Interview</th>
<th>QUEBEC CITY</th>
<th>MONTREAL</th>
<th>OSHAWA-WHITBY</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Bill 101</td>
<td>18–24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25–30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31–35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Quiet Rev.</td>
<td>50–64</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65–74</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75+</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Distribution of sample members according to location and occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>QUEBEC CITY</th>
<th>MONTREAL</th>
<th>OSHAWA-WHITBY</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly skilled</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately skilled</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3. Occupation

Based on the National Occupational Classification Matrix 2001 (Human Resources Development Canada 2001), speakers’ occupations (and/or those of their spouses or parents, where relevant) were categorized as highly skilled (usually requiring university education, e.g., professor, accountant, nurse), skilled (college or apprenticeship training, e.g., police officer, bookkeeper), moderately skilled (secondary school and/or occupational training, e.g., childcare worker, bus driver), and unskilled (on-the-job training, e.g., factory worker, handyman). Table 3 shows that the sample is heavily biased in favour of highly skilled individuals.

4.4. Educational attainment

Sample members also tend to be very highly educated (Table 4), with nearly two-thirds having obtained at least some post-secondary education.
4.5. Insertion into the linguistic market

As observed by Sankoff and Laberge (1978), the correlation of linguistically variable behaviour with social class membership ignores the fact that certain economic activities (e.g., teacher, receptionist) specifically require competence in the standard language. The insertion of individuals into the linguistic market is often more explanatory of actual linguistic behaviour than more abstract factors like social class membership (Sankoff et al. 1989). Following the methodology outlined by Sankoff and Laberge, sample members were ranked by a panel of trained judges according to the criterion of the “relative importance of the legitimized language in [their] socio-economic life” (1978:241). Note that despite the generally elevated occupational and educational levels displayed in Tables 3 and 4, only 9% of the sample report occupations which rate high on the linguistic market index (Table 5). Subsequent studies will reveal which of these factors, if any, accounts best for observed linguistic variability in Quebec English.

4.6. Proficiency and attitude measures

In conjunction with these standard sociolinguistic variables, speakers were characterized according to two additional parameters which are particularly relevant to contact-induced change: (reported) proficiency in French, as determined by scores on a Cumulative French Proficiency Index (CFPI).

Table 4: Distribution of sample members according to location and educational attainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quebec City</th>
<th>Montreal</th>
<th>Oshawa-Whitby</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Distribution of sample members according to location and linguistic market rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quebec City</th>
<th>Montreal</th>
<th>Oshawa-Whitby</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Low</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-High</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and affect towards that language and culture, as assessed by scores on a Cumulative French Attitude Index (CFAI). Speakers with the highest scores on both indices may reasonably be predicted to show most susceptibility to contact-induced convergence, if any, with French.

4.6.1. Cumulative French Proficiency Index

The CFPI is calculated for each speaker on the basis of self-reports on a number of measures reflecting the vitality of French in his or her linguistic repertoire. These include (1) age and means of acquisition, (2) frequency of use, (3) degree of proficiency, and (4) language used with selected interlocutors. Each response was weighted according to its contribution to the overall strength of French. Thus, an individual who learned French spontaneously in early childhood would have scored higher on the acquisition measure than one who acquired it at a later age or in a formal institution. Likewise, use of French in the home was weighted more heavily than in the workplace. Scores were normalized by taking into account only those items mentioned by a speaker, each divided by the maximum strength for that item. Each individual was assigned an average score (over items mentioned) between 0 (no knowledge of French) and 1 (high proficiency). Table 6 displays the distribution of sample members according to reported proficiency in French, as emerges from the CFPI.

Reported proficiency is highly correlated with language status, instantiated both by location and time of acquisition of English. Note the perfect progression, from the Ontario control group, nearly all of whom report little or no knowledge of French, through the Montreal anglophones, 29% of whom assess their proficiency as mid-high to high, and to the 54% of Quebec City anglophones who report proficiencies in the mid-high to high ranges. Moreover, the post-Bill 101 generation consistently reports the highest proficiencies, with Quebec City youth in the lead.

4.6.2. Cumulative French Attitude Index

As part of the conversations constituting the interview, participants frequently expressed their opinions about their sociolinguistic situation, offering a window into their overall affect toward French. This, in turn, may help predict whether their English is likely to undergo linguistic influence from that language. To tap into this information, we conducted a content analysis of the corpus, grouping relevant remarks into six broad categories: reaction to the language laws, social consequences of language choice, the fate of the English language and culture in Quebec, anglophone-francophone relations, perceived value of the languages, and

\[ \textit{To ensure that statistical comparisons would be meaningful, the threshold for “high” was set at 0.6.} \]
linguistic manifestations of language contact. These constituted input to the CFAI, created following the same procedure described above with reference to the CFPI. Table 7 displays the distribution of sample members according to overall affect toward French, as emerges from the CFAI.

The overwhelming majority (92% of participants for whom scores could be calculated) scored in the highest range, indicating very positive affect towards the French language and francophones. Interestingly, this is independent of perceived proficiency (Table 8): those who espouse these attitudes are evenly distributed across proficiency cohorts.

5. CORPUS CONSTITUTION

Having characterized the speakers constituting the sample, we turn next to the speech data that make up the Quebec English Corpus (QEC). To maximize representation of the vernacular features characteristic of spontaneous, everyday speech (which include many manifestations of language contact), we adopted the ethnographically inspired methods of data collection detailed in Poplack (1989). To minimize the Observer’s Paradox (Labov 1972), anglophone fieldworkers were trained in administering the “sociolinguistic interview” (Labov 1984), a collection of topics geared to elicit informal conversation.° Interviews were recorded, with

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Table 6: Distribution of sample members according to reported proficiency in French, by location and time of acquisition of English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quebec City Pre-Quiet Rev.</th>
<th>Post-Bill 101</th>
<th>Montreal Pre-Quiet Rev.</th>
<th>Post-Bill 101</th>
<th>Oshawa-Whitby Pre-Quiet Rev.</th>
<th>Post-Bill 101</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low (0–.19)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Low (.2–.39)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-High (.4–.59)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (.6–1)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

°All fieldworkers were native speakers of Canadian English and most were members of the respective communities in which they collected data. We are grateful to Jennifer Anderson, Julia DiNardo, Dawn Harvie, Rachel Horodezky, Michele Mani, Rebecca Silvert, and Gerard Van Herk for their participation in the fieldwork.
Table 7: Distribution of sample members according to overall affect toward French

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cumulative French Attitude Index (CFAI)</th>
<th>QUEBEC CITY</th>
<th>MONTREAL</th>
<th>OSHAWA-WHITBY</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-Quiet</td>
<td>Post-Bill</td>
<td>Pre-Quiet</td>
<td>Post-Bill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative French Attitude Index (CFAI)</td>
<td>Rev.</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>Rev.</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative (0–.19)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Negative (.2–.39)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Positive (.4–.59)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Positive (.6–1)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Correlation of reported proficiency with reported affect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cumulative French Attitude Index (CFAI)</th>
<th>CUMULATIVE FRENCH PROFICIENCY INDEX (CFPI)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Mid-Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Negative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Positive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Positive</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1. Transcription

The data were transcribed from minidisk directly into computer files, using a protocol designed to maximize accessibility (Poplack 1989; Poplack and participants' consent, on Sony MD Walkman MZ-N707 Type-R minidisk recorders, using unobtrusive Sony ECM-T140 lavaliere microphones. The length of the session was determined by the participant, ranging from a low of one hour to a high of four hours. As is standard sociolinguistic practice, to ensure anonymity, informant names were replaced by speaker numbers and pseudonyms, and any identifying information was deleted. The resulting corpus contains 340 hours of speech, or 2,814,223 words, counting interventions of informants only.
St-Amand, in press; Poplack and Tagliamonte 1991). The overall strategy was to represent variation resulting from the operation of phonological processes in standard orthography regardless of actual phonetic realization (e.g., past-tense \([mIst]\) and \([mIs]\) were both transcribed \textit{missed}). Variant forms resulting from the operation of other processes (morphological, syntactic, lexical), standard or not, were represented exactly as produced, as in (1).

(1) There’s more English people in the province of Quebec than there \textit{are} people in Saskatchewan. (QEC/QC/059:1059)

French interventions in the text were likewise transcribed according to standard French orthography. In the few cases where idiosyncratic transcription devices were adopted, this was to distinguish high-frequency homographs (e.g., quotative and discourse marker \textit{like} \((N = 37,449)\) were transcribed \textit{lyke} to avoid confusion with the verb and comparator \((N = 9,723)\)). Punctuation and spacing were used to treat fixed expressions or compounds as single units (\textit{you-know}), or to separate productive contracted forms (\textit{do n’i}) to facilitate their location in the alphabetical concordance. No other effort was made to edit or modify the form of this material in any way. Syntax, morphology, lexical choice, deletions, and insertions of all sorts, standard or non-standard, were scrupulously respected.

The time required to transcribe a single interview was a function not only of its length (interviews varied from 2,664 to 46,925 words), but also of its complexity in terms of number of participants, voice quality, noise level, and other imponderables. Correction time per interview varied from a maximum of 33 hours (for a 35,204-word interview) to a minimum of 2.5 hours. Thanks to a team of highly trained and efficient transcribers, transcription of the 2.8 million-word corpus was completed in 2,471 person-hours.\footnote{We are indebted to transcribers Rebecca Kirschner, Molly Love, Emily Mayberry, Marie-Claude Séguin, Chelsea Smith, and Jennifer Templin.}

5.2. Correction

Given the degree of precision required to represent accurately the inherent variability of spontaneous speech, the correction of a corpus of this size is a formidable task. Alternating transcribers and correctors at each pass, transcriptions underwent three independent correction phases: two in conjunction with the original audio recordings, and a third, from systematic wordlist scans. At this stage, native francophones also corrected any incorporations from French, flagging multiword code-switches, as
in (2), and indicating, from systematic consultation of the audio tapes, the language in which French/English homographs, as in (3), had been realized. The correction process took an additional 1,536 person-hours to complete.\(^8\)

(2) I called him and you-know, asked him to go over and get me <FR deux chiens-chauds, tout garnis.> ['two hot dogs, all dressed'] (QEC/MTL/112:1055)

(3) The *menace* [me’nas] certainly isn’t coming from, you know, the heart, from Quebec’s anglos. (QEC/QC/004:1361)

The corrected transcripts are input to data handling programs capable of creating wordlists, indices, and concordances of different configurations. These enable maximally efficient location and extraction of vast quantities of reliable data on most morphosyntactic variables without having to return to the original transcripts. This is of primordial importance for the large-scale studies of linguistic variation currently being carried out on the *Quebec English Corpus*.

### 5.3. Nature of the data

The resulting corpus of spoken Quebec English contains a wealth of narratives, opinions, and observations, as well as some of the linguistic manifestations of the contact situation we set out to study, including borrowings from French, as in (4), code-switches to French, as in (5), and the odd calque, as in (6).

(4) But then again, you gotta be very careful. Because they- they’re cutting the corners right away, *bonhomme* or no *bonhomme* ['little man' (on traffic light)]. (QEC/QC/020:486)

(5) If you watch the French program, they’ll say, “This is reporting from *l’arrondissement Anjou.*” ['the Anjou neighbourhood'] (QEC/MTL/136:592)

(6) They came back to Canada and they- they got *installed* ['Fr s’installer ‘settle’] here. (QEC/QC/046:112)

The corpus also features many vernacular and colloquial features of English, such as *be like* quotatives, as in (7), null subjects, as in (8), progressives used with statives, as in (9), among many others, as well as more formal discourse (10). These features, all hallmarks of the spoken language, faithfully reflect the spontaneous speech of the participants in this study. The richness of the *Quebec English Corpus* in terms of the number and variety of linguistic forms represented (especially compared to the sources studied thus far in this connection) is evidence that it is

\(^8\)Molly Love, Rebecca Malcolmson, Emily Mayberry, and Rebecca Kirschner were responsible for corpus correction.
possible to obtain a good representation of speech styles even in the absence of long-term ethnographic observation.

(7) I’m so loud, like I never shut up. And people are like, “Wow!” Like, “stop talking so loud!” (QEC/OW/303:2309)

(8) Oh, sometimes [Ø] used to say, “That’s not the way to say such a thing.” (QEC/QC/025:984)

(9) I’ve been trying, but it’s because I had so many other things I was wanting to stop first, like marijuana and… (QEC/QC/021: 1355)

(10) I don’t know from whom he got my name. (QEC/MTL/122: 398)

6. A SOCIOLINGUISTIC PROFILE OF QUEBEC ANGLOPHONES

In this section we present a sociolinguistic profile of the anglophones constituting the Quebec English Corpus, touching on their reported patterns of use of both English and French, their affect toward them and the sociolinguistic situation more generally, and their opinions about the effects that contact with French has had on their English.9

6.1. Reported English-use patterns

Figure 1 displays reported English-use patterns for all members of the sample. To better contextualize the anglophone Quebecers, we contrast them with the Ontario control group, whose linguistic behaviour appears consistent with that of typical monolinguals anywhere. All the Ontarians claim English as their first language, feel most comfortable in it, speak it daily, use it as their former and current home language, and speak it with family.

6.1.1. First language

In comparison, fewer Quebecers report English as their mother tongue, especially in Montreal (59%), where more individuals cite heritage languages (e.g., Yiddish, Italian) alone or in conjunction with English (32%). Figure 2, which breaks down these results by location and time of acquisition of English, shows that while all the older Quebec City residents claim English as their first language (L1), nearly half of their post-Bill 101 counterparts report both languages. In Montreal, we observe an opposing trend: English as a sole L1 has increased among the young speakers (79%), but at the expense of the heritage languages.

Thus, one effect of Bill 101, particularly palpable among younger Quebec City anglophones, is the acquisition of both English and French as

9Jackie Adams, Nathalie Alexandre, Lidia Jarmasz, Émile Khordoc, Allison Lealess, Natalia Mazzaro, Sarah Moretti, Rocio Pérez-Tattam, Katrina Petrik, Rebecca Silvert, Nikolay Slavkov, and Chelsea Smith all participated in the creation of the sociolinguistic profile.
first languages, a hallmark of balanced bilingualism. This, parenthetically, is consistent with the difficulties some younger speakers experienced in identifying their language group, as illustrated in (11).

(11) Well there’s rarely just plain anglophones. Like there’s a few that I can think of, but not very many, who don’t speak French at all, at all. Most of my friends speak English and French very well, like depending with who they’re with. Like when I’m with my friends from school I speak English, when I’m with other friends I speak French, and it doesn’t really matter.

(QEC/QC/031:249)

6.1.2. “Most comfortable” language

As for the language the speaker feels “most comfortable” in, almost all anglo-Quebecers also choose English. Figure 3 shows that the few who choose both English and French tend to be concentrated in Quebec City. Nonetheless, 100% of the younger generation, regardless of location, report speaking English daily.10

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10Actually, all participants, with the exception of three elderly Quebec City residents, report speaking English daily.
6.1.3. Home language over time

In terms of home language, current or childhood, while most older anglo-Quebecers cite English regardless of location, their younger counterparts are much more differentiated. English as the sole home language is decreasing in favour of both French and English in Quebec City, while the opposite is true in Montreal (Figures 4a and 4b). In Quebec City, Bill 101 has enabled French to penetrate personal domains such as the home, whereas Montrealers have responded by reinforcing English as the language of personal affect.

6.1.4. Language choice according to interlocutor

Likewise, comparison of reported language choice according to interlocutor over time (Figure 5) shows that English has declined substantially in Quebec City; in Montreal, in contrast, it has barely diminished over the duration.

6.2. Reported French-use patterns

How does the perceived role of English compare with that of French? Figure 6 shows the reported French-use patterns for sample members.
In Ontario, the role of French is consistent with that of a foreign language anywhere. Few (37%) claim the ability to speak it at all (and those, with qualifications), and all are born after 1977. Most of them acquired it formally, as a second language in an English-medium school. Only one speaker reports speaking French daily and considers herself bilingual. For these English Canadians, French has little impact on daily life. Almost all anglo-Quebecers, in contrast, report speaking French, with the post-Bill 101 generation in the lead in both locations.

Moreover, approximately 80% of the respondents report having acquired French at an early age, regardless of location (Figure 6).

As for means of acquisition, the geographic difference is quite evident. Many more Quebec City anglophones of both generations acquired French informally, whereas two-thirds of their Montreal counterparts report having learned it through formal instruction only. This may explain why twice as many Quebec City residents, regardless of generation, claim to speak French daily as compared to Montrealers (Table 9).

Given these reported-use profiles, it is not surprising that more than half of all anglophone Quebecers, especially the post-Bill 101 youth (including the entire Quebec City cohort) qualify themselves as bilingual.

Summarizing, speakers in both locations perceive that French has made inroads. Most not only claim to speak it, but report doing so daily,
and characterize themselves as bilingual. Young Quebec City speakers are in the lead. More of the latter also report having learned French informally, all consistent with the ubiquitous nature of the language, the relative homogeneity of the population, and the minority status of anglophones in the city.

Yet speaker reports on the role of English reveal that it too remains vital on each of the measures examined. In Montreal, there is evidence that

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**Figure 4a:** Childhood home language, by location and time of acquisition of English

**Figure 4b:** Current home language, by location and time of acquisition of English
English is actually becoming more entrenched: more of the post-Bill 101 generation claim it as their first language and current home language, and continue to use it with a variety of interlocutors. Despite indications that French is beginning to infiltrate erstwhile preferred domains for English,
particularly among Quebec City youth, crucially, it is not replacing it. Some younger speakers report having acquired French as an L1, feeling more comfortable using it, speaking it at home, and choosing it with a variety of interlocutors including family members, but this is for the most part in conjunction with, rather than in place of, English, which all the post-Bill 101 generation also speak daily. We conclude that French is not supplanting English.

6.3. Reported affect toward the sociolinguistic situation

Content analysis of the recorded conversations constituting the Quebec English Corpus also enabled us to characterize anglo-Quebecers’ views of the consequences of Bill 101, and from these, to assess their general affect toward the sociolinguistic situation in Quebec. Because not all participants commented on all issues, in what follows we review those issues which received most mentions, and which we may therefore infer to be most vital.

6.3.1. Reactions to the language laws

More than one-third of the participants (N = 45)\(^\text{11}\) mentioned Bill 101, and at least two-thirds of these reacted negatively, with little difference due to location or generation. The main complaint targets the clause restricting access to English-medium public education to anglo-Quebecers who attended such schools themselves (12).

(12) So every parent, that is their goal, is that their children should do well. And the government’s trying to keep them back, because they want peasants. (QEC/MTL/140:415)

\(^{11}\)The analysis in this section is based on a reduced sample of 140 informants. As detailed in section 4.6.2, the data discussed here derive from systematic content analysis of observations arising spontaneously during the course of the interview, not from direct responses to questions. Percentages are calculated on the basis of the total number of observations relevant to each measure.

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**Table 9:** Reported frequency of use of French, by location and time of acquisition of English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quebec City</th>
<th></th>
<th>Montreal</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-Quiet</td>
<td>Post-Bill Revolution</td>
<td>Pre-Quiet</td>
<td>Post-Bill Revolution</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revolution</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>Revolution</td>
<td>101</td>
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<td>Daily</td>
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<td>90%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>42%</td>
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<td>22%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All but two of the respondents were also against the unpopular signage laws requiring that French be prominent on bilingual signs, as in (13). Only a few individuals explicitly endorsed the original intent of the language legislation, as exemplified in (14).

(13) But bilingual is reality. And that’s what is not to be acknowledged. According to me. You don’t take out English signs and say to people, “You’re putting that in French, and if it’s in English, it’s 50% smaller”. You don’t do that. Because then the English people are gonna have to what? Start squinting? (QEC/MTL/130:776)

(14) Like Bill 101 was a necessity, it was a good thing... It made the rest of us get off our ass and learn French. (QEC/QC/033:933)

6.3.2. Language choice

More than one-third of the participants (N = 52) commented on the consequences of choosing English as a language of public interaction, and all but three qualify them as negative, as in (15). Many report having been admonished when overheard speaking English, as in (16). In this context, a recurrent anecdote involves outwitting francophone bystanders with bilingual skills, as in (17).

(15) Refused to talk to me, made my life a living hell because I wouldn’t speak to her in French. (QEC/MTL/158:496)

(16) But then I walk down the street, and somebody looks at me funny or makes a comment because I’m speaking in English, and it’s frustrating because you just wanna turn around and say, “Well, I speak French too.” (QEC/MTL/129:367)

(17) So I remember a couple of old ladies on a city bus once when I was in junior high... I was sitting on a seat in front of them talking with one of my friends from school and all I remember hearing was “Ah, les maudits anglais, on les entend partout” [‘Damn anglophones, you hear them everywhere.’] And so I just turned around and I looked at the ladies and I said, “Est-ce que le fait que je parle en anglais, ça vous dérange? Parce que si vous voulez, je peux changer ça tout de suite en français, si vous préférez”. [‘Does the fact that I’m speaking English bother you? Because if you want, I can change to French right now if you prefer.’] And both their jaws dropped, because I guess in their minds, you either speak French or you speak English, but you can’t speak both. And they got off at the next stop. (QEC/QC/071:135)

Most of those who mentioned language choice in service encounters (N = 28) also reported difficulty in obtaining service in English. Yet paradoxically, elsewhere in the same conversations speakers report that they themselves tend not to initiate in English (66%), opting instead for French (60% of young Montrealers), as in (18), or both (67% of Quebec City youth).
(18) I always come into a store and speak in French first. (QEC/MTL/129:383)

Only among the older Quebec City cohort does a substantial proportion (50%) report initiating in English. When speakers do choose to initiate in English, the majority report being accommodated to (in English or both languages); and when they are addressed in French, they too reciprocate in that language. Some anglo-Quebecers even expressed indignation at the failure of fellow anglophones (or “allophones”) to reciprocate in French (19).

(19) I get pissed off when I speak to a clerk in French and they answer me in English...I'll switch to English no problem, but I'll walk out of that store and I'll look at the person I'm with, and I say, “Can you believe that? Not even a je ne parle pas français or bonjour”!...Having grown up in Quebec in a French neighbourhood, that bothers me, that pisses me off. (QEC/MTL/129:384)

6.3.3. The fate of the English language and culture in Quebec

Nearly half the participants (N = 59) raised the issue of the anglophone exodus from Quebec, ascribing it mainly to the political situation, and to a lesser extent, to language issues and lack of employment opportunities for the young. Nearly two-thirds admit to having considered moving themselves, a sentiment which is especially pronounced among the post-Bill 101 generation (75%), regardless of location. Although the numbers are quite sparse here, it is clear that the language issue is the motivating factor for these youth. Only on the fate of the English community in Quebec are participants (N = 48) sharply split, with a strong majority of Montrealers (78%) evincing optimism as to its survival, as in (20), while only half as many anglo-Quebecers (40%) are of this opinion.

(20) I can’t imagine English ever disappearing...There are plenty of francophones who go to McGill so they can learn English. And there’s plenty of francophones, I mean, what are they watching on TV? A lot more anglophone programs than French. And what are the popular songs that they’re singing?...They’re anglophone. (QEC/MTL/160:1022)

These opposing sentiments have become even more strongly entrenched among the respective post-Bill 101 generations (rising to 89% for Montrealers versus 38% for Quebec City residents).

Notwithstanding, the minority status of anglophones, so eloquently exemplified in (21) as well as in the epigraph to this article, was invoked by relatively few informants (N = 15), most of whom (60%) were Quebec City youth.
(21) Well, Montreal’s more English than it is here. Quebec is – English people are very big-time minority. So yeah, I mean the percentage of people here compared in Montreal, it’s like almost, you know, big-time marginal. (QEC/QC/062: 874)

6.3.4. Anglophone-francophone relations

More than half the participants (N = 82) had occasion to raise the issue of anglophone-francophone relations. Although one-third reported that these had once been negative in both locations, these feelings appear to have diminished, since only a handful (N = 7) report any current animosity. Indeed, of the 54 individuals who commented on their personal relations with francophones, all report close familial or friendship ties.

6.3.5. Value of French and English

With respect to the perceived value of French and English, only a few participants invoked the advantages of speaking one or the other of the official languages. Most cited their instrumental value, as in (22), and only to a much lesser extent, affective value, as in (23). But more than half of the participants (N = 79) invoked bilingualism, and all but one considered it an advantage, as in (24). (This is one of the few language-related issues on which the Ontario control group volunteered an opinion, and here too, all but one concurred that bilingualism is a positive attribute.) Moreover, informants from all three locations are overwhelmingly in favour of both linguistic groups achieving bilingualism.

(22) a. You know, like ‘cause here if you don’t speak French you can’t get a job, practically. I mean it’s very rare, a job that you can do just with English. (QEC/QC/072:211)

   b. All of a sudden now she’s noticing. At the position she has, you know what? No English, no job, no dinero. (QEC/QC/073:1055)

(23) I understand like, why they would want to keep French, you know, it’s a beautiful language. (QEC/QC/076:1279)

(24) I think that the fact that you can speak two languages, and understand two languages and so many people do, it’s an opportunity for enlightenment. The more you know, the better person you are, you know? (QEC/MTL/145: 664)

6.4. Linguistic effects of language contact

Nearly one-third of the participants (N = 42) mentioned the linguistic effects of language contact, in particular, language mixing. Very few, regardless of speaker cohort, displayed the prescriptive reaction expressed in (25). Rather, Quebec anglophones seem to accept mixing as a fact of
life, as illustrated in (26). Some, especially Montrealers, view it as a positive phenomenon, as expressed in (27).

(25) Just one language at a time, thank you very much! (QEC/MTL/124:1227)
(26) I don’t even notice when I do it. I can talk with one of my friends, we’d talk for hours and somebody could be counting how many times. They’d tell you, “Well, 34 times you changed languages”. And I’d say, “I didn’t even notice once!” (QEC/QC/031:1402)
(27) So it’s funny, ‘cause we’ll talk- and they’ll talk French, I’ll talk in English. I’ll talk in French, they’ll talk- I mean, we’re talking and if I can’t think of a word, I’ll say it in English. If I can, I talk to them in French. You know, it’s interesting! (QEC/MTL/172:641)

Nearly half of the participants (N = 62) discussed the issue of linguistic convergence, and the overwhelming majority (79–83%, depending on speaker cohort) believe that French is influencing English. Of those who elaborated (N = 45), nearly all (89–97%) cited the lexicon as the area most affected, as in (28), though many were hard-pressed to provide specific examples.

(28) Well, you’ll change a vocabulary word. And it’s the same thing. Like I remember the other day I had the word ascenseur in my head all day. I swear it took me two hours to figure out what the hell was ascenseur in English. Well, it’s an elevator, of course. (QEC/QC/056:894)

Summarizing, in the aggregate, the anglo-Quebecers we have studied profess generally negative opinions of Bill 101, especially as concerns the controversial medium-of-education and signage clauses. Language choice is a widespread concern, and nearly all describe the consequences of choosing English in the public domain as negative. This may well be why so many (with the exception of some older Quebec City residents) report initiating in French. Contrasting with these negative assertions is the very positive picture that emerges from more subjective measures. Thus, the advantages of bilingualism were widely invoked, and anglophone-francophone relations were characterized as overwhelmingly good, with many reports of close personal ties. This type of situation should be conducive to linguistic convergence.

Indeed, a strong majority, regardless of location or time of acquisition of English, concurred that French had changed English, with Quebec City youth again in the lead. Almost all speakers pinpoint the lexicon as the single most important area of influence. Younger Quebec City speakers also cited code-switching as another manifestation of the contact situation. How do speaker perceptions of the impact of French on English compare with their actual usage of the two languages in discourse? Positive attitudes toward French, coupled with the high degrees of proficiency in that
language reported by these same individuals (sections 6.1 and 6.2), should render English more permeable to contact-induced change, especially amongst the apparently most vulnerable group: the post-Bill 101 generation of Quebec City. In the next section we test this hypothesis with a quantitative measure of the impact of French on Quebec English.

7. **The Role of French in Quebec English**

Because language mixing is so salient to linguists, laypeople, and the participants in this study, in this section we consider its two major manifestations: *borrowing*, here defined as the incorporation of lone French-origin items into otherwise English discourse, as in (29), and *code-switching*, or the alternation between multiword fragments of French and English in discourse, as in (30).

(29) So the way it worked with her Master’s, it was like two months in school, ten months *stage* [ˈstɑːɡ] ‘work term’, which was like a paid *stage*. And two months in school again. (QEC/MTL/212:370)

(30) She kept me there for about ten minutes, ‘til the man behind me says, “*C’est donc ridicule!*” [‘This is ridiculous!’] (QEC/QC/006/1600)

We first note that use of borrowed items is surprisingly rare, especially in view of the highly propitious contact situation described above. Contrary to speaker reports in (25)–(28), the number of loanwords per interaction ranges from none at all (22% of the sample) to a (rare) 41. To contextualize these figures, consider that the individual who uttered 41 borrowed tokens also produced 9,314 words which were not borrowed in the same interview, meaning that borrowed vocabulary represents only 0.44% of her lexicon.\(^{12}\)

Table 10 displays the distribution of sample members according to the proportion of their total vocabulary that borrowed items represent. It is clear that French lexical items have made virtually no inroads into the English lexicon; they represent no more than 0.23% of the vocabulary of the 10% of the sample who make even marginal use of borrowed vocabulary, and substantially less for everyone else. Finer analysis (Poplack et al., in preparation) reveals that their true impact is in fact far smaller than implied by these figures.

Studies of bilingual communities (Poplack 1985, 2001, 2004) have taught us that there are many different ways of combining languages in

\(^{12}\)These calculations exclude “established” loanwords, here defined as French-origin words attested in the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* (Barber 2004) prior to the birth of the informant (e.g., *terrace*, attested in 1515), and which would have been acquired with the remainder of the English lexicon.
discourse, among them emblematic or special-purpose uses like word play, cross-language punning, and learned uses. These draw attention to the other language through a variety of discourse strategies like repetition, hesitation, intonational highlighting, and explicit metalinguistic commentary. They differ from true borrowing or intra-sentential code-switching, which minimize the salience of the other language by means of smooth transitions, morphosyntactic integration, etc. Emblematic combinations create maximal distance between the two languages, while their true counterparts are integrated seamlessly into the discourse. If code-switching and borrowing were to lead to structural change (an outcome which, contrary to popular opinion, has received no empirical support), only true exemplars would be implicated.

In this context, it is striking that the overwhelming majority of lone French-origin words in the Quebec English Corpus are used metalinguistically, as in (31a), in the context of explanation or translation (31b), or for a variety of other special discourse purposes.

(31) a. Whether they’re English or allophone or bilingual or not bilingual, they often, uh- sometimes use French words. That are just automatic for them. Like dépanneur. ‘Cause there’s no better word than dépanneur. It’s true, I mean every anglophone still says dépanneur. I don’t know anybody who uses any other word. Because there’s no good word to replace it. Some words are just perfect. It’s like, convenience store? Or corner store? Dep is like- it’s only one syllable! (QEC/MTL/170:646)
b. I call them gar–garderies, these places where the children go now and that, eh? Daycare, like, they call them. (QEC/QC/011:1197)

To illustrate, Figure 7 plots for the 14 high-frequency (operationally defined as having occurred ten times or more) lexical items of French origin in the Quebec English Corpus, the proportion of each which was used unreflectingly (rather than rhetorically, i.e., in special-purpose contexts). Note that only four (cegep ‘Quebec secondary school’, metro ‘subway’, quebecois(e) ‘Quebecer’, and stage ‘work term’), qualify as true loanwords in this sense\(^{13}\); the others are virtually all used with full speaker awareness, for specific discourse functions.

Code-switching, or the alternation of multiword fragments of the two languages, is likewise exceedingly rare, even when compared with rates for other bilingual communities, calculated from data collected using similar methodology (Poplack 1980, 1985). Table 11 shows that a full one-third of the participants did not switch at all, and another 25% switched only once or twice during the course of their interactions.

Moreover, precisely as was observed with the borrowings, nearly half of the 589 code-switches in the corpus occurred in the context of metalinguistic commentary, as in (32), with virtually all of the remainder also used for other special purposes (Poplack 1985; Poplack et al., in preparation), such as to render idiomatic expressions, as in (33).

(32) That’s why I ‘m happy that we started with French, because with all the grammar, and like, every object has a sex, un cheval, une chaise [‘a [m] horse, a [f] chair’], you know? That’s completely ridiculous! (QEC/QC/064:1057)

(33) Like the French-English rights now, there’s still that “yes no” thing, you know, it’s still there, and like, Vive le Québec or Vive le Canada, and stuff like that. (QEC/QC/068:842)

8. DISCUSSION

In its new and unfamiliar guise of minority or subordinate language, Quebec English has become subject to discourse typical of other minority situations, which characterizes it as threatened and distinctive, purportedly due to convergence with French. In this paper, we have described a research project specifically designed to provide an empirically accountable assessment of the existence and extent of contact-induced change in a situation of intense, long-term contact. Participants in our study describe a sociolinguistic situation which can be characterized as maximally conducive to convergence. They are also in agreement that

\(^{13}\)Even here, the first three are arguably proper names.
French has in fact influenced Quebec English, particularly as regards the lexicon.

But, once the highly salient French-origin incorporations are placed in the context of the wider discourse, borrowed forms are seen not only to be extremely rare (constituting an average of 7/100 of 1 percent of the total lexicon), but also to be used with full speaker awareness: metalinguistically, rhetorically, and for other special discourse purposes. The even more sporadic multiword switches to French serve exactly the same functions. This is hardly the kind of bilingual language use that can be expected to lead to contact-induced change. The construction of the *Quebec English Corpus* sets the stage for ongoing studies of other areas of
the language which will allow us to determine whether grammatical change can be detected, and if so, to which sources it should be ascribed. If contact-induced change is occurring in Quebec English, the research design described here will enable us to detect it.

**Table 11**: Distribution of sample members according to number of code-switches produces, by location and time of acquisition of English

<table>
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<tr>
<th>N code switches</th>
<th>QUEBEC CITY</th>
<th>MONTREAL</th>
<th>OSHAWA-WHITBY</th>
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<td>Post-Bill 101</td>
<td>Pre-Quiet Rev.</td>
<td>Post-Bill 101</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>1–2</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
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**References**


