

Responding to Complex Diversity in Europe and Canada: Future Research Directions

Language Politics and Ethnic Identities in Canada

Donna Patrick, Sociology & Anthropology
Carleton University, Ottawa

Workshop Sponsored by the ESF Research Networking
Program RECODE and the Canada-Europe Transatlantic
Dialogue, Université de Montréal

THREE COMPONENTS OF ETHNOLINGUISTIC IDENTITY IN CANADA

1. French English official language policy; linguistic duality; Quebec language rights
2. Immigrant languages
3. Indigenous languages

Policy Trajectories in Canada and Québec

- B &B Commission (1963 – 1969)
- “Two founding peoples”
- Official bilingualism (1969); Canadian *Constitution Act* (1982), Sec. 23, *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*; Bill 22, French as official language in QC (1974); Bill 101 (1977)
- Multiculturalism policy (1971); Multiculturalism Act (1988); Interculturalisme (QC);
- Aboriginal rights, Section 35, 1982 Constitution Act
- Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples (1991- 1996)

French and English

- Research Implications:
 - Immigration policy and the focus on “language”
 - Multilingualism in Montreal and elsewhere; blurring of francophone, anglophone, allophone categories
 - Protection and Promotion of minority languages and language communities (Section VII, Official Languages Act)
 - Language dominance, marginalization of “other” languages, and social responses. Language hierarchisation.

French and English

- Research Implications:
 - Immigration policy and the focus on “language”
 - Neoliberal shift in federal immigration policy;
 - 1976 focus on “family reunification; humanitarian concerns; promotion of economic, social, demographic and cultural goals”
 - Current focus on immigration for **labour force growth**; immigrants responsible for “integration” defined as **labour market integration** through proficiency in French and/or English.

French and English

- Research Implications: Neoliberal shift in federal policy cont.
 - Official language competency “points”;
 - 2013 onus on newcomer to pay for “tests” & language classes (outside of LINC: Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada and “Labour Market Language Training”); newcomers bear the responsibility for “integration”;
 - Training, the growth of “free internships”; Responsibility of the employer to “accommodate” linguistic and cultural diversity?

French and English

- Research Implications: Neoliberal shift in federal policy cont.
 - LINC (language-teaching) Policy in 1990s emphasized the introduction of “**Canadian values**” to newcomers.
 - The need to speak one of Canada’s official languages in order to “**integrate**”
 - The need to learn “**principles, tradition and values**” inherent to Canadian society
 - Need to become “**financially self-sufficient**”

What do all these terms “mean” to teachers; students; Canadians? Need for qualitative research to know how these are being defined

French and English

- Research Implications: Neoliberal shift in federal policy cont.
 - Definition of terms: “Canadian values” “integration”
Canadian “principles, tradition and values”
“financially self-sufficiency” AND
 - Workplace ethnographies and other research examining
“workplace integration” and accommodation of newcomers.
Over 70% of new immigrants experience difficulty entering the
labour market; mismatch between expectations and economic
realities; WHY?

French and English: Québec

- Bill 22, French as official language in QC (1974); Bill 101 (1977); Immigration-Québec (1968); *interculturalisme*
- Research Implications:
 - Quebec control of immigration policy; relation between “language” and “integration”; orientation towards French *laïcité*, *accommodement raisonnable* (2007 commission);
 - Multilingualism in Montreal and elsewhere; blurring of francophone, anglophone, allophone categories

French and English: Québec

- Research Implications:

- Language laws and effects: In QC over 80 % use French at home; Francophone firms increased from 47% (1960s) to 67% (2000s); anglophone accommodation to French-speakers and increased bilingualism rates.

What is the nature of this “bilingualism”? Who are the new “bilinguals” or “trilinguals”

- Multilingualism in Montreal and elsewhere; blurring of francophone, anglophone, allophone categories

Of Quebec’s 600,000 or so anglophones, over 80% between 15-24 are bilingual; 1 in 10 provide multiple answers re: “mother tongue”

French and English

- Further Research Implications:
 - Protection and Promotion of minority languages and language communities (Section VII, Official Languages Act)
 - Language dominance, marginalization of “other” languages, and social responses.

Immigrant languages

- One in 5 Canadians is a new immigrant
- Many studying official languages for the first time;
- In ROC, they often excluded from the study of FSL
- Lack of policy on this matter, yet educational research demonstrates that children of allophones thrive in multilingual learning contexts (immersion programs, French-language schools and the like).
- While we know something about allophone student achievement in French, there is little research about how these groups of students interact, socialize, learn from each other, and basically get along with each other

Immigrant languages

- Similarly, research shows that there are pedagogical and social benefits from after-school and weekend “heritage” (or “international”) language programs. (We learn about cultures -- and language-- by starting with our own).
- And from intercultural contact and interaction in multiple culture classrooms;

Educational research questions:

What barriers exist to increasing multilingualism in Canada?

What kinds of “intercultural” and cross-linguistic interactions and programs are beneficial pedagogically, culturally and thus socially and economically?

Les langues autochtones au Canada

Number of languages found : 88



Indigenous Languages: Policy trajectory

- Exclusion from “founding peoples” discourse; erasure in minority language rights discourse
- Exclusion from “official multiculturalism”, but “Aboriginal and treaty rights” protected in Section 35, Constitution 1982
- B&B Commission (1963-1969) delegated Aboriginal issues to a separate commission or study; RCAP(1991-1996).
- 2003, **Aboriginal Language Task Force** set up by Canadian Heritage to “propose a national strategy to preserve, revitalize and promote First Nation, Inuit, and Métis languages and cultures”

Indigenous Languages: Policy trajectory

- **2003, Aboriginal Language Task Force**

No action taken from Task Force. Policy void on a national strategy. Onus on individual Aboriginal groups and on urban communities to initiate programs on language/culture revitalization.

Racial hierarchisation of language policy in Canada.

Nunavut official language policy

Legislation passed in 2008:

- Bill 6 “Nunavut Official Languages Act”
 - Inuktut (Inuit languages), French and English
- Bill 7 “Inuit Language Protection Act”, focus on public sector organizations and education:

The *Inuit Language Protection Act* gives parents the right to have their children educated in Inuktut. Instruction has been available up to Grade 3 since 2009, and by 2019 it should be available to all grades.

Inuit official language policy

Language standardization:

- Common orthography for Inuit languages (i.e. a single writing system).
 - Inuktitut (Inuit languages), across the Canadian Arctic and Arctic Quebec.

Paradoxical tensions between Indigenous identities and cultural values and modernization in state and other institutional structures. Adoptions of Western structures, knowledge systems, and technologies in order to preserve Indigenous ways of knowing

- Turn to Greenland for insights into language standardization and education in language policy development and implementation in the Canadian Arctic.

Merci!

- donna.patrick@carleton.ca