

QUEBEC'S ENGLISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITIES: CURRENT ISSUES AND FUTURE TRENDS

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Introduction

On 10–11 May 2010, the world's largest French-language multidisciplinary academic convention hosted a wide-ranging conference on English-speaking Quebec. This event, held at Université de Montréal, took place under the auspices of the annual convention of the *Association francophone pour le savoir* (Acfas). Presentations focused on different regions of Quebec and covered a broad range of topics including demographics, education, health, history, identity, literature, language acquisition and economic conditions. In addition to attracting a considerable audience, the conference brought together 54 participants who delivered 25 presentations and took part in two round table discussions. Participants included professors, graduate students, representatives of community organizations, public sector employees, professional writers, and independent researchers. Their work begins to fill gaps in the study of English-speaking Quebec, contributing to a small but growing field.

The conference had four major goals, namely:

- to share knowledge about the experiences of English-speaking communities in Quebec (ESCQ) and their social, political and economic environments;
- to contribute to the development of ESCQ Studies into a recognized academic field;
- to promote community-university collaboration;
- to communicate important research demonstrating the need for decision makers to work on enhancing the vitality of ESCQ.

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The conference was organized by the Quebec English-Speaking Communities Research Network (QUESCREN) and the Eastern Townships Resource Centre (ETRC). QUESCREN, located at Concordia University's School of Extended Learning, is a dynamic alliance of researchers, community members, and institutions dedicated to developing research capacity related to Quebec's English-speaking communities. The ETRC, which is affiliated with Bishop's University in Sherbrooke, has the mission of furthering multidisciplinary research on the Eastern Townships. The conference was organized by a program committee made up of QUESCREN's coordinator-researcher, two University professors, and a community representative with a research background.

In addition to the presentations, two networking events were held during the conference to encourage informal multidisciplinary exchange:

- A lunch at a local restaurant attracted approximately twenty participants;
- A closing cocktail reception was sponsored by the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN), drawing in nearly fifty participants.

Thematic Summary of Conference

The conference began with a session on demographics. This session highlighted the challenges of analyzing the English-speaking community in the absence of an agreed-upon definition of the community itself due to important regional variations. Issues related to intra- and inter-provincial migration were also examined, showing that Quebec's English-speakers migrate more than Francophones for reasons related to economic and linguistic vitality. Another paper challenged the idea that the English-speaking community is in decline, arguing instead that its vitality has increased over the past two decades at the relative expense of Quebec's Francophones.

This latter argument was not shared by many presenters, and was by implication challenged in another session that focused on poverty in the English-speaking communities. All presenters in this session were members of QUESCREN's research group on poverty. They questioned the popular myth of a uniformly prosperous "English" community, highlighting greater and increasing levels of poverty and social exclusion for English-speakers in Quebec than those endured by Francophones. A historical survey showed that the struggle against poverty is an integral part of the heritage of English-speaking Quebec. One presenter looked at this issue from a literary standpoint, focusing on recent novels by Rawi Hage and Heather O'Neill that highlight Anglophone poverty in Montreal.

English-language literature from Montreal was explored in greater detail through a round table featuring several Montreal writers. This session was co-organized with the Équipe de recherche interuniversitaire sur la littérature anglo-québécoise (ÉRILAQ). Participants were asked to share their favourite local writing in English, which ranged from Louis Rastelli's *A Fine Ending* to Robert Allen's *Standing Wave*. The authors present debated whether writers should try to focus on the unique character of Montreal or rather the "terrifyingly normal lives" of the majority of its residents. Some authors argued that representing English-French tensions could only yield terrible results because it showed "a total misunderstanding of Montreal," whereas others felt it was a reality that could not be sidestepped.

The idea of an English-speaking community (or communities) supposes an identity rooted in the English language, but other forms of identification were also explored in this conference. One presentation outlined the ethno-national Irish sub-group, looking at the place of Irish Quebec in the broader Irish diaspora. Another paper showed a gradual decline in religious identities among English-speakers over the last forty years. Changes in how the community has been represented over the years were explored through a bibliographical review of English-speaking Quebec. One study even showed how French-speaking students in Quebec City's English-language schools have come to identify themselves as Anglophones.

Education was the most common theme in the two-day conference, a theme approached from many angles. One researcher looked at the history of English-language education from its origins to the creation of linguistic school boards in 1998. Another paper analyzed how high school history teachers in French-language schools present the Anglophone minority in Quebec. A provincial government researcher examined how English-language schools use evidence or concrete data to support the planning, implementation and evaluation of their strategic and success plans. Issues surrounding problems in second-language acquisition were also raised.

Several papers dealt with intercultural communication and accommodation practices. One research paper based on a survey conducted in the Eastern Townships concluded that English-speakers were more accommodating than Francophones, and that religious affiliation played against accommodation of other cultures or belief systems. Another paper looked at how intercultural competence in language learning could be integrated to ensure that students recognize experiences of diversity and become open to other cultures.

The two-day conference also brought in researchers who presented and evaluated community development initiatives spearheaded by non-profit organizations or governmental departments. These included:

- The Community Learning Centers (CLC) project, which seeks to expand the traditional role schools have in the community;
- The Woman's Rural Leadership Project, a community development endeavour focused on women in smaller English-speaking communities;
- The Youth Employment and Educational Success Stories (YEESS!!) project, aimed at youth retention in the Quebec Chaudière-Appalaches region;
- In the Know, the Centre for Community Organizations' (COCO) project to document the diversity of community groups in Quebec and to understand how they relate to the Quebec government and its funding programs.

Another session examined issues surrounding health services to the English-speaking minority in Quebec. One paper looked at the impact of linguistic barriers on access to health services, proposing a classification scheme to address this situation. Another study looked at the way doctors interacted with official-language minorities across Canada. Finally, the availability of mental health services in the Eastern Townships was also examined.

Conclusion

Participants and organizers alike considered this two-day multidisciplinary conference a success. The conference addressed the challenges initially set out by the organizations involved, allowing them to fulfil their respective missions. More specifically, the conference met its goals of sharing knowledge, building networks, demonstrating the need for greater intervention to enhance ESCQ vitality, and developing the subject of "English-speaking Quebec" into a field of study. The conference not only brought research on English-speaking communities to a Francophone audience, but also successfully bridged the academic, public, and community sectors.

However, work must still be done to sustain, strengthen and build upon the networks and ideas developed at this conference. A follow-up conference was held during the 2011 Acfas convention at Bishop's University. QUESCREN also co-organized a one-day seminar in 2011 examining Anglophones' place within Quebec's collective historical narrative, a joint initiative with Université Laval that builds upon research presented at the 2010 conference. As a long-term goal, many participants recommended the creation of a permanent structure to

better establish ESCQ Studies as a recognized academic field. The enthusiasm generated in this first Acfas conference certainly points to the emergence of a small but growing field.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

For more information, please visit www.quescren.ca and click on "Research Events"

Identifier les québécois d'expression anglaise : démographie et statistiques

Présidence/animation : Rodrigue LANDRY, *Institut canadien de recherche sur les minorités linguistiques*

Charles CASTONGUAY, *Université d'Ottawa*

Le regain de la population d'expression anglaise au Québec

Jan WARNKE, *Université Laval*

La vitalité des communautés de langue officielle en situation minoritaire : la diversité des contextes

Eric FORGUES, *Université de Moncton*, Maurice BEAUDIN, *Université de Moncton*, Josée GUIGNARD NOËL, *Institut canadien de recherche sur les minorités linguistiques*

Analyse des tendances migratoires des anglophones au Québec

Jean-François LEPAGE, *Statistique Canada*, Jean-François CORBEIL, *Statistique Canada*

Les communautés de langue officielle en situation minoritaire : une réflexion conceptuelle

Études comparatives et sous-groupes ethno-religieux

Présidence/animation : Roderick MacLeod

Céline PRÉAUX, *Université Libre de Bruxelles*

L'impact de la minorisation sur la perception identitaire des anglophones du Québec et des francophones de Flandre

Patrick DONOVAN, *Université Laval*

La place du Québec dans la diaspora irlandaise

Sarah WILKINS LAFLAMME, *Université d'Ottawa*

Les Églises unie et anglicane et la communauté anglo-québécoise : portrait et enjeux contemporains

Identité, histoire et éducation

Présidence/animation : Jarrett RUDY, *Université McGill*Paul ZANAZANIAN, *Université Laval****La conscience historique et la structuration des frontières intergroupes : les enseignants d'histoire nationale franco-québécois à l'égard de la minorité anglophone du Québec***Marie-Odile MAGNAN, *Université Laval****Une « communauté imaginée » anglophone à Québec : le rôle des interactions scolaires***

Roderick MACLEOD

L'invention d'un système scolaire anglais au Québec***Variétés de transferts de connaissances***

Présidence/animation : Lianne MOYES, *Université de Montréal*

Brendan O'DONNELL

Regards sur nous-mêmes : une évaluation des sources bibliographiques du Québec d'expression anglaise

Geneviève LÉGARÉ

L'utilisation de données dans les organisations scolaires anglophones du Québec : présentation du projet de recherche***Fragments de la littérature anglo-québécoise : session organisée par l'Équipe de recherche interuniversitaire sur la littérature anglo-québécoise (ÉRILAQ) et par le Réseau de recherche sur les communautés québécoises d'expression anglaise (RRCQEA)***

Présidence/animation : Patrick Donovan, *Université Laval*

Participants

Antonio D'ALFONSO

David MCGIMPSEY, *Université Concordia*David HOMEL, *Université Concordia*Gillian LANE-MERCIER, *Université McGill*Jarrett RUDY, *Université McGill*Katia GRUBISIC, *Non applicable*Lianne MOYES, *Université de Montréal*Marianne ACKERMAN, *Université McGill*

Langue, culture et interculturelisme

Présidence/animation : Martin GEOFFROY, ICRMLDale STOUT, *Université Bishop's*,Claude CHARPENTIER, *Université Bishop's*, Myriam CHIASSON***Les immigrants dans une société laïque: réciprocity sociale et tolérance parmi les Estriens de langue française et anglaise***Denise LUSSIER, *Université McGill****Étude empirique en contexte anglophone canadien sur le développement de la compétence interculturelle et son impact en enseignement des langues***Corinne HAIGH, Caroline ERDOS, *Université McGill*, Fred GENESSEE, *Université McGill*, Robert SAVAGE, *Université McGill****Indices de troubles de la lecture et de troubles du langage oral chez des élèves anglophones scolarisés dans un programme d'immersion française******Santé et services sociaux***

Présidence/animation : Norman SEGALOWITZ, *Université Concordia***Communications**Catherine DROUIN, *Université de Sherbrooke*Gabriela ORZANCO, *Groupe de recherche PRIMUS, Centre de recherche clinique Étienne-Lebel, CHUS-Fleurimont, Faculté de médecine et des sciences de la santé, Université de Sherbrooke*, Josiane COURTEAU,*Groupe de recherche PRIMUS, Centre de recherche clinique Étienne-Lebel, CHUS-Fleurimont, Faculté de médecine et des sciences de la santé, Université de Sherbrooke*, Denis LEROUX, *Département des sciences humaines, section géographie, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières*, Alain VANASSE, *Groupe de recherche PRIMUS, Centre de recherche clinique Étienne-Lebel, CHUS-Fleurimont, Faculté de médecine et des sciences de la santé, Université de Sherbrooke****Identification des communautés anglophones du Québec : approche populationnelle dans le cadre de l'évaluation des disparités de santé associées à l'infarctus du myocarde***Roger FARLEY, Roger GUILLEMETTE, *Santé Canada****La disponibilité des professionnels de la santé pour desservir les communautés de langue officielle en situation minoritaire***Claude CHARPENTIER, *Université Bishop's*, Dale STOUT, *Université Bishop's*, Annie BENOIT, *Université Bishop's*, Christopher PHILIP,

Edith POULIN, *Université Bishop's*

La disponibilité, l'accessibilité et l'acceptabilité : les trois barrières à l'obtention de services en santé mentale offerts en anglais à la population anglophone de l'Estrie

Identité anglophone et développement communautaire dans les Cantons-de-l'Est

Présidence/animation : Cheryl GOSSELIN, *Université Bishop's*

Aimée VIEIRA

Stratification rurale des anglophones dans les Cantons-de-l'Est : le cas des entrepreneurs et travailleurs autonomes

Donald DE GUERRE, *Université Concordia*, Rachel GARBER,
Andrew TRULL, *Université Concordia*

La Conférence de recherche communautaire des Cantons-de-l'Est

Heather MCKEEN-EDWARDS, *Université Bishop's*,

Claire HOLT, *Université Bishop's*

À la recherche d'un sentiment communautaire dans les Cantons-de-l'Est : un outil pour encourager un mouvement populaire sur la scène locale

Projets de développement communautaire

Présidence/animation : Sylvia Martin-Laforge

Lise PALMER, Brenda ROONEY, Ana OSBORNE

Trouver un juste milieu : stratégies pour la mise en œuvre d'un développement communautaire efficace à l'échelle provinciale et locale pour les communautés d'expression anglaise

Karine VIEUX-FORT, *Université Laval*

Définir la communauté anglophone à travers un projet de rétention et d'employabilité des jeunes

Frances RAVENSBERGEN, *Le Centre des Organismes Communautaires (COCO)*

En savoir plus : un regard sur les groupes communautaires anglophones, bilingues et ethnoculturels québécois et leur relation avec le gouvernement du Québec et l'action communautaire

Sara DOWNS, *UQTR*

Anglo 2.0 : regards exploratoires sur la vitalité ethnolinguistique anglophone à partir du Web social

L'évaluation des centres scolaires et communautaires : impact sur les écoles et les communautés anglophones au Québec

Présidence/animation : Michael Canuel

Participants

Anne-Marie LIVINGSTONE, *MELS*,
Audrey OTTIER,
Bonnie MITCHELL,
Patricia LAMARRE, *Université de Montréal*

Économie et pauvreté

Présidence/animation : Grant Myers

Hugh MAYNARD, *Qu'anglo Communications*, Peter MACGIBBON
Les anglophones du Québec: tendances en emplois et éducation

Harold R. CHORNEY, *Université Concordia*
*Les conséquences infrarégionales de choix politiques
macroéconomiques: nouvelle économie classique, conservatisme
fiscal, chômage et marginalisation auprès des anglo-québécois*

Domenic A. BENEVENTI, *UQAM*
La pauvreté urbaine dans la littérature anglo-montréalaise récente

Eric SHRAGGE, *Université Concordia*,
Lorraine O'DONNELL, *Université Concordia*
*Réactions des communautés québécoises d'expression anglaise à la
pauvreté parmi leurs membres : survol historique*

