

## **Local bilingualism and global connectedness: New Montrealers' language attitudes and repertoires**

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Canada's province of Quebec is characterised by a sophisticated language policy framework that reconciles federal bilingualism with a provincial policy of official monolingualism aimed at securing the continued survival of the French language through active promotion. Part of this policy is an emphasis on communicating to immigrants into the province that there is no option other than learning French in order to become a full member of society. This is achieved, in part, by a public education system which, although featuring two parallel (French and English) streams, restricts access to the English system to anglophone Canadian citizens. Similarly, legislation of the linguistic landscape has resulted in a predominance of French text in the visual language found in public space, leaving no doubt as to which language ought to be regarded as the language of the host society towards which migrants need to gravitate: in this context, for instance, bilingual signage is seen as ambiguous in that it suggests optionality between French and English, with a presumed resulting preference for English (Bourhis & Landry 2002: 108–109).

The so-called Allophones (speakers of languages other than French and English) constitute by necessity a heterogeneous group and are a subset of the larger group of 'immigrants' (some of whom may well be native speakers of French or English). They are the ones that have been the target of language policies, with much emphasis put on their eventual convergence towards the French language (achieved, in part, through the education system). These policy efforts have had a lasting impact on the language repertoires of immigrants, but many also realise that it is knowledge of both languages that endows them with the desirable cultural capital to fully function not just in Quebec, but also nationally and globally (see e.g. Pagé & Lamarre 2010: 2). The way in which the two official languages of Canada are handled in the officially monolingual Quebec context by these new arrivals to the province is of primary importance to policy-makers and has attracted a certain amount of scholarly interest (Pagé & Lamarre 2010, Kircher 2016)

Of particular interest are these speakers' language attitudes, repertoires, and actual use. This paper considers the language background of 220 residents of Quebec born outside the province. The heterogeneous sample shows a large number of trilinguals, knowledge of French and knowledge of English both exceeding 90% of the sample each, as well as a majority who combine both English and French in their repertoire, even when they rank another language first in terms of perceived proficiency. These repertoires, combined with an analysis of the persons with whom and the situations in which Allophones use their languages, shed an interesting light on language realities on the ground which reflect an awareness of both the language policies in place and the role of the continental (and global) lingua franca.

