

Navigating through multiple languages:
A study of multilingual students' use of their language repertoire
within a French Canadian minority education context

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ABSTRACT

The presence of Allophone students in French-language secondary schools in Ottawa is gradually increasing. While the politique d'aménagement linguistique (PAL) insists on the use of French within the school, one may begin to wonder which language Allophone students are speaking. French? English? Their native language(s)? This qualitative case study of four multilingual Allophone students explores their language repertoire use in relation to their desired linguistic representation, their linguistic proficiency in French, English, and their native language(s), and their perceptions of language prestige. The results indicate that students spoke a significant amount of English, some French (particularly with their teacher or Francophone classmates), and minimal amounts of their native language. Recommendations are suggested to increase the effectiveness of PAL within a Francophone minority context and to ensure that the policy's objects are attained.

Keywords: Linguistic Repertoire, Language Use, Minority Context, Language Policy, Multilingualism

Le nombre d'élèves allophones qui fréquentent les écoles secondaires de langue française à Ottawa augmente graduellement. Bien que la politique d'aménagement linguistique (PAL) insiste sur l'usage du français à l'école, on pourrait s'interroger sur la façon dont les langues faisant partie du répertoire langagier des élèves allophones sont utilisées. Cette étude de cas qualitative de quatre élèves plurilingues allophones a pour objectif d'examiner comment ces quatre participants utilisent les langues faisant partie de leurs répertoires langagiers en fonction de leurs représentations linguistiques désirées, leurs compétences linguistiques en français, en anglais, et en langue(s) primaire(s) ainsi que leurs perceptions du prestige langagier associé à ces langues. Les résultats indiquent que les élèves communiquaient souvent en anglais, parfois en français (surtout avec leurs enseignants et camarades francophones), et peu souvent dans leur(s) langue(s) d'origine(s). Des recommandations sont formulées afin d'accroître l'efficacité de la PAL dans des contextes majoritairement anglophones et de s'assurer que les objectifs de cette politique sont atteints.

Mots-clés : Répertoire linguistique, Usage langagier, Contexte minoritaire, Politique langagier, Plurilinguisme

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Figures.....	iv
List of Tables.....	iv
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: Research Problem.....	2
Literature Review.....	3
Research Question.....	14
Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework.....	15
Defining Language Repertoire.....	16
Defining Desired Linguistic Representation.....	16
Defining Language Prestige.....	17
Conceptual Framework.....	18
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	20
Methodological Framework.....	20
Context.....	20
Participant Selection.....	20
Participants.....	21
Data Collection.....	23
Data Analysis.....	23
Trustworthiness.....	24
Chapter 4: Results.....	25
Desired Linguistic Representation.....	25
Linguistic Proficiency.....	32
Language Prestige.....	38
Chapter 5: Article.....	45
Conclusion.....	73
References.....	75
Appendix A: The journal's instructions to authors.....	82
Statement of Contribution.....	84

List of Figures

	Page
Figure 1: Interrelationships among variables affecting Language Repertoire Use.....	14
Figure 2: Conceptual Framework.....	18

List of Tables

	Page
Table 1: Comparison of participants.....	22
Table 2: Participants' nationalities and immigration experiences.....	22
Table 3: Participants' perceptions of language prestige.....	44

INTRODUCTION

Limited research has been conducted on Allophone students studying in a French-language school within a minority context. The majority of studies have explored bilingual language use; however, contemporary demographics demonstrate an increasingly multilingual society. Other research, such as Curdt-Christiansen's (2007) study in a Canadian classroom, focuses on Allophone students who have a common native language. In the following research, the participants each have their own native language(s), varying in proficiency levels, and each language will have a unique prestige status.

In Chapter 1, the research problem will be explored in greater detail and the politique d'aménagement linguistique (PAL) will be described with regards to its policies on language use. Following a lengthy review of the literature, the research question will be formally presented.

In Chapter 2, the theoretical framework, a combination of Fishman's (1972) and Heller's (1992) work on code-switching, is described, and the conceptual framework for the study is illustrated. Additionally, the terms 'language repertoire,' 'desired linguistic representation,' and 'language prestige' are defined with respect to their use in this research study.

The methodological aspects of the study are presented in Chapter 3, including the methodological framework, and the context of the research. Details of the participant selection process and a brief description of the participants are also provided. Moreover, the processes of data collection and analysis are recounted. Chapter 3 also includes a note on trustworthiness.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the study for each participant with regards to desired linguistic representation, linguistic proficiency, and language prestige. A summary of the participants' beliefs is included following each factor.

Finally, Chapter 5 introduces the article written for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. The article will be submitted to an academic journal for a future issue.

A brief conclusion will follow the five chapters in order to summarize the dissertation.

CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH PROBLEM

Canadian history often polarizes English and French; however, the current reality is that many multilinguals in Canada are only learners of either language. In Ottawa, 22% of the population has a mother tongue other than English or French, and 11% speak a non-official language most often at home (Statistics Canada, 2007). As the number of Allophones rises, the number of Francophones outside of Quebec plunges – statistics demonstrate an 11% decrease in Francophones who speak French at home between 1971 and 2001 (Lentz, 2004). It has long been stated that minority French-speaking populations are diminishing as a result of assimilation with the Anglophone majority. Factors often linked with this phenomenon include: “une population francophone dispersée, l’omniprésence de l’anglais dans la vie de tous les jours, les mariages mixtes, l’attrance des jeunes francophones pour les produits culturels anglo-américains” (Lentz, 2004, p. 2).

In Ontario French-language schools, students alternate between languages because “[l]es frontières linguistiques se traversent facilement et la plupart des élèves passent constamment du français à l’anglais, de l’anglais au français, ou/et à une troisième langue” (Gérin-Lajoie, 2010, p. 360). In the French-language schools of Toronto, for example, 84 different languages are represented by the student population (Gérin-Lajoie & Jacquet, 2008). According to Lentz (2004), French-language schools in minority contexts must ensure that students speak French in their daily lives, both in academic and non-academic settings, in order to strengthen the vitality of the community. Regardless, teachers must become aware of the linguistic background of their students as many may struggle to develop their French and English language abilities in school if their native language(s) are ignored or undervalued (Conti & de Pietro, 2005). Moreover, teachers must recognize the languages spoken by their students in order to avoid marginalization. Likewise, “it is beneficial for teachers to be aware that language minority students may be dealing with more than one minority language, and that the loss of the language with the least prestige may lead to academic challenges” (Perez, 2009, p. 26).

In order for French-language schools to achieve their linguistic goals of contributing to the preservation of French, the politique d’aménagement linguistique (PAL) was published in 2004. PAL later released guidelines for school personnel, who are required to understand and share the school’s mandate to protect, value, and transmit the French language and culture. In addition, personnel must be fluent in French, demonstrate that they will value and promote the language,

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

and understand that “la langue n’est pas seulement un moyen de communication mais qu’elle est une compétence faisant partie intégrante de l’identité et de la culture de l’élève” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 18). It appears that within PAL, linguistic diversity should not be perceived as a threat, but as a tool to promote the French language. “En classe, le personnel enseignant doit reconnaître et mettre en valeur la diversité linguistique et même s’en servir pour l’apprentissage et la valorisation du français” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 31). While PAL briefly explains the importance of recognizing different languages, the document makes little reference to any language other than English and French. On the subject of English, PAL encourages teachers to have an understanding of the language in order to explain to students the importance of both official languages and the roles that these languages play in the school.

Recently, French-language education has become very appealing to parents looking for an alternative to immersion and, subsequently, the enrolment of Allophones in Francophone schools has increased with the changes in Canadian demographics (Prasad, 2012). How are these students integrating into the Franco-Ontarian culture? As language plays an important role in socialization and inclusion, more research is required in order to understand language use among multilingual Allophone students attending a French-language secondary school in minority contexts. Specifically, this study explores language choice by investigating the interrelationships among students’ (1) linguistic representation, (2) proficiency in French, English, and their native tongue(s), and (3) the prestige of the different languages in their repertoire, within the school domain. This study intends to offer a greater understanding of the manners language choice is reached among Allophones in a French minority school and the role each factor plays in their adaptation to the school community, which will inform policies regarding use of both official languages and the students’ first language in the school.

Literature Review

The most recent wave of Francophone immigration began in the 1960s. A notable switch occurred from the traditional European newcomers to those from French-speaking regions in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Caribbean. Previously, French Ontario had been dominated by Quebecers; however, the face of the Francophone minority became increasingly diversified. Mougeon and Heller noted that Ottawa, in particular, “attracted an even more heterogenous Francophone population, which is varied not only in terms of its economic characteristics, but

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

also in terms of its regional and cultural origins, and of the variety of French spoken” (1986, p. 203). The higher rate of French-language maintenance in Ottawa has been attributed to three factors. Primarily, as the nation’s capital, Ottawa has “more institutions which function in French in Ottawa than in other cities of similar Francophone concentration, thereby providing services and jobs for Francophones” (Mougeon & Heller, 1986, p. 205). Secondly, Ottawa is located at the Ontario-Quebec border, therefore providing easier access for Ottawa’s Francophones to Quebec French media. The location also ensures greater contact between the Francophones of both provinces. Finally, Ottawa experiences a “steady inflow of Francophones,” ensuring that the community is constantly being revitalized (Mougeon & Heller, 1986, p. 205).

Mougeon and Heller’s 1986 research on language use in French-language Ontario schools is among the most recent studies on the subject; however, it neglects the presence of Allophones – a relatively recent phenomenon. In their study, the researchers categorized their participating students based on their language preferences (French-dominant, English-dominant, and bilingual). French-dominant students were most likely raised in Francophone areas and arrived at school with no knowledge of English. On the other hand, English-dominant students communicated primarily in English outside of school and may have previously been educated in French. Conversely, bilingual students had various backgrounds but often lived in English neighbourhoods and had long attended French-language schools.

“Bilingual and English-dominant students tend to prefer to speak English amongst themselves, although bilingual students will speak French to individuals who are known to be most comfortable in French. Indeed, these students may act as brokers for their less French-proficient English-dominant peers.” (Mougeon & Heller, 1986, pp. 215-216)

The study focused predominantly on Francophones in French-language schools, and noted that some chose to befriend bilinguals in order to learn English, while others preferred to form relationships exclusively with other Francophones (Mougeon & Heller, 1986).

More recently, research has been conducted on multilingual students’ language use in the Canadian school domain (Curdt-Christiansen, 2007; McAndrew & Rossell, 2005). It is important to note that these studies were conducted in the Montreal area and that we were not able to find any recent research on the subject that took place in the Ottawa French minority language education context. Nonetheless, the challenge of educating an increasing Allophone population in French minority schools has become a growing concern (Ontario Ministry of Education,

2004). Since the Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) predicts 8,000 to 10,000 French-speaking settlers in Francophone communities by 2020, it is extremely important to understand the French minority education context (Bouchamma, 2008). This population increase in conjunction with the dwindling number of native Francophone students (due to low birth rates) reaffirms the need to preserve the French language and culture (Bouchamma, 2008).

The following literature review has been organized into four principal categories: language use in the classroom, desired linguistic repertoire, linguistic proficiency, and language prestige.

Language Use in the Classroom

A controversy in second language education arises from the use of the first language (L1) in the second language (L2) classroom. Many perceive L1 as a threat to the L2 development, and teachers often avoid the use of the L1 for this reason (Richards & Rogers, 2001). Regardless, young children frequently mix the two codes during the learning process (Moore, 2002). However, Cook (2001) argues against L1 use in the classroom since students learning their L1 do not have the support of another code, that the L1 and L2 must be separated in the mind, and that maximum L2 input is indispensable to language acquisition.

When young children begin school, they may have never been in contact with the language used by the teacher and may only be familiar with their native language. Even when the child has older siblings who speak to each other in the school language, contact can still be minimal as the children have spoken primarily in their L1 with their parents. Even communication with siblings is often in the native language as it is considered the language used in the home. These children start school completely immersed in a new language and culture (Moore, 1992).

In class, children often revert to their native language during social conversations, as noted by Reyes (2004) during a study of English-Spanish bilingual students. Reyes concluded that, in general, more Spanish was used than English by the participants. In comparison to the 10-year-olds, the 7-year-olds used more Spanish and switched less frequently between languages. Reyes theorized that a longer exposure period to the second language can increase instances of code switching since older children learn to manipulate their language use with greater facility in order to accommodate the linguistic abilities of their peers. The accommodation allows both interlocutors to feel comfortable and select a language in which they both feel competent. As

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

exposure to the second language increases, the students' ability to navigate their language use improves, i.e. knowing when to separate and when to mix the languages.

Moreover, Reyes sites similar studies, such as Glaessner (1995), in which bilingual students "used two languages strategically to engage in private speech and collaborative speech when cognitively challenged" (2004, p. 91). Hence, students make use of both languages in the classroom, yet demonstrate a preference for their native language for more challenging activities. Similarly, Milk (1981) concluded that students rarely use their weaker language for natural communication in the classroom. However, the proportion of academic language use increases during group work activities.

With regards to international classrooms, Arua and Magocha (2002) claimed that after analysing language preferences in Botswana, many children preferred the use of Setswana. English was the second most preferred language choice. Children who spoke other minority languages did not appear to prefer these languages. Uniquely, minority languages are forbidden in the Education Policy, and consequently, Setswana and English are the only languages used on the playground and in school. Contrary to Botswana, Canadian children are often encouraged to use their native languages in class – often as a tool to further their knowledge of the target language (Litalien, Moore, & Sabatier, 2012). However, Arua and Magocha (2002) demonstrate in their study the importance of learning English in developing countries.

In Montreal, Curdt-Christiansen (2007) explored how students in Chinese heritage language schools addressed their peers differently from the teacher. Amongst themselves, the students primarily spoke French, as opposed to Chinese, and would sometimes mix French with English. Curdt-Christiansen observed that language use was in relation to the public school attended by the student, as well as the situation of communication and with whom they were communicating. In contrast, when speaking with the teacher, the students used Chinese and minimal amounts of English. French was never used in teacher-student interactions as the students were aware of the teachers' limited French knowledge.

Similarly, McAndrew and Rossell (2005) studied Montreal's immigrant education context, and noted that many immigrants are required to learn French because of Quebec's law 101¹. After collecting data in 29 Montreal schools, McAndrew and Rossell concluded that French was

¹ Law 101, adopted in Quebec in 1977, ensures that Allophone immigrant students pursue French-language education in primary and secondary school in order to guarantee the use and maintenance of the French language by the greatest number of inhabitants in the province of Quebec.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

the language most used between students in informal conversations. Both elementary and secondary schools were primarily French-language dominant, and “dans bien des cas, la compétition ne se fait pas avec l’anglais, mais avec un ensemble de plusieurs langues d’origine, dont l’usage est très majoritairement limité aux contacts intragroups” (2005, p. 105). While their data indicated that Allophone students’ native languages are spoken more often than English in Montreal schools, a similar study must be conducted in Ottawa to understand the influence of the French minority context.

In comparison, Haché (2003) conducted a study in three elementary and three secondary French-language schools in the conseil scolaire public du Nord-Est de l'Ontario in order to evaluate the efficiency of the initial politique d’aménagement linguistique (1994). Although the PAL was not formally adopted until 2004, a draft was published in 1994 which announced the objectives of the Ontario Ministry of Education. Haché (2003) noted that while French usage varied from one school to another, most elementary students spoke English (29.8%) or French (27.4%) while some students (17%) spoke ‘Frenglish’ (a combination of French and English). The secondary school data revealed that outside of the classroom, students spoke French and English equally. Moreover, “les élèves utilisent un mélange très prononcé de l’anglais et du français ou un français influencé par l’anglais” (Haché, 2003, p. 64). Interestingly, Haché explored the attitudes of teachers within the French minority context. The teachers noted that students’ use of French was limited primarily to the classroom and that their use of English increases as they progress through school. Haché (2003) cited media, primarily the television, and socializing with friends in English as a contributing factors to the decreased use of French. Moreover, teachers also believed that students often did not feel comfortable expressing themselves in French because of their lack of vocabulary. Additionally, teachers felt the need to constantly encourage the use of French and to demonstrate the benefits of speaking French. Finally, many teachers agreed that Anglophone students and students from multilingual households increased the assimilation of Francophones into the mainstream culture (Haché, 2003).

While research conducted internationally, in Montreal, and in other parts of Ontario can offer valuable insights on language use in Ottawa, the uniqueness of the minority French context remains to be further explored.

Desired Linguistic Representation

Linguistic representations are individually built selves which are developed during experiences with language in different contexts. Essentially, they are the link between language and identity. One's linguistic representation allows them to be categorized as a member of certain groups since language symbolizes membership to particular communities. In fact, language can often be a factor that holds a group together. Petitjean argues that imposing certain language practices upon the Other constitutes an identity change (2009, p. 79). "La langue devient le symbole de ce qu'est un individu en tant que membre d'une collectivité" (Petitjean, 2009, p. 80).

In Salomone's (2010) book on language, identity, and education, she addresses the differences between the previous school culture, in which speaking other languages was 'social suicide', and the current culture, in which Allophones are becoming the norm. Salomone claims that social and political dimensions influence the languages used, and consequently one's linguistic representation.

In his work on African students' linguistic representations in France, Zongo (1997) explored the conflict between native languages and French. The participants in the study were often embarrassed by their native languages due to the prestige of French while simultaneously viewing French as an 'outsider' language and their native languages as 'insider' languages. Similarly, Morgan (2006) explained that language use within speech communities allows insiders to identify outsiders. From one's "style of speaking [he or she] may be readily identified as belonging to a particular community" (Morgan, 2006, p. 17). This sense of belonging is particularly critical for Allophone youth who may chose to communicate in certain languages in order to integrate themselves into the school community.

While researching youth in Franco-Ontarian high schools, Ibrahim (2008) discusses the link between language learning and identity. As his participants began learning Black English from the dominant educational source – the television – their new corresponding identities developed. The students began to appropriate the Black identity by observing Black artists and adopting their speech patterns (both words and accent). The students desired to represent themselves similarly to the Black artists on televisions with whom they were able to identify.

Dallaire (2003) brings to light the concept of a hybrid identity within the Francophone culture. In Ontario, as in many other provinces where Francophones represent a minority,

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

Francophone youth are attracted to the English-dominant North American culture. Dallaire studied how the Jeux Franco-Ontariens helped youth to construct their hybrid identity. Intriguingly, the adolescent-participants chose to express themselves as “not just Francophone” (Dallaire, 2003, p. 163). Unfortunately, the author recognized that the hybridity of Francophone youth was not limited to just French and English culture, as the participants were ethnically diverse, yet chose to restrict her research to the two dominant cultures. Subsequently, many of the participants considered themselves ‘Canadian’ or ‘Bilingual’ in order to express the duality of their linguistic abilities.

Linguistic Proficiency

Interesting studies in language proficiency have also been conducted in Ireland and Wales, where immersion schools are common for minority language education since many communities do not have the resources necessary for entirely Irish or Welsh-language instruction (Mueller Gathercole & Thomas, 2009; Thomas & Roberts, 2011). With regards to Welsh education in Wales, Mueller Gathercole and Thomas noted that “in bilingual communities in which one language is very dominant over the other, acquisition of the dominant language may be quite unproblematic across sub-groups, while acquisition of the minority language can be hampered” (2009, p. 213). The results of their study concluded that students (regardless of their native language) in a bilingual community will develop relatively similar proficiency in the dominant language (English), but the degree of acquisition of the minority language (Welsh) varies. Often the minority language education does not result in high proficiency levels by English-dominant students due to the small percentage of native speakers of Welsh.

Continuing the examination of English-Welsh education, Thomas and Roberts (2011) discussed English language use, and noted that children in Wales are expected to attain certain proficiency levels in English, yet similar expectations do not exist for Welsh. In Wales, English is perceived as the ‘language of inclusion’, and once young students become aware of language use patterns, they are difficult to reverse. Similar studies in Ireland have established that once there is at least one English-dominant child, a group of Irish-dominant children will switch their conversation from Irish to English (Thomas & Roberts, 2011). “Children who speak the dominant community language at home often revert to the comfort of their L1 in peer–peer interactions, and do so even with children for whom their L1 is the minority language” (Thomas & Roberts, 2011, p. 89). This phenomenon is likely to have negative effects on both the child’s

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

linguistic achievements and the impact of the school's ability to transmit the minority language. To further investigate this occurrence, Thomas and Roberts studied language use by English-dominant and Welsh-dominant students in Welsh immersion schools. When speaking with the teacher and their peers in the classroom, most Welsh-dominant students used predominately Welsh, while most bilingual and English-dominant students used a combination of Welsh and English. Despite a clear preference for Welsh by the Welsh-dominant students, English still prevailed in the classroom during peer-to-peer interactions.

In Ireland, Irish L1 students are often mixed with Irish L2 learners in immersion programs due to limited resources. There is a concern that the Irish L1 students will not fully develop their native language when placed with English peers. Hickey (2001) terms this phenomenon 'unofficial immersion,' the learning of the majority language as opposed to the target language, since the minority language speakers appear to be more accommodating than the majority language speakers. Hickey's research concluded that L1 Irish pre-school children use primarily English and very little Irish, possibly because they are vulnerable to English's elevated social status and the high proportion of English in the media and the community. Hickey (2001) noted that while French-language school students in Ontario may have syntactic problems in French due to the influence of English, Irish students lack knowledge of vocabulary and syntax. To combat the lack of proficiency, Hickey suggests that Irish L1 students should be separated from English L1 students during the first few years of school to ensure superior Irish proficiency in Irish L1 students.

Similar research was performed by Potowski (2004) in an English/Spanish dual immersion program. For her study, Potowski selected a classroom in which the teacher taught in English and in Spanish equally, and chose four focal students (two Spanish L1, two Spanish L2). During Spanish lessons, when 100% of conversations should be in Spanish, Potowski noted only 56%. Despite being more proficient, the two Spanish L1 students used similar amount of Spanish and English to the Spanish L2 students. Potowski also noted that the least Spanish proficient student seemed less willing to speak Spanish and may have feared appearing incompetent.

Research conducted in Franco-Ontario schools by Mougeon and Beniak (1994) demonstrated that "the less French is used in the home and community, the more the school becomes the main provider of exposure to and opportunities to use French, that is, the more it becomes an instrument of language revival" (p. 117). In richly Francophone-populated Franco-

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

Ontarian towns, such as Hawkesbury, the language proficiency (as measured by reflexive pronoun mastery) was consistently high among students. However, in Franco-Ontarian towns with a low Francophone population, such as Cornwall, the students' language proficiency was considerably lower, particularly during elementary school. The authors also noted that a limited use of French outside of the school domain caused students to be less familiar with certain informal registers of Canadian French.

With respect to factors that contribute to language proficiency in immigrants, Chiswick and Miller (1996) conducted a study in Australia to observe newcomer's level of education, exposure to the language prior to migration, and time spent in the new country. Additionally, "family composition, country of origin, and motive for migrating" (Chiswick & Miller, 1996, p. 20) can affect language choice and proficiency. The researchers perceived that an immigrant's country of origin had a significant impact on his or her degree of English proficiency. "Compared to the Southern European control group, English-language proficiency rates are 25 percentage points higher for immigrants from Northern Europe, 36 percentage points higher for those from the Philippines, and 21 percentage points higher for immigrants from South Asia" (Chiswick & Miller, 1996, p. 26). Moreover, immigrants from Southern Europe had comparable proficiency to those from "Arab countries, Other Asia, Eastern Europe, and South and Central America" (Chiswick & Miller, 1996, p. 26).

The majority of language proficiency research recently executed in schools pertains to bilingual participants in immersion settings. Research is required in the field of multilingual education to further understand the relationship between language proficiency and language use. Moreover, as language proficiency can affect language use, the factors that affect language proficiency are extremely noteworthy. However, the relationship between language proficiency and language use in the French minority language context of Ottawa remains to be explored.

Language Prestige

The concept of language prestige, that one language could be more valuable or important, can affect the learner's motivation and classroom behaviour. According to Araújo e Sá and Schmidt, language value is calculated by its "usefulness for (international) communication, business relationships, [and] travelling" (2008, p. 112). Their research suggests that when one's mother tongue is not a language of prestige, inner conflict may arise as the individual struggles with his or her desire to learn the language of prestige.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

English is generally considered THE universal language and is often perceived as the most globally prestigious due to its use in international affairs and business transactions globally; however, the prestige of other languages is often specific to the individual's country. Moreover, when the native language is undervalued, additive bilingualism may be prevented. Subtractive bilingualism refers to the loss of the L1 due to the dominance of the L2 (Hamers, 1992). Children will subsequently feel uncomfortable using their L1 when they return to their country of origin or refuse to communicate with their family members (Moore, 1992).

Regardless of language prestige, individuals typically have a preferred language, based on the language they perceive to be the most elegant, most useful, or the easiest (Clerc & Cortier, 2008). For multilinguals, language preference often leads to a personal hierarchy of languages. Through studying language preferences across different age groups and cultures, Clerc and Cortier (2008) noted that young children preferred their mother tongue (93% of males, 81% of females) to adolescents (52% of males, 48% of females). A similar separation from one's native language is noticeable in perceptions of language elegance (67% of young children, 42% of adolescents) as many students begin to develop a connection with the language used in school. Interestingly, when asked about their language preference based on usefulness, males (73% of young boys and 35% of adolescents) significantly preferred their native language to females (45% of young girls and 16% of adolescents). A 15-year-old Moroccan girl was quoted in Clerc and Cortier's study for preferring French, as opposed to her native language, because "c'est le français qui vas m'aider à construire ma vie" (2008, p. 156). Interestingly, the researchers recognized that it is uncommon to prefer more than one language. In contrast, Jobe (1992) provided instances when individuals refuse to speak specific languages, despite being competent. In urban Gambia, individuals reject Wolof or Mandinka because they are the languages of the Other. Additionally, the act of code mixing may hold certain perceptions, such as the use of a deteriorated form of language or an inability to speak either language (Swigart, 1992).

A Mauritian study (Rajah-Carrim, 2007) offers additional insights into language prestige in the education system. In accordance with Heller (2003), English is valued in Mauritius for potential social and economic gains; however, Kreol, the most common native language, is officially excluded from the education system. French is also frequently used in schools as it is considered the language of everyday interaction.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

“Many teachers use French instead of English in the classroom. New concepts are usually explained in English or even in Kreol. In a typical biology class, for instance, the teacher first explains in French (or even Kreol), and then possibly dictates notes in English. Students generally ask questions to the teacher in French but in Kreol to their classmates.” (Rajah-Carrim, 2007, p. 54)

In this case, language prestige is preventing students from succeeding yet Mauritians recognize the importance of learning European languages in order to compete at an international level. This situation has led to the significant failure rates in primary education (Rajah-Carrim, 2007).

In Ontario, Mougeon and Beniak (1994) noted a shift towards English and away from French language use. Many Francophones had lost the ability to converse in French and had begun to use English predominately in the home. Some factors suggested to explain this shift in prestige included the minority context, higher income rates of Anglo-Ontarians as opposed to Franco-Ontarians, and migration to urban centers and subsequently increased contact with Anglophones (Mougeon & Beniak, 1994). More recently, Haché (2003) noted that Francophone children are encouraged to speak French at home, yet many spoke English in the community. The use of both French and English by Francophones signals that both languages are valued. However, English possesses a superior degree of prestige since it is the language spoken in the community and can subsequently grant the speaker with a greater number of resources (Heller, 2003).

Language prestige clearly plays an influential role in the language use of students. While the PAL (2004) aims to restore the prestige of French in French-language schools, research is required to examine the efficiency of the policy.

Summary

The literature review revealed significant studies in the fields of language prestige, language proficiency, and the learner's desired linguistic identity, as well as some research specific to the Ottawa-Ontario context. However, as of yet, no language repertoire use study has been conducted on the interrelationship among language prestige, language proficiency, and the learner's desired linguistic identity within the school domain. Furthermore, the research in Ottawa was often outdated and did not take Allophones' language choices into consideration. In fact, much of the literature focuses on bilinguals and does not consider the additional dimension of linguistic capabilities offered by multilinguals. For example, many of the studies previously

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

described pertain to the use of English and an additional language in the classroom, while few focus on English, French and a third language. Curdt-Christiansen (2007) is the only researcher to study the use of English, French, and an additional language in a Canadian classroom. In this study the additional language, Chinese, is common to all students. In the following study, the participants each have their own native language(s), varying in proficiency levels, and each language will have a different prestige status in the community.

Research Question

The research question that will guide this study is: Within a French minority school, how do the interrelationships among Allophone students' desired linguistic representation, proficiencies in English, French and native language(s), and the prestige of their languages affect language repertoire use?

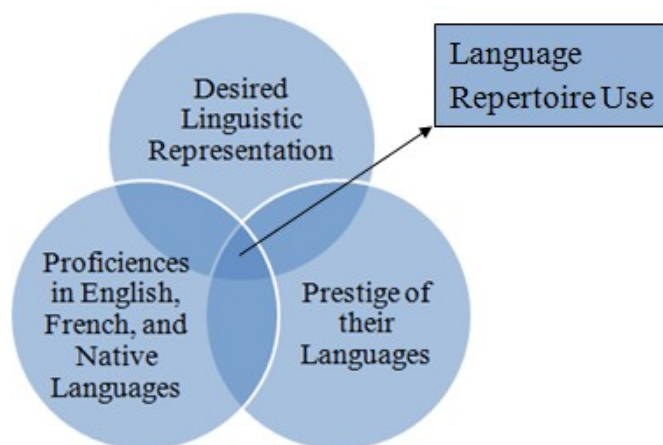


Figure 1: Interrelationships among variables affecting Language Repertoire Use

As illustrated in Figure 1, the research goal of this study is to understand language repertoire use among Allophone students in a French minority school. Language repertoire use has been placed at the centre of the Venn diagram as it will be explored through the interrelationship among three factors: desired linguistic representation, language proficiencies, and language prestige. The overlapping circles in the diagram signify the shared commonalities of the factors and their reciprocal influence.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Code-switching, the shift from one language to another within an utterance or a conversation, was studied extensively throughout the mid to late 1900s, during which time many different theories were proposed. Fishman, a pioneer in language choice theories, created a model in 1965 to illustrate the language possibilities of a bilingual. According to the figure, a bilingual could either converse with a monolingual in the language spoken by the monolingual, or with a bilingual. When two bilinguals communicate, a language choice must occur. Subsequently, Fishman (1972) has advanced the domain theory, which upholds the belief that individuals make a conscious choice to switch languages based on linguistic and social restraints. Fishman postulated that language choices occur when the interlocutor shifts between different sociolinguistic domains and that they may represent a change in role relationships. Therefore, when the domain is constant, code-switching can symbolize the interlocutor's transformation in social roles. It is important to note that the same domain (for example, the school) may be perceived differently in other communities, or by different members of the same community. Key elements within the domain include participants, topic, and setting, yet the sociocultural norms and expectations of language use are of equal importance during analysis (Wei, 2010). Domain theory perceives links between languages and particular contexts, and is therefore appropriate for this study focusing on the school domain within a particular community. Although Fishman's theory is not recent, its impact on code-switching research is widespread considering it is still being used and referenced in contemporary multilingual studies (Bodomo, Anderson, & Dzahene-Quarshie, 2009; Ljosland, 2011).

More recently, Heller's sociolinguistic studies of bilinguals in Quebec and Ontario have led to the notion of code switching as a political strategy. According to her theory (2003), languages become associated with groups of speakers and particular contexts. Therefore, multilinguals can represent themselves differently, depending on their purpose. "Heller (1992, 1995) argues that dominant groups rely on norms of language choice to maintain symbolic domination, while subordinate groups may use code switching to resist or redefine the value of symbolic resources in the linguistic marketplace" (Nilep, 2006, p. 13). If we perceive the multilingual students as the subordinate group in this research, then it can be suggested that their language choices reflect resistance against the mandate to use French exclusively in the school. Alternatively, the desire for certain symbolic resources, such as membership to particular social

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

groups in the school, may be responsible for code-switching among students. This explanation is in line with Fishman's (1972) theory that languages are associated with roles and that code-switching represents a transformation of roles; however, Heller (2003) contributes to this notion by suggesting that the role change may be for personal gain. Moreover, Boztepe's critic that the domain theory does not convey "what the speaker *accomplishes* as a result of alternating between available codes in his linguistic repertoire" (2001, p. 13), is remedied by the addition of Heller's explanation that the interlocutor either experiences a gain in symbolic resources or demonstrates resistance against the school's French language policy.

Defining Terms

Language Repertoire

Language repertoire, equally known as communicative repertoire and multilingual repertoire, encompasses the multilingual and multicultural knowledge of their user and his or her ability "de mobiliser les ressources de son répertoire, à savoir l'ensemble des variétés linguistiques – maîtrisées à différents degrés – selon les situations et les circonstances" (Rosen, 2005, p. 123). Languages in a repertoire require a certain degree of competence and development so that the individual may call upon them in particular situations. While educational institutions strive to develop all four language abilities (reading, writing, listening, and speaking), a language in one's repertoire has not necessarily been fully mastered. In fact, the languages in one's repertoire may not have all been developed to the same degree. Managing one's linguistic repertoire (in the case of bilinguals) requires "une tendance à rapprocher le plus possible les deux langues l'une de l'autre, de manière à faciliter les passages divers que le sujet est amené à opérer dans ses pratiques langagières : changement de langues, traductions, alternances de codes, néocodages" (Py, 1992, p. 16). However, it is important that the languages in one's repertoire are not brought too close together so as not to disrupt usage norms and alienate monolingual speakers of each language (Py, 1992). Although theorists define the linguistic repertoire as a collection of "different languages, dialects, registers, styles and routines spoken" (Lüdi, 2006, p. 12), for the purposes of this study, only different languages will be considered, namely the participant's heritage language, French, and English.

Desired Linguistic Representation

Building upon Fishman's 1972 domain theory, Blom and Gumperz (1986) stated that the different languages within one's repertoire "symbolize the differing social identities which

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

members may assume” (p. 421). However, there is no single corresponding relationship between a specific language and a specific way of representing oneself. Similarly, Petitjean (2011) explained that multilinguals' language practices “constitue[nt] une porte d'entrée indispensable sur la manière dont ceux-ci construisent et organisent ensemble leur réalité sociale, et, ce faisant, s'inscrivent dans leurs relations aux autres” (Petitjean, 2011, p. 147). The speaker's linguistic representation can be classified in terms of his or her relation with others.

Consequently, within the school context, the participants' linguistic representations can only be determined with regard to the teacher and the other students. In this sense, the participants will be classified in terms of 'student' (in contrast to the teacher) or 'friend' (relative to the classmates). The participants' language choices with regard to their roles will determine their linguistic representation.

However, as emphasized by Blom and Gumperz (1986), certain constraints (i.e., social or situational) may limit the speaker's language choices, therefore providing them varying degrees of freedom. In this case study, the French-language school's language policies regarding French language use affect the participants' language choices within the school setting.

Language Prestige

When defining language prestige, Heller (2003, 2011) referenced Canada's history as a colony of both France and England. Following the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759, Canada was governed by Great Britain. The British chose to gain French loyalty rather than assimilate the population, but soon made attempts to control the French through acts such as the unification of Upper and Lower Canada in 1841. As a British colony, Anglophones possessed more political power and influence while Francophones were put at a disadvantage. “Francophone Canada lived on the margins of power, articulated with but depended on the wealth base of Canadian society” (Heller, 2011, p. 14) The mobilization of Francophones in Quebec during the 1960s allowed French-speakers to gain access to more resources, and eventually lead to the Official Languages Act of 1969. The recognition of Canada as a bilingual country is central to language prestige as “the language authorized by the state is often used as a symbol of power and prestige with a bilingual group” (Gal, 1988, pp. 246-247). In some northern territories, aboriginal languages have also become officialised; however, as we are examining the context of Ottawa, only French and English will be examined. Heller (2003) stated that the economic and political power of Anglophones has contributed to the prestige of the English

language and that the long history of British dominance in Canada has ensured that the high status of English is deeply rooted. It is clear to Heller that English, followed by French, are the most prestigious languages in Canada; nevertheless, other languages can be highly valued if they allow speakers to gain resources. When Allophones can use their native languages to access social, educational, and material resources, these languages acquire power and prestige.

Subsequently, in this study, prestige will be attributed to a language if the speaker recognizes that the language provides social, educational, and material resources. As the participants attend a French-language school, they recognize the educational resources of French. However, they perceive the prestigious value of English and their native languages differently.

Conceptual Framework

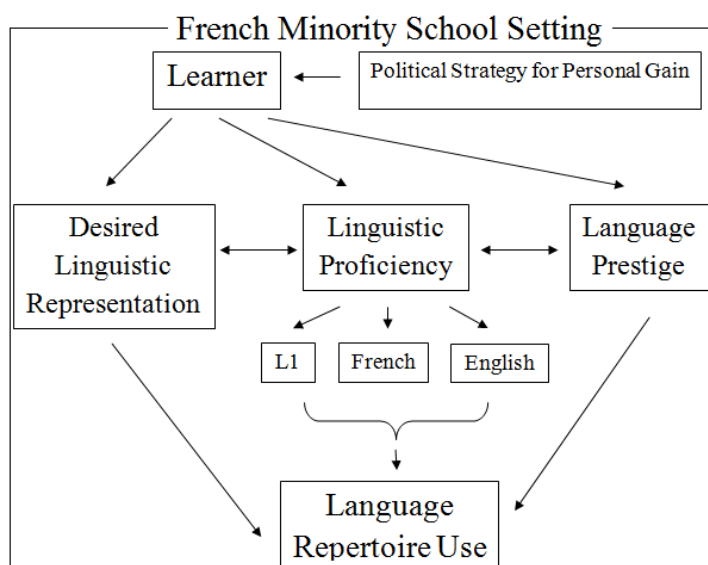


Figure 2: Conceptual framework. This figure illustrates the conceptual framework used to guide the research.

The conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 2 represents the learner, an Allophone student attending a French-language secondary school in a French minority context, at the center of his or her language repertoire use, influenced by his or her political strategy for personal gain of symbolic resources, and predisposed by his or her desired linguistic representation, linguistic proficiency, and the prestige of the languages in his or her linguistic repertoire. The learner's language proficiency is examined according to his or her abilities in his or her native language(s), French, and English. Fishman (1972) suggested the linguistic constraints of the school domain will oblige students to speak primarily in French, while the social restraints may

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

compel students to speak English or another language. While Fishman recognized that the school domain is critical to language choice, Heller (2003) further elaborated that symbolic resources may also influence the learner's language choice by encouraging a personal gain. For example, when the learner wishes to be perceived as a good student, he or she may speak French in front of the teacher. However, when the learner wishes to demonstrate camaraderie and rapports with other students, he or she may choose to speak English or a native language spoken by all members of the group.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Methodological Framework

The data collected was qualitatively analyzed in order to voice the perspectives and opinions of the Allophone participants within the French minority context. Considering this study aims at understanding how Allophone students use their linguistic repertoire, a case study framework was suitable because the different desired linguistic representation, language proficiencies, and the prestige of the students' languages provided a greater and holistic awareness of the phenomenon. Case studies are often used in the field of education (Yin, 2009) to examine real-life events by triangulating data. Moreover, multiple participants ensure that detailed accounts of each case contribute to a rich and descriptive narrative which demonstrates the complexity of the context. The case study methodology ensures that each participant will be viewed as a unique individual whose data will contribute to the greater understanding on the phenomenon.

Furthermore, social constructivism was adopted at the epistemological orientation as it strives "to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation" (Creswell, 2007 p. 20). The conclusions obtained in this research reflect the diversity of responses and complexity of the phenomenon. For social constructivists, the social context, what participants "say or do in their life settings" (Creswell, 2009, p. 8), aides in one's understanding. The researcher's inferences were advanced through interaction with the participants within the school context in order to understand their views on the phenomenon.

Context

The research was conducted at a public French-language secondary school in Ottawa. The school offers students from grades 7 through 12 a French language education which prepares them for postsecondary studies. The school is located in an urban setting in the Ottawa region and was chosen for its high Allophone population with students from a wide range of ethnicities.

Participant Selection

For in-depth case studies, Creswell (1998) recommends a maximum of 4 participants. Consequently, four students, three female and one male, were chosen from the MLT research unit's SSHRC-funded 2009-2012 database (Masny et al. 2009-2012) for the purposes of this study. After narrowing the participants to Allophones exclusively, these students were chosen for having different native languages and various levels of proficiency in the languages in their

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

repertoire. All four students (Table 1) speak French, English, and a third or fourth language, yet their linguistic abilities vary significantly (as acknowledged by the participants themselves during the interviews and observed during classroom observations). The possession of different native languages was a key factor in participant selection as each language has a unique level of prestige, which will impact the student's language repertoire use. Similarly, the different nationalities and ethnicities of the students ensured that they will have unique experiences with their language use, particularly in terms of their different arrival periods in Canada. The range of arrival times (one participant is Canadian-born, another arrived in infancy, the third immigrated during kindergarten, and the fourth is a recent newcomer) ensure that the participants have different experiences regarding their time spent in Canada (Table 2). Individualistic factors affecting language use include age, gender, time spent in Canada, country of origin, level of education, and prior knowledge of the majority language (Chiswick and Miller, 1996; Yagmur, 2009). Therefore, it was important to consider a variety of factors when selecting the participants.

Additionally, the students differ in age, grade, and the subject-course in which they were enrolled, in order to provide greater diversity in the data. Two of the participants were enrolled in courses that used French as the language of instruction, while the other two participants were enrolled in English courses but they possessed mixed levels of English proficiency. The language of instruction factor was perceived as significant since different language choices could be made by the participants depending upon the possible symbolic resources gained from the teacher or peers. Moreover, these students were chosen as their cases yielded relevant and information-rich data in accordance to the factors outlined in the conceptual framework. The diverse responses regarding the students' desired linguistic representation, their proficiencies in English, French and their native language(s), and the prestige of their languages have been amply explored to ensure that the conclusions reached are accurate representations of language repertoire use by Allophones in a French minority school setting.

Participants

The first participant, Nimo, is a Chilean-Canadian grade 8 student who was observed in a citizenship course. She speaks Spanish, French, and English fluently. The second participant, Maria, is a Guinean-Canadian grade 9 student who was observed in a drama course. Maria speaks French and English fluently and understands some Fula, her native language. The third

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

participant, Mohamed, a Lebanese-Canadian grade 10 student, was observed in an English course. Mohamed speaks Arabic, French, and English fluently. Finally, the fourth participant is Sara, a Congolese-Canadian grade 11 student who was observed in a *Anglais pour débutants* course (Ministère de l'Éducation et de la Formation, 1999). Sara speaks Swahili, Lingala, and French with high proficiency, and English with low proficiency.

Table 1

Comparison of participants

Participant	Gender	Grade	Course	Language of Instruction	Language(s) Spoken in Addition to French and English
Nimo	Female	8	Citizenship	French	Spanish
Maria	Female	9	Drama	French	Fula
Mohamed	Male	10	English	English	Arabic
Sara	Female	11	English	English	Swahili, Lingala

Table 2

Participants' nationalities and immigration history

Participant	Ethnicity	Country of Birth	Immigration Experience
Nimo	Chilean	Canada	N/A
Maria	Guinean	Guinea	Arrived during infancy
Mohamed	Lebanese	Lebanon	Arrived in kindergarten
Sara	Congolese	Congo	Arrived 4 years ago

The participants signed consent forms prior to participating in the MLT study and were informed of the level and type of involvement expected, assured that their information would remain confident, and received contact information if questions arose. They consented to audio and video recording by signing a consent letter. All participants were asked to create a pseudonym for themselves to further protect their identities.

Data Collection

The University of Ottawa's Multiple Literacy Theory (MLT) research unit originally collected this data to study the relationships between immigration, literacies, technology, and popular culture in becoming-citizen. The data was collected between November 2010 and June 2011 at the Ottawa French-language public secondary school. The data was collected in two phases. The first phase was in grade 7 history and grade 8 citizenship courses; the second phase was in a grade 9 drama and grade 10 English courses. There was one female student-participant in the grade 7 history course, eleven (2 male, 9 female) student-participants in the grade 8 citizenship course, one female student-participant in the grade 9 drama course, and four (2 male, 2 female) student-participants in the grade 10 English course.

Among the collected data are two 75 minute classroom observation videos for each class, and individual or group student interviews based on the observations. Additionally the participating students were given Flip Cameras (personal "Flip Cam" video cameras) to document their daily life. The students were told to focus their videos particularly on their technology use and concept of being a Canadian citizen. After returning the Flip Cams, each student participated in an individual interview of approximately 30 minutes. The goal of the individual interviews was to discuss what the students had filmed. Of the 17 student-participants, 13 completed the exercise of filming their daily life a second time. Interviews were also conducted with the three participant-teachers and the mothers of two participants. The MLT research unit also collected artifacts from the school and the participants, which included school newsletters and students' homework and in-class assignments.

Data Analysis

Following the interviews, a verbatim transcription was completed in order to obtain accurate quotations. The interview notes were consulted to ensure a truthful record of the interview and the final transcript was reviewed and time coded. Additionally, the Flip Cam videos were briefly described with the use of key terminology and time coded to facilitate information retrieval. The classroom artifacts, such as the student's work and teacher handouts, were photocopied and organized per course.

After reviewing the transcripts of the four chosen participants, key quotations with regards to the students' desired linguistic representation, their proficiencies in English, French, and their native language(s), and the prestige of their languages were highlighted. Similarly, relevant

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

descriptions were noted in terms of these three factors of language use. Only the artifacts of the four participants were reviewed for the purposes of the students' proficiencies in the target language of the course.

Subsequently, the data was arranged for each participant and then grouped into the categories of students' desired linguistic representation, their language proficiencies, and the prestige of their languages. The organized data was then coded and a data-driven inductive approach was also utilized so that "the themes identified are strongly linked to the data... without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 83). An inductive approach also required a consideration of the literature during the code development process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Furthermore, the inductive approach coincided with our social constructivist worldview as meaning was generated from the data (Creswell, 2009, p. 9).

Once the preliminary codes were established, formalized, and recoding occurred, distinct themes were established that directly linked to the research question. The final stage of data analysis included interpreting the themes based on our personal understandings of the data.

Trustworthiness

The conclusions reached in this qualitative case study reflect each participant's real-life experiences with language repertoire use within the context of a minority French-language secondary school. The suggested maximum of four participants (Creswell, 1998), as well as the diversity of participants' cases', increased the generalizability of the results. Moreover, the validity of the research was enhanced by the triangulation of multiple sources of data (Interviews with the participants and their teacher, classroom observations, and Flip Cam footage) (Creswell, 2007). Additionally, referential material (for example, the school newsletter, teacher handouts, and the participants' in-class work) was collected by the researchers at the school in order to further support the interpretations of the data.

Creswell suggests that a minimum of two of the eight trustworthiness procedures be adopted during any research study (2007). Four procedures (triangulation; peer review; negative case analysis; rich, thick description) were implemented during this study to ensure that the results were valid.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The data for the four participants was organized in function of the three components of the conceptual framework: desired linguistic representation, linguistic proficiency, and language prestige. Evidence of data for each component is supported by quotes or examples of behaviour from the students' interviews, personal Flip Cam videos, or classroom observations.

Desired Linguistic Representation

As Blom and Gumperz (1986) suggested, when examining the participants' linguistic representations, the French-language school's language policies regarding French language use were taken into consideration. Likewise, when students chose to speak in English during English-language-of-instruction courses, it was understood that there were certain constraints placed upon the students. However, the participants often elected to speak languages other than the language of instruction at school, which demonstrated how the use of those languages can represent another linguistic representation. The analysis for each of the four participants' desired linguistic representation is described in this section.

Nimo

Within the school setting, Nimo only speaks French and English since she has few Spanish-speaking friends. As observed in the classroom observation footage, Nimo speaks French when answering the teacher's questions. In this case, Nimo's language choice reflects the constraint imposed upon her by the school's language policy. While Nimo does make attempts to speak with her friends in French during class, she often disregards this policy. In the following example, Nimo is working with her group members Coco and Heba to complete a Canadian banner creation project². Although the other group members communicated in English predominately for both on and off-task discussion, Nimo often spoke in French for on-task communication, and spoke predominately in English for off-task discussion.

Nimo : Le monter un peu plus puis laisser l'espace pour faire de l'herbe et des coquelicots, puis le faire un peu plus grand pour que les montagnes partent de sa tête. Comme ça il n'y a pas d'espace vide entre... (Raise it a little more and leave space to put some grass and

² "Projet bannière" was a banner creation project with the theme of "Qu'est-ce qu'être un(e) Canadien(ne) pour toi?" The project coincided with the National Capital Commission's (NCC) National Student Banner Contest for students in which the winning banner would appear in Major's Hill Park, Ottawa.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

poppies, then make it a little bigger so that the mountains depart from its head. That way there is not any empty space between...)

Heba : Okay

Nimo : Tu sais ? (You know?)

Coco : Well the judges are going to pick ours because, because of the Canada

Heba: Oh

Nimo: I hope they do, okay, so, après t'as l'herbe ici... (...then you have the grass here...)

It is clear from the example that Nimo is making an effort to speak in French with her group members. However, she will speak in English when the topic is less focused on school, as exemplified by the discussion of winning the banner competition (a nationwide contest).

It appears that Nimo wishes to be perceived as a well-behaved French student who respects the language policies of the school. When conversing with her Anglophone school friend Coco outside of school on the Flip Cam footage, Nimo pursues her attempts to speak in French but slowly transitions from predominately French language use to English language use. In the first videos of the series, Nimo addresses the researchers in French while Coco uses a combination of French and English. As Coco's use of English increased with each video in the collection, Nimo began to translate some of the English comments into French for the researchers. Nimo also began to speak more English, particularly when speaking directly to Coco. In some portions of these video clips, Nimo's use of English became nearly exclusive and her efforts to switch back to French were unsuccessful as Coco continued to respond in English.

This series of videos could serve as an illustration of Nimo's struggle between her French student identity and her friendship with Coco. As Coco's friend, Nimo wishes to speak English, yet the Flip Cam assignment is a project through her school in which she is expected to speak French. In the interviews, Nimo explained that Coco does not speak French at home and that she therefore spoke primarily in English with her. "Elle ne parle pas français, comme pas un mot à la maison, donc elle est surtout habituée à parler en anglais avec tout le monde, donc moi je m'entraîne dans ça, je parle pas vraiment français avec elle." (She does not speak French, like not one word at home, therefore she is mostly used to speaking in English with everyone, therefore I become involved in that, I do not really speak French with her). Apparently, when Nimo's two linguistic representations do not overlap, her language choices are clear: she speaks French in class and English with her friends. However, when confronted by situations such

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

speaking with her friends in class, it appears that Nimo wrestles with language selection and predominately switches from one to the other depending on the topic of discussion.

Moreover, in regards to Spanish, Nimo assumes the identity of the daughter of two Chilean immigrants primarily within her home. She practices her Spanish culture extensively through attending Spanish dance performances, listening to Spanish music, and participating in the young Latin-American leaders club. Nimo's mother explains that "elle a commencé... une espèce de programme de leadership pour les jeunes... pour former des jeunes leaders dans la communauté latino-américaine." (She started a sort of leadership program for youth... to train young leaders in the Latin-American community). However, this identity does not appear to conflict with her school identities as a French student and friend of Anglophone students.

Maria

In contrast with Nimo, who wishes to follow the policy of the school, Maria does not always respect the French language regulations. During one instance, Maria begins speaking in English with her friends, and then switches to French as she walks past the teacher. Yet, in the teacher's presence, she addresses another student in English. The teacher becomes frustrated with Maria and disciplines her in French; however, an equally upset Maria begins to speak to the teacher in English. This resistance of the school's language policy could be interpreted as Maria's limited interest in being perceived as a student for whom speaking French in the school is important.

At school, Maria chooses to speak French with Francophones, and English with Anglophones. Nevertheless, Maria even makes attempts to learn other languages, such as Arabic, in order to speak with Allophones. In the following example, Maria was speaking primarily in English with an Arabic-speaking student and the teacher caught the girls speaking out of turn.

Teacher: Vous êtes en train de babiller elle, elle a un microphone à son, à son gilet, qu'on entend absolument tout qu'est-ce que tu dis en anglais pis en français... (You are in the process of chatting, she has a microphone on her, on her sweater, we hear absolutely everything that you say in English and in French...)

Maria : Et en arabe (And in Arabic)

Teacher : Et en arabe ? Encore mieux! (And in Arabic? Even better!)

In this discussion, Maria appears proud that she spoke a few words in Arabic with her friend and announces this to the class. As with other Allophones, Maria resumes her conversation with the

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

friend by speaking in a combination of French and English – often switching in midsentence. However, when addressing other students in the class, Maria would speak with one friend in English, and turn to address another student in French. The language switch appears to be based on the language preferences of the other students. These language choices could reflect Maria's desire to appear as a friend to Anglophones, Francophones, and Allophones by speaking the language in which they are most comfortable.

With regards to Fula, Maria's native language, Maria rejects the language by claiming that it does not symbolise anything for her and that it is purely "la langue de ma mère" (The language of my mother). It seems that Maria does not want any connection with the language and does not assume any identity in relation to Fula.

Sara

In contrast to the other participants, Sara speaks minimal English in her daily life and appears to reject the language. During the second class observation, the teacher attempted to help Sara read her lines in the play being studied by the class, but Sara seemed indifferent to the activity. Additionally, Sara addressed the teacher in French when asking questions.

Teacher: Because it's hard, because they don't mean the same thing

Sara: Quoi? Live?

Teacher: English it's difficult

Sara: Madame, quoi? Quoi?

Teacher: Live

Sara: Live

Teacher: Live, I live in Ottawa

Sara: Okay, je vie Ottawa

Teacher: Yeah, but in English my dear. Live in Ottawa

Sara: I live in Ottawa

The example demonstrates Sara's unwillingness to learn English when the teacher attempts to explain the difference between 'live' and 'leave.' Sara refuses to repeat the word 'live' when the teacher uses it in a sentence, and even asks in French for the teacher to explain. Sara's rejection of English, a language she claims not to speak, along with her dismissal of English television and music, as stated in interviews, could symbolize her strong connection with her Congolese

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

heritage and dismissal of the Canadian culture “je suis congolaise...je suis pas canadienne” (I am Congolese... I am not Canadian).

Her defiant English identity appears to be in opposition to her Swahili friend and family member identity. At home, Sara speaks Swahili with her parents and her older siblings. During English class, Sara is overheard speaking Swahili with her Congolese friend. Moreover, in the Flip Cam footage, Sara and her Congolese friend speak in a combination of French and Swahili while they walk to the bus stop together after school. In these instances, Swahili could also be viewed as a language of defiance against the French language policy as well as the language of instruction (English) since it is not amongst the two preferred options.

Sara's French identity appears in contrast to her defiant English and Swahili identities since it primarily exemplifies strong family connections and respectful student behaviour. Sara predominately speaks French with her siblings at home and with her friends at school. During the English classroom activity, Sara completed her group work by speaking in French with the other students. Likewise, Sara communicated with her siblings in French when she filmed her Flip Cam footage.

Little is known of Sara's identity as a Lingala speaker as she does not appear to speak the language frequently. Sara speaks Lingala primarily when conversing with Congolese friends from her region. “Mes amis parlent lingala aussi” (My friends speak Lingala also). Sara's identity as a Lingala speaker is therefore categorized as friendly.

Mohamed

Mohamed possesses a strong relationship with Arabic, his native language, as it allows him to assume many different identities from family member, to friend, to successful working adult. Although he speaks Arabic predominately at home, he admits to communicating with some of his school friends in Arabic, as demonstrated in the Flip Cam footage. He also plans to return to Lebanon as an adult to live permanently. “Quand je grandis je veux vivre là-bas” (When I grow up I want to live there).

In school, Mohamed claims that he generally speaks French in French-language classes; however, he was only observed in an English-language class and never spoke in French. In fact, he was defiant with the English teacher on one occasion when she addressed him in French but he would only respond in English. The incident followed an argument among the male students in the class who had begun to insult one another.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

Teacher: À l'instant, eux autres sont en train de t'amener, de t'attacher des problèmes, tu le sais, commentaires négatives on s'en sert pas dans la classe (At the moment, they are in the process of bringing you, to associate problems with you, you know it, negative comments we do not use in class)

Mohamed : Okay

Teacher : Okay?

Mohamed: Yes

Teacher: Okay, pis qu'est-ce que t'es censé faire? (Okay, and what are you supposed to be doing?)

Mohamed : This

Teacher : Oui, pis qu'est-ce que tu ne fais pas? (Yes, and what are you not doing?)

Mohamed : This

Teacher : Okay, est-ce que tu peux voir où t'es entrain de créer un problème? (Okay, can you see that where you are creating a problem ?)

Mohamed : Yes

Teacher : Pis te vois-tu que le fait que t'es assis juste à son côté n'aide pas? (And do you see that the fact that you are seated just beside him is not helping?)

Mohamed : But Madame you know their voices can get louder

Teacher: Oui, je le sais... (Yes, I know that...)

This example illustrates Mohamed's unwillingness to speak French when he is not required. When Mohamed speaks English, he assumes the role of a defiant student. Perhaps Mohamed assumes this role in order to appear 'cool' in front of his friends. Throughout the entire class, Mohamed spoke English exclusively with his friends and discussed popular male subjects such as weightlifting, money, and video games.

Mohamed's language choices become complex in his Flip Cam footage in which he is playing video games and wrestling with two of his school friends. The three boys speak a combination of Arabic and English since their identities in Arabic and English include being a friend. This interaction represents the complex code switching which occurs when the social identity symbolized by a language becomes entangled with the same social identity represented by another language.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

Since Arabic allows him to assume many identities, and English allows him to assume the role of a 'cool' and defiant student, Mohamed's identity when speaking French appears to be primarily in relation to his academic studies. This is evident when Mohamed was asked what French represents to him and he replies that "français, c'est une langue d'école" (French, it's a school language). Although Mohamed admits to speaking in French with some Francophone friends, he also reveals that there are relatively few students who speak French outside of class. "Il y a pas souvent qu'il y a des gens qui parlent en français" (It is rare that there are people speaking in French). Therefore, French remains a classroom language for Mohamed which he uses to further his education.

Summary

As explained by Blom and Gumperz (1986), the setting of the school domain will impose certain constraints among the students' language choices. Students are required to speak in French while on school property, but all participants spoke a variety of languages which represented different social identities. Nimo spoke in French when she was being a respectful French student and in English when she was being a friend to her classmates. Nimo's Spanish identity was strictly associated with her home life as the daughter of Spanish-speaking parents.

Maria used both French and English to symbolize her friendship with Anglophones and Francophones alike. When she wished to appear as an Anglophone, she spoke English, and when she wished to appear as a Francophone, she spoke French. However, Maria also used English to defy the school's French language policy.

Sara rejects the use of English in defiance of Western culture, and uses Swahili in defiance of the school's French language policy. Sara's use of French symbolizes her strong family relationship and her respectful student status. Her use of Lingala primarily represents her friendly nature.

Like Maria, Mohamed used English to defy the school's French language policy as he refused to speak to his teacher in French when it was not required of him so as to appear as a 'cool' and defiant student. Both his English and Arabic identities also included being a friend, which caused him to code switch significantly when outside of school with his Arabic-speaking friends.

From the participants' experience with different linguistic representations, it is clear that they only partially respect the school's language policy as they also desire to either speak

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

English or their native language in order to establish relationships with their peers. Peer relationships are particularly critical during adolescence due to “the development of individual behavioural, emotional, social, and academic characteristics” (Li et al., 2011, p. 340). Furthermore, code switching appears essential during class time in order to be both a student and a friend. Within this context, most participants are code switching from English, a language bountiful in social and material resources, to French, the language of educational resources and some social resources, because of the desire for symbolic resources. It is clear that code switching represents the battle between opposing linguistic identities.

Linguistic Proficiency

The proficiency of the student in each of the languages in his or her linguistic repertoire has been examined primarily in accordance to his or her speaking and writing abilities. During initial interviews, the students explained which languages they spoke most often in different domains. Interestingly, no participant claimed to speak exclusively French in the school domain. The students also discussed their language abilities in the other languages in their linguistic repertoire and often highlighted their strengths and weaknesses with different languages. The ensuing analysis represents each of the four participants' linguistic proficiencies with respect to the languages in their linguistic repertoires.

Nimo

Trilingual Nimo speaks Spanish, French, and English fluently, but is most competent in French as it is the language in which she reads and writes most frequently. “J’écris pas en anglais, je sais pas pourquoi. Je crois que c’est juste que je connais beaucoup plus de mots en français” (I do not write in English, I do not know why. I think it is just because I know more words in French). Nimo prefers writing in French because she has a stronger vocabulary than in English and considers Spanish to be more of an oral language. When asked if Nimo wrote in Spanish, she replied “Espagnol? Non je n’écris pas. L’espagnol, je le juste dit et puis je parle, mais j’écris pas en espagnol” (Spanish ? No, I do not write. Spanish, I just say it and then I speak it, but I do not write in Spanish). Regardless, Nimo appears very proud of her Spanish language ability. She admits that she is not able to speak Spanish with many people, but enjoys conversing with her family. When she visited her parents' native country of Chile at the age of three, Nimo confesses that she was very confused between the different languages that she spoke. “J’étais très

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

confuse avec les deux langues, donc je prononçais tous les 'r' comme (...) les 'r' anglais, donc rarr" (I was very confused with the two languages, so I pronounced all the 'r' like (...) the English 'r's, so rarr). During that trip, Nimo felt like a foreigner; however, she has since improved the pronunciation of the phoneme /r/. Consequently, Nimo claims to feel more Chilean. "À chaque fois que je vais au Chili, comme c'est vraiment bizarre, je suis comme moi, tout d'un coup parler comme eux, comme je commence à comme emprunter ces mots puis c'est vraiment bizarre" (Each time I went to Chili, like it was really weird, I am like me, all of a sudden speak like them, like I start to like borrow these words and then it is really weird).

Additionally, Nimo has recently become an active member of the Latin-American community in Ottawa by participating in a Spanish leadership group. Once per week Nimo attends workshops and leadership activities with other youth from Spanish speaking countries in South America. This opportunity allows her to practice Spanish outside of the home domain and with youth her own age.

Nimo remembers beginning elementary school without being able to speak English. She felt intimidated and agitated because her school friends all spoke English and her neighborhood friends spoke English exclusively. Nimo explains that she did not speak much when she was younger because she did not have a strong mastery of the English language; however, she notes a significant improvement now that she speaks English. "Je me sentais comme un peu intimidée parce que je parlais pas l'anglais tellement bien, donc je parlais pas beaucoup, mais maintenant ça s'est amélioré" (I felt a little intimidated because I did not speak English very well, so I did not speak, but now it has improved). Nimo now claims that she speaks English with everyone. "Je parle avec tout le monde en anglais pratiquement comme mes voisins et tout ça" (I practically speak English with everyone, like my neighbours and all that).

After hearing from her friends that immersion did not provide their children with the high level of language competency anticipated nor a lived experience in French, Nimo's mother decided to put Nimo in a French-language school in order to give her a solid basis in the language.

Je voulais aussi m'assurer qu'elles aient (...) une base solide en français, et je me rendais compte des gens que je connaissais dans mon entourage dont les enfants avaient fait l'école d'immersion, ils ne parlaient pas vraiment français, ils ne vivaient pas vraiment en français. Alors je m'étais dit que peut-être ça serait mieux qu'elles aient (...) la base au

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

primaire en français pis après ça on verrait. (I wanted to ensure that they have a solid base in French, and I was realising that people that I knew in my circle of friends whose children had completed French immersion, they did not really speak French, they were not really living in French. So I told myself that it might be better if they first had a base in French and afterwards we would see).

To guarantee a mastery of French, Nimo's mother ensures that her daughters have the opportunity to live in French by speaking French at home, as evident by the Flip Cam videos taken with her family around the kitchen table. Nimo's mother would often address her daughters in French, while the father would speak to them in Spanish.

Maria

Maria claims to only speak two languages, French (her first language) and English. However, Maria's native tongue is Fula. Maria has limited production ability in Fula as she is unable to speak the language but is able to understand when spoken to by her mother and sister. "Je comprends quand elle parle mais je suis pas capable de parler" (I understand when she speaks but I am not able to speak). When asked how it is possible that Maria cannot speak Fula when she has native speakers in her household, she responds that her parents mostly speak to her in French. The use of French in the home domain is demonstrated in Maria's Flip Cam videos with her sisters. In one example, Maria is showing the researchers her Facebook Chat conversation with her boyfriend but she does not remember the word for 'boring' in French.

Maria: On sait vraiment pas de quoi on parle, genre, c'est tout comme, on est vraiment 'bored,' comme on est vraiment, um, comment dit-on ça en français? Comment tu dis 'bored' en français? (We do not really know what we are talking about, like, it's all like, we are really bored, like we are really, um, how do you say that in French? How do you say bored in French?)

Sister : Quoi? (What?)

Maria : Comment tu dis 'bored' en français? Comment dit 'bored' en français? (How do you say bored in French? How say bored in French?)

Sister : Oh, plate (Oh, boring)

Maria : C'est comme toute plate (It's like all boring)

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

Maria code switches with ease in this example as she is chatting with her boyfriend on Facebook in English while attempting to explain her actions in French for the researchers. Similarly, another video clip from the same series displays Maria helping her younger sister with her French grammar homework while reading and writing on Facebook in English.

Maria claims to speak French most often and that she seems to be able to relate best with Francophones, whom she explains, have a greater understanding of her stories and jokes than Anglophones. “Les gens comprennent plus ici que les anglais cuz on a comme, je sais pas mais comme, quand je rencontre comme une histoire, or whatever, comme les gens francophones me comprennent plus que les anglophones, je sais pas pourquoi” (People here understand more than the English people cuz we have like, I do not know but like, when I tell a story, or whatever, like Francophone people understand me more than Anglophones, I do not know why). Nonetheless, Maria seems to be competent in English and often uses English and French in the same sentence. “Des fois je dis les deux dans la même phrase” (Sometimes I say both in the same sentence). Instances of her simultaneous use of French and English are rampant in the transcripts of her interviews and classroom observations. One such example is evident when she was speaking about her interest in dancing. “J’ai dansé avant but then j’ai arrêté pour 3 ans and then j’ai recommencé comme 3 semaines” (I danced before but then I stopped for 3 years and then I restarted like 3 weeks). Another example appears when Maria explains why she helps her younger sister with her homework: “Comme je suis la plus grande et then like you know...” (I am like the oldest and then like you know). Of the four participants, Maria’s transcripts have the most evidence of code switching.

Sara

Sara has the most variation of language abilities of all four participants as she has different levels of abilities in the four languages in her linguistic repertoire. Upon arriving in Canada, Sara enrolled in a French-language school (while many of her siblings chose English-language schools) because she already had a strong mastery of the French language from her schooling in the Congo. French is the language most commonly used among her siblings at home.

Sara considers herself to be very weak in English and rarely communicates in the language. When asked which languages she spoke, Sara replied “je parle juste français, swahilie et lingala” (I speak only French, Swahili and Lingala) and did not mention English. Apart from having English neighbours with whom she exchanges pleasantries, Sara claims that she very rarely

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

communicates in English. “Je parle même pas, je sais même pas comment dire bonjour je pense” (I do not speak at all, I do not even know how to say hello I think). However, Flip Cam footage displays Sara conversing briefly with her sister in English. Regardless, Sara seems disinterested in learning English. “C’est juste parce que j’aime pas l’anglais.” (It is just because I do not like English). Her negative attitude toward the language was also apparent during classroom observations. For example, while responding to the English questions in the activity, Sara would often write abbreviations, yet the other students wrote complete words and sentences. Sara also left many of the questions unanswered. Regardless, Sara’s weak English language abilities can be explained by her more recent immigration from the Congo to Canada (4 years prior to the study) and her status as a beginner English language learner. French subsequently becomes a highly valuable language for Sarah as it is her method of communication with other Canadians.

Sara is most comfortable with Swahili and French as she is only capable of some writing in Lingala. “Je peux écrire les lettres et tout ça (...) mais je peux écrire des choses” (I can write letters and all that (...) but I can write some things). Nevertheless, in the second series of Flip Cam videos, Sara is watching a French and Lingala Congolese movie. In the follow up interview, Sara explained that she often watched “les théâtres congolais [qui sont en] lingala ou français, ou les deux langues” (the Congolese plays [that are in] Lingala or French, or both languages). Sara also has other Congolese friends with whom she speaks Swahili and Lingala, “des fois swahilie, des fois lingala” (Sometimes in Swahili, sometimes in Lingala).

Mohamed

Mohamed differs from the other students in that he is the least comfortable in French, yet he uses his native language in the most settings. As Mohamed visits Lebanon frequently and anticipates living there in the future, he accords great importance to Arabic and does not want to lose his fluency. “L’arabe c’est ma langue primaire, pis j’aimerais la garder” (Arabic is my native language, and I would like to keep it). He converses with his family and friends on a regular basis in Arabic, but also makes significant use of English.

When Mohamed began kindergarten in a French-language school, he spoke minimal French. “C’est la langue que j’ai appris, c’est ma deuxième langue que j’ai appris au Canada. Je savais pas comment parler en anglais, je suis arrivé ici en maternelle, en première année pis je savais juste un petit peu en français” (It is the language that I learned, it is my second language that I learned in Canada. I did not know how to speak English, I arrived here in Kindergarten, in

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

first grade and I knew just a little bit of French). Subsequently, Mohamed briefly attended an English-language school in order to improve his language abilities; however, he credits video games and television as his resources for learning the language. “Pis anglais c’est un que je pensais quand je joue des jeux de vidéo” (And English it’s one that I thought when I play video games). Mohamed later returned to the French-language schools yet remained stronger in English. During the interviews, Mohamed often used English vocabulary when he forgot the French equivalent. In only one instance, Mohamed didn’t know a word in either French or English and was required to say the word in Arabic.

In referring to Allophone students who learn French and English outside of the home, Mohamed’s teacher claimed

Je veux qu’ils comprennent l’anglais et le français parce que souvent ils maitrisent ni une ni l’autre. Ils vont le parler souvent de façon très courant, t’sais c’est blah blah blah mais le vocabulaire est quand même limité. Le vocabulaire est pas spécialisé, on sacre, on se sert des mots vulgaires pour salir la conversation. (I want them to understand English and French because often they master neither one nor the other. They will often speak it very fluidly, you know it is blah blah blah but the vocabulary is still very limited. The vocabulary is not specialised, one swears, one uses vulgar words to dirty the conversation).

As the teacher indicated, Mohamed speaks English and French proficiently but it is possible that certain of his language abilities, most likely writing, suffer from a lack of development. Copies of Mohamed’s English work during the observations revealed that he wrote using alternative spellings, such as those commonly found on the Internet, or incorrect spellings, which is most likely due to an informal English education.

Summary

Each of the participants varies in their language proficiency. While Nimo is a confident speaker of Spanish, French, and English, she is the strongest at writing in French. Maria, on the other hand, is very strong in French and English, and communicates (oral and written) in both frequently, yet she is exceptionally weak in her native language of Fula. In contrast, Sara has a wide variety of language abilities. She is a strong oral communicator in French, Swahili, and Lingala, but a less confident written communicator of Lingala. Additionally, she considers herself to be extremely weak in all English language skills. Finally, Mohamed is a strong speaker

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

in Arabic, French, and English, but communicates least often in French and has poor English writing abilities.

As all of the Allophone participants are strong communicators in French, and most are strong communicators in English, code switching occurs with ease. Considering Ottawa's English language majority context, it is not surprising that many of the participants have developed strong linguistic abilities in English. Within the school domain, Nimo, Maria, and Mohamed rarely speak their native language, regardless of their linguistic abilities, yet Sara often speaks Swahili to her Congolese friend. It appears as though code switching from French to English has become the norm within the school as both languages are understood by most students but since Sara rejects English, she refuses to conform.

Language Prestige

Following Heller's definition of language prestige as a political strategy (2003, 2011), the languages in the four participants' linguistic repertoires were examined in function of the resources the participants gained from the use of a particular language. Heller recognizes the historical events that led to the prestige of French and English in Canada, while also acknowledging that other languages can acquire power if the speaker can gain social, educational, and material resources. Evidently, all participants will gain educational resources if they communicate in French or English with their teachers (depending on the language of instruction of the course), but some participants appear to use other languages as well for educational gain. Language choice for educational gain is defined as the use of the language of instruction of the course when discussing subject-related topics. For example, when Nimo and her teacher were conversing in French regarding her project, Nimo was communicating in French for educational gain. Social gains occur when participants discuss subjects unrelated to the course with their peers. The participants used a variety of languages for this purpose. Finally, material resources are described as physical gains (monetary or material worth) that the participant can receive for speaking a specific language. For example, Mohamed aspires to return to Lebanon to begin his future career. In this case, Mohamed will receive material gain from speaking Arabic.

The following section describes the resource gains of each participant in order to determine the prestige of the languages in their linguistic repertoires.

Nimo

When asked which language Nimo spoke primarily with her friends, she replied: “c’est surtout l’anglais” (it’s mostly English). Nimo appears to perceive English as a highly prestigious language since it is the language she speaks predominately in her neighbourhood and at school. However, Nimo has a few school friends who do not speak English. “J’ai quelques amis qui ne connaissent pas l’anglais, donc je parle (français) avec eux” (I have a few friends who do not speak English, so I speak [French] with them). English and French are clearly the languages used by Nimo for social gain as she uses them to maintain social relationships with friends.

Moreover, English and French allow Nimo to access educational gains as they are the languages she uses for communication during group projects. For example, during the second classroom observation, Nimo was speaking French and English while working with her friends Coco and Heba. The students were required to design and draw a banner that represents Canada. Nimo asked the teacher a question in French and then spoke to her group members in English.

(After speaking with teacher in French) Nimo: Okay, Coco, don’t you want to do this?

Coco: You do it, on pense

Nimo: Why?

Coco: Because you’re the best drawer

This example illustrates Nimo’s use of French and English for educational gain as she clarifies the task when speaking with the teacher, but addresses her group members in English to determine who will draw the banner.

In accordance with Heller’s definition of language prestige, Spanish would be perceived as less prestigious since Nimo can only speak the language with select people, which represents a low social gain. “Même si j’ai seulement comme quatre personnes à qui je peux le parler” (Even if I only have four people with whom I can speak). However, when reflecting on Spanish, Nimo considered it a more beautiful language than French and “c’est facile aussi parce que (...) ça ressemble un peu au français” (It is also easy because (...) it resembles French a little).

Maria

For Maria, Fula has a low level of prestige since she considers it “la langue de ma mère” (It is the language of my mother). Maria claims that she cannot speak Fula although she can comprehend the language to some degree. When asked if she spoke Fula, Maria responded “Je

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

connais, non, je comprends quand [ma mère] parle mais je [suis] pas capable de parler” (I know, no, I understand when [my mother] speaks but I [am] not capable of speaking). Although Maria’s mother and older sister speak Fula, Maria demonstrates a limited interest in learning the language since she stated that she did not have any time to learn. “J’ai pas vraiment le temps d’apprendre [le peul]” (I really do not have the time to learn [Fula]). Maria does not perceive any social, educational, or material gains from speaking Fula, and therefore does not use the language.

In contrast, English and French have high levels of prestige for Maria as she uses both interchangeably at school. Maria perceives English and French as parallel and communicates in both equally as often. “Des fois je dis les deux dans la même phrase... elles sont pareilles, elles sont aussi importantes l’une que l’autre” (Sometimes I say both of them in the same sentence... they are the same, they are equally important). Maria uses both languages for social and educational gain at school as she addresses her friends in either English or French, depending on their preferred language, and the teacher primarily in French. During the classroom observations, Maria was observed code switching frequently with Allophone students whose language preferences may be less clear. For example, Maria asks her Arabic-speaking friend in French for the definition of an Arabic expression. In this case, Maria continues speaking to the same student but switches languages during the conversation.

Arabic student: Ça veut dire ‘je jure’ (It means ‘I swear’)

Maria : I know, I always say it, trust me, I know

(...)

Arabic student: The one that I say the most is (Arabic expression)

Maria: Me too, I always say it, oh my God

While this example illustrates Maria’s use of English and French for social and educational gain (she is communicating with a friend and developing her knowledge of Arabic), it is also clear that Maria accords a certain level of prestige to Arabic since she claims to use certain terms and appears interested in learning new expressions. Maria’s curiosity regarding Arabic demonstrates its perceived higher level of prestige in comparison with Fula, her native language. An explanation of this attribution of prestige could be the high population of Arabic-speaking students in her school, which may increase the perceived number of resources to be gained from speaking Arabic.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

Additionally, Maria explains that her older sister uses English at work and she therefore recognizes the potential material gain from speaking English.

Sara

Sara is the only participant who asserted that French was the language that she predominately spoke at school. When asked why she spoke French, she explained that she prefers to speak in French so that she does not have to repeat herself to other interlocutors. “Je préfère parler en français parce que j’aime pas répéter des choses” (I prefer to speak in French because I do not like to repeat things). While many participants switch languages to speak to different students, Sara claims that French allows her to be understood by everyone. She chooses to speak French “parce que je veux que tout le monde écoute et je veux pas parler la langue et puis aller parler un autre” (because I want everyone to listen and I do not want to speak the language and then do speak another). Sara views French as the language of social gain and therefore does not see the value in code switching. Moreover, when asked about her future, Sara explained that she wanted to attend a French-language postsecondary school and therefore recognizes the educational gains that French can offer.

Unlike other participants, Sara does not have one particular home language. Although she claims to speak predominately Swahili at home, the Flip Cam footage revealed a mixture of French and English when conversing with her siblings. Sara’s siblings have varying levels of comfort with the four languages spoken at home since her youngest siblings attend English-language schools, while the older siblings, like Sara, attend French-language schools. Sara explains that the children are often required to speak French to one another so that everyone can be understood. “On est souvent obligé à parler en français à la maison” (We are often obliged to speak French at home). Moreover, the youngest siblings are not competent in Swahili and therefore French has become the only language mutually understood.

Although Sara watches movies, and converses with some of her family and Congolese friends in Lingala, there appears to be fewer resources gained from speaking the language. Additionally, Sara is not overly interested in learning English and does not appear to perceive many social, educational, or material gains from speaking the language. Even though Sara recognizes the importance of English through her hours spent on the internet on websites such as Facebook and Youtube, she fails to demonstrate any interest in learning English formally.

Mohamed

For Mohamed, Arabic is the most prestigious language. When asked what the different languages in his linguistic repertoire represent to him, Mohamed responded, “L’arabe c’est ma langue primaire pis j’aimerais la gardée, pis français c’est une langue d’école... pis anglais c’est un que je pensais quand je joue des jeux de vidéos” (Arabic is my native language and I want to keep it, and French is a school language... and English is the one I think when I play video games). With regards to Mohamed’s desire for Arabic language maintenance, he replied “pour pas la perdre... parce que quand je grandis je veux vivre là-bas” (so as not to lose it... because when I grow up I want to live there). Mohamed hopes to return to Lebanon in the future to live there permanently. Consequently, he expects to receive material resources in the future for speaking Arabic and therefore places significant prestige on the language.

With regards to French, Mohamed has no interest in watching French television shows because “c’est pareil, ce sont les mêmes shows en français et en anglais” (it is the same, they are the same shows in French and in English) and would prefer to watch all television in English. In Lebanon, Mohamed had begun to learn some French and was subsequently placed in a French-language school when he arrived in Canada. He notes that he does speak French with his Francophone friends, but that most students at the school speak English and therefore he chooses to speak English with them. “J’ai des amis qui parlent juste en français, pis je parle en français avec eux mais mes amis qui préfèrent à parler en anglais... je parle anglais avec eux” (I have friends that only speak French, and I speak French with them but I have friends who prefer to speak English... I speak English with them). Most often, Mohamed speaks a combination of Arabic and English, as evidenced in his Flip Cam videos with his friends. While playing with his friends, Mohamed warns: “remember, the teacher knows what we’re saying, so no swearing” to ensure that the student is careful not to use vulgar language, yet since Mohamed understands that the project is in French, he should be encouraging his friends to speak in French. At no point during any of the Flip Cam videos or classroom observation footage did Mohamed speak in French. This resistance to use French demonstrates Mohamed’s perception of low social, educational, or material gain from French language use.

Interestingly, Mohamed explains that nearly all the students speak English during breaks from classes, such as between classes or at lunch, and that French is heard infrequently. “Tout le monde ici à l’école parle anglais, comme quand, yes, on a 5 minutes en pose, pis chaque

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

personne comme pendant diner, ils viennent ici pour s'asseoir pis on parle en anglais. Il y a pas souvent qu'il y a des gens qui parlent en français" (Everyone here speaks English, like when, yes, we have a 5 minute break, and everyone like during lunch, they come here to sit and we speak in English. There are rarely people who speak in French). Simply put, English is viewed as the language of opposition to French. Mohamed referred to it as the 'break' language, which is used when students need a pause from speaking French during class. Additionally, Mohamed alludes to English's 'cool factor' as it is a commonality among most students that is not associated with school. In this sense, Mohamed received social gains from speaking English with his peers.

Summary

French and English, the languages spoken by all the participants, are viewed differently by each participant. Likewise, the participants have different perceptions regarding the level of prestige of their native language(s) (Table 3). While Nimo is proud to speak Spanish, she also values French and English for the social and educational resources that both languages offer. On the other hand, Maria considers her native language to have a low level of prestige and views French and English to be equally prestigious. In contrast, Sara grants French significant prestige as it offers her social and educational gains while Swahili and Lingala primarily bestow only social gains. For Sara, English has a low prestige level, which is in direct contrast with all other participants, since she gains all of her resources from other languages. Finally, Mohamed judges French to offer educational resources, English to offer social resources (as well as educational resources during his English course), and Arabic to offer social resources as well as potential material resources when he returns to his native country in the future. Mohamed is the participant who appears to grant his native language the highest level of prestige among the languages in the students' linguistic repertoires.

French appears to be the most prestigious as it offers educational resources and some social resources; however, it is often undervalued by most of the participants because of the greater social resources achieved through communicating in English. In accordance with the literature, students will often opt to speak English because of the international value of English in comparison with their native languages. Within the school domain, most participants, with the exception of Sara, consider their native language to be the least prestigious as it cannot be used to achieve significant social resources.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

Table 3

Participants' perceptions of language prestige based on Heller's (2003, 2011) definition

Participants	French Resources	English Resources	Native language(s) Resources
Nimo	Educational Social	Educational Social	Social
Maria	Educational Social	Educational Social Material	
Sara	Educational Social		Social
Mohamed	Educational Social	Educational Social	Social Material

CHAPTER 5: ARTICLE

Navigating through multiple languages: A case study of multilingual students' use of their language repertoire within a French Canadian minority education context

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Abstract

The presence of Allophone students in French-language secondary schools in Ottawa is gradually increasing. While the politique d'aménagement linguistique (PAL) insists on the use of French within the school, one may begin to wonder which language Allophone students are speaking - French, English, or their native language(s). This qualitative case study of four multilingual Allophone students explores their language repertoire use in relation to their desired linguistic representation, their linguistic proficiency in French, English, and their native language(s), and their perceptions of language prestige. The results indicate that students spoke a significant amount of English, some French (particularly with their teacher or Francophone classmates), and minimal amounts of their native language. Recommendations are suggested to increase the effectiveness of PAL within a Francophone minority context and to ensure that the policy's objects are attained.

Keywords: Linguistic Repertoire, Language Use, Minority Context, Language Policy, Multilingualism

Introduction

Canadian history often polarizes English and French; however, the current demographics in Ontario underline the rise of Allophones and the decline of Francophones (Statistics Canada, 2007). Francophone assimilation with the Anglophone majority increases the blurring linguistic boundaries within French-language schools as students frequently code switch between French and English, and often a third or fourth language.

The enrollment of Allophone students in French-language education continues to increase in Ontario. In the French-language schools of Toronto, for example, 84 different languages are represented by the student population (Gérin-Lajoie & Jacquet, 2008). How are these students integrating into the Franco-Ontarian culture? As language plays an important role in socialization

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

and inclusion, more research is required in order to understand language use among multilingual Allophone students attending a French-language secondary school in minority contexts. Specifically, this study explores language choice by investigating the interrelationships among students' (1) linguistic representation, (2) their proficiency in French, English, and native tongue(s), and (3) the prestige of the different languages in their repertoire, within the school domain. This study intends to offer a greater understanding of the ways language choice is reached among Allophones in a French minority school and the role each factor plays in their adaptation to the school community, which will inform policies regarding use of both official languages and students' first language(s) in the school.

Following an explanation of the politique d'aménagement linguistique (PAL), which dictates the use of French in French-language schools, and the explanations of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks, a literature review will explore each factor of language choice (linguistic representation, linguistic proficiency, and language prestige). Subsequently, the cases of Nimo, Maria, Sara, and Mohamed will be presented and discussed in detail.

PAL

In order for French-language schools to achieve their linguistic goals of contributing to the preservation of French, the politique d'aménagement linguistique (PAL) was established. In 2011, PAL released guidelines for school personnel, who are required to understand and share the school's mandate to protect, value, and transmit the French language and culture. Additionally, personnel must be fluent in French, demonstrate that they value and promote the language, and understand that language "est une compétence faisant partie intégrante de l'identité et de la culture de l'élève" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 18).

It appears that within PAL, linguistic diversity should not be perceived as a threat, but as a tool to promote the French language. "En classe, le personnel enseignant doit reconnaître et mettre en valeur la diversité linguistique et même s'en servir pour l'apprentissage et la valorisation du français" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 31). While English is considered necessary for teacher to explain the importance of both official languages and the roles that both languages play in the school, little reference is made in PAL to non-official languages.

Theoretical Framework

Fishman's 1972 domain theory in code-switching, the shift from one language to another within an utterance or a conversation, upholds the belief that individuals make a conscious choice to switch languages based on linguistic and social restraints. When the sociolinguistic domain is constant, code-switching can symbolize the interlocutor's transformation in social roles. Domain theory perceives links between languages and particular contexts, and is therefore appropriate for this study focusing on the school domain within a particular community. Although Fishman's theory is not recent, its impact on code-switching research is widespread considering it is still being used and referenced in contemporary multilingual studies (Bodomo, Anderson, & Dzahene-Quarshie, 2009; Ljosland, 2011).

Boztepe's critic that domain theory does not convey "what the speaker *accomplishes* as a result of alternating between available codes in his linguistic repertoire" (2001, p. 13), is remedied by the addition of Heller's (2003) explanation that the interlocutor experiences a gain in symbolic resources. Heller, a prominent researcher in Franco-Ontarian education and multilingualism, claims that the desire for certain symbolic resources (social, economical, or material resources), such as membership to particular social groups in the school, rationalizes language choice. Heller's theory of code-switching for personal gain is in line with Fishman's (1972) philosophy that languages are associated with roles and that code-switching represents a transformation of roles. For instance, one may wish to appear a particular way and speak language A in a certain context for social gain, yet may wish to appear a different way and speak language B in another context for material gain.

Conceptual Framework

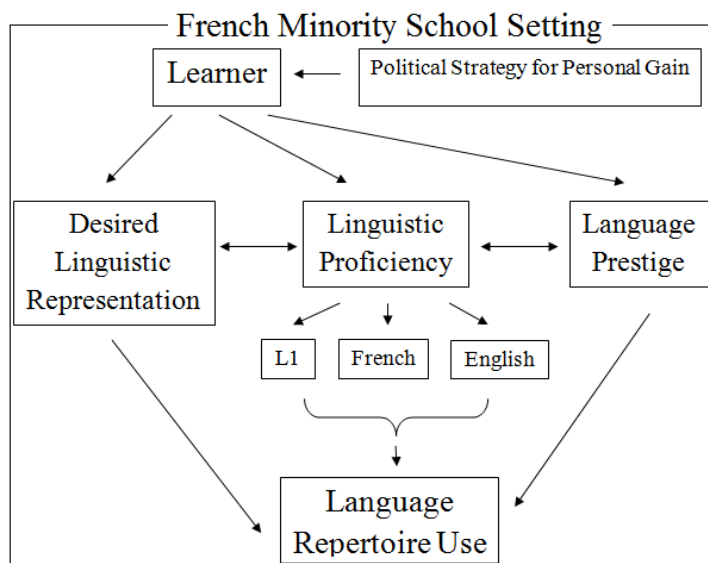


Figure 1: Conceptual framework. This figure illustrates the conceptual framework used to guide the research.

The conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 1 represents the learner, an Allophone student attending a Francophone secondary school in a French minority context, at the center of his or her language repertoire use, influenced by his or her political strategy for personal gain of symbolic resources (Heller, 2003), and predisposed by his or her desired linguistic representation, linguistic proficiency, and the prestige of the languages in his or her linguistic repertoire.

Within the school context, the learners' desired linguistic representation was analysed with regard to their roles as a student and as a friend, while taking into consideration the different languages in their repertoire. Language proficiency was determined according to their expressed abilities in their native language(s), French, and English. Moreover, language prestige was established by the social, educational, and material resources obtained by the learner in each language in their repertoire.

Literature Review

The most recent wave of Francophone immigrants arrived in the 1960s from French-speaking regions in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Caribbean – changing the face of French Ontario and diversifying the Francophone minority. Referring to Ottawa, Mougeon and Heller (1986) wrote that the city “attracted an even more heterogenous Francophone population, which

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

is varied not only in terms of its economic characteristics, but also in terms of its regional and cultural origins, and of the variety of French spoken” (p. 203). In 1986, Mougeon and Heller studied French-language schools and begun to categorize the student-participants based on their language preferences (French-dominant, English-dominant, and bilingual). The results indicated that bilingual and English-dominant students speak English with their peers, while French students will either befriend bilinguals in order to learn English, or form relationships exclusively with other Francophones (Mourgeon & Heller, 1986).

In Montreal, where more recent studies have been conducted, McAndrew and Rossell (2005) examined Montreal's immigrant education context, and noted that many immigrants are required to learn French because of Quebec's law 101. After collecting data in 29 Montreal schools, McAndrew and Rossell concluded that French was the language most used between students in informal conversations. In both elementary and secondary schools, which were primarily French-language dominant, native languages were spoken more frequently than English.

Recent research has been conducted on multilingual students' language use in the school domain (Curd-Christiansen, 2007; McAndrew & Rossell, 2005; Rajah-Carrim, 2007); However, no recent literature was found that focused specifically on the Ottawa French minority language education context. Nonetheless, the challenge of educating an increasing Allophone population in French minority schools has become a growing concern (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004). Since the Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) predicts 8,000 to 10,000 French-speaking settlers in Francophone communities by 2020, it is extremely important to understand the French minority education context (Bouchamma, 2008). This population increase in conjunction with the dwindling number of native Francophone students (often due to low birth rates) reaffirms the need to focus on French language and culture (Bouchamma, 2008).

Desired Linguistic Representation

Linguistic representations are individual versions of the self which are developed during experiences with language in different social contexts. Essentially, they are the link between language and identity. One's linguistic representation categorizes him or her as a member of certain groups since language symbolizes membership to particular communities. In fact,

language can often be a factor that holds a group together (Heller, 2006). Petitjean (2009) argues that imposing certain language practices upon the Other constitutes an identity change (p. 79). “La langue devient le symbole de ce qu’est un individu en tant que membre d’une collectivité” (p. 80).

In Ontario, as in many other provinces where Francophones represent a minority, Francophone youth are attracted to the English-dominant North American culture. Dallaire (2003) studied how the Jeux Franco-Ontariens helped youth to construct their hybrid identity. Intriguingly, the adolescent-participants chose to express themselves as “not just Francophone” (Dallaire, 2003, p. 163). Many of the participants considered themselves ‘Canadian’ or ‘Bilingual’ in order to express the duality of their linguistic abilities. Unfortunately, the author chose to restrict her research to the two dominant Canadian cultures and ignored the Allophone’s native cultures.

Linguistic Proficiency

Interesting studies in language proficiency have also been conducted in Ireland and Wales, where immersion schools are common for minority language education as many communities do not have the resources or demand necessary for Irish-language or Welsh-language schools. With regards to Welsh education in Wales, Mueller Gathercole and Thomas (2009) noted that “there is growing evidence that in bilingual communities in which one language is very dominant over the other, acquisition of the dominant language may be quite unproblematic across sub-groups, while acquisition of the minority language can be hampered” (p. 213). The results of their study concluded that students (regardless of their native language) in a bilingual community will all develop relatively similar proficiency in the dominant language (English), yet the degree of acquisition of the minority language (Welsh) varies. Often the minority language is imperfectly mastered by English-dominant students due to the small percentage of native speakers. Similar studies in Ireland support these claims and contribute the theory that once there is at least one English-dominant child, a group of Irish-dominant children will switch their conversation from Irish to English (Thomas & Roberts, 2011).

With regard to language proficiency in the classroom, Glaessner (1995, in Reyes, 2004) noted that bilingual students communicate in both languages during class time, yet there is a tendency to use one’s native language during cognitively challenging activities. Additionally, Glaessner stipulated that older students manipulate their language use with greater facility in

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

order to accommodate the linguistic abilities of their peers. The accommodation allows both interlocutors to feel comfortable and select a language in which they both feel competent. As exposure to the second language increases, the students' ability to navigate their language use improves.

Research conducted in Franco-Ontario by Mougeon and Beniak (1994) demonstrated that “the less French is used in the home and community, the more the school becomes the main provider of exposure to and opportunities to use French, that is, the more it becomes an instrument of language revival” (p. 117). In richly Francophone-populated Franco-Ontarian towns, such as Hawkesbury, the language proficiency was consistently high among students. However, in Franco-Ontarian towns with a low Francophone population, such as Cornwall, the students' language proficiency was considerably lower, particularly during elementary school. The authors also noted that a limited use of French outside of the school domain caused students to be less familiar with certain informal registers of Canadian French.

Language Prestige

The concept of language prestige, that one language could be more valuable or important, can affect the learner's motivation and classroom behaviour. Research (Araújo e Sá & Schmidt, 2008) suggests that when one's mother tongue is not a language of prestige, inner conflict may arise as the individual struggles with his or her desire to learn the language of prestige. English is generally considered THE universal language and is often has the most globally prestigious; however, the prestige of other languages is often specific to the individual's country. Moreover, when the native language is undervalued, additive bilingualism may be prevented (Hamers, 1992). Subsequently, children will feel uncomfortable using their L1 when they return to their country of origin and refuse to communicate with their family members (Moore, 1992).

Regardless of language prestige, individuals typically have a preferred language, based the language they perceive to be the most elegant, most useful, or the easiest. For multilinguals, language preference often leads to a personal hierarchy of languages. Clerc and Cortier (2008) studied language preference across different age groups and cultures and noted that young children preferred their mother tongue to adolescents.

In contrast, Jobe (1992) provides instances when individuals refuse to speak specific languages, despite being competent. In urban Gambia, individuals reject Wolof or Mandinka

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

because they are the languages of the other. Likewise, individuals may insist upon a particular language choice because it is their language. Additionally, code mixing may have certain perceptions, such as a deteriorated form of language or inability to speak either language (Swigart, 1992).

A Mauritian study (Rajah-Carrim, 2007) offers additional insights into language prestige in the education system. In accordance with Heller (2003), English is valued in Mauritius for potential social and economical gains; However, Kreol, the most common native language, is officially excluded from the education system. French is also frequently used in schools as it is considered the language of everyday interaction. Mauritians recognize the importance of learning European languages in order to compete at an international level, therefore

“many teachers use French instead of English in the classroom. New concepts are usually explained in English or even in Kreol. In a typical biology class, for instance, the teacher first explains in French (or even Kreol), and then possibly dictates notes in English. Students generally ask questions to the teacher in French but in Kreol to their classmates.”
(Rajah-Carrim, 2007, p. 54)

In this case, language prestige is preventing students from succeeding, which has led to the significant failure rates in primary education (Rajah-Carrim, 2007).

The literature review revealed significant studies in the fields of language prestige, language proficiency, and the learner's desired linguistic identity. However, as of yet, no language repertoire use study has been conducted on the interrelationship among language prestige, language proficiency, and the learner's desired linguistic identity within the school domain. Furthermore, the research in Ottawa was often outdated (Mougeon & Beniak, 1994; Mougeon & Heller, 1986) and did not take Allophones' language choices into consideration. In the following study, the participants each have their own native language(s), varying in proficiency levels, and each language will have a different prestige status in the community.

Methodology

The data was originally collected for a SSHRC-funded 2009-2012 study (Masny et al. 2009-2012) at a public French-language secondary school in a greater Ottawa region urban

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

setting. The school offers students from grades 7 through 12 a high quality French language education which prepares students for postsecondary studies.

Four Allophone students, three female and one male, were chosen for having different native languages and various levels of proficiency in the languages in their repertoire. All four students speak French, English and a third or fourth language, and are of different nationalities. Additionally, the students differ in age, grade, and the subject-course in which they were enrolled, in order to provide greater diversity in the data. Two of the participants were enrolled in courses that used French as the language of instruction, while the other two participants were enrolled in courses that used English as the language of instruction.

The first participant, Nimo, is a Chilean-Canadian grade 8 student who was observed in a citizenship course. She speaks Spanish, French, and English fluently. The second participant, Maria, is a Guinean-Canadian grade 9 student who was observed in a drama course. Maria speaks French and English fluently and understands some Fula, her native West African language. The third participant, Mohamed, a Lebanese-Canadian grade 10 student, was observed in an English course. Mohamed speaks Arabic, French, and English fluently. Finally, the fourth participant is Sara, a Congolese-Canadian grade 11 student who was observed in a *Anglais pour débutants* course (Ministère de l'Éducation et de la Formation, 1999). Sara speaks Swahili, Lingala (a Central African Bantu language), and French with high proficiency, and English with low proficiency. (See Table 1)

Among the collected data are two 75 minute classroom observation videos for each course and individual or group student interviews based on the observations. Additionally the participants were given Flip Cams (personal video cameras) to document their daily life. The students were subsequently interviewed individually in order to discuss the footage. Interviews were also conducted with the teachers and Nimo's mother. Moreover, artifacts such as school newsletters, students' homework, and in-class assignments were collected.

Results

The data for the four participants was organized in function of the three components of the conceptual framework: desired linguistic representation, linguistic proficiency, and language prestige. Evidence of data for each component is supported by quotes or examples of behaviour from the students' interviews, personal Flip Cam videos, or classroom observations.

Desired Linguistic Representation

Blom and Gumperz (1986) state that languages represent different social identities. Within the school setting, the participants may wish to be perceived in the role of a student by speaking the language of instruction during class, or in the role of a friend by communicating with classmates in a socially acceptable language. However, as suggested by Blom and Gumperz (1986), the French-language school's language policies regarding French language were taken into consideration as they may restrict language choice. Similarly, when students chose to speak in English during English-language-of-instruction, it was understood that there were certain linguistic constraints placed upon the students. However, these constraints were often disregarded and the participants elected to speak other languages in class.

The following cases highlight instances of the participants assuming either the social identity of a student or a friend in order to demonstrate their different linguistic representations.

Nimo

Since Nimo has few Hispanophone classmates, she primarily speaks French and English within the school domain. In class, Nimo was observed speaking French when addressing the teacher, in accordance with the PAL. In this instance, Nimo used French to represent her student identity (STUDENT=FRENCH). However, Nimo frequently disregarded the policy when speaking with her classmates in order to assume the social role of a friend (FRIEND=ENGLISH). Nimo explained that some of her friends do not speak French at home and that she therefore speaks in English with them. "Elle ne parle pas français, comme pas un mot à la maison, donc elle est surtout habituée à parler avec anglais avec tout le monde, donc moi je m'entraîne dans ça, je parle pas vraiment français avec elle." (She does not speak French, like not one word at home, therefore she is mostly used to speaking in English with everyone, therefore I become involved in that, I do not really speak French with her). When Nimo's two linguistic representations overlap, her language choices are clear: she speaks French in class and English with her friends. However, when confronted by situations such speaking with her friends in class when the teacher is circulating, it appears that Nimo wrestles with language selection and predominately switches from one to the other.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

Nimo's Spanish linguistic representation primarily resides within her home and her extra-curricular activities. She practices her Spanish culture extensively through attending Spanish dance performances, listening to Spanish music, and participating in the young Latin-American leaders club. Nimo's mother explains that "elle a commencé... une espèce de programme de leadership pour les jeunes... pour former des jeunes leaders dans la communauté latino-américaine." (She started a sort of leadership program for youth... to train young leaders in the Latin-American community). This linguistic representation does not appear to conflict with her school identities as a French student and English friend.

Maria

Unlike Nimo's clear use of French to assume a student identity (STUDENT=FRENCH), Maria does not always respect the PAL (2004) regulations to speak French during French-language-of-instruction classes. During one instance, Maria begins speaking in English with her friends, and then switches to French as she walks past the teacher. Yet, in the teacher's presence, she addresses another student in English. The teacher becomes frustrated with Maria and disciplines her in French; however, an equally upset Maria begins to speak to the teacher in English. This disregard of the PAL could be interpreted as Maria's limited interest in being perceived as a respectful student.

Similarly, Maria's linguistic representation with her friends is unclear. Maria chooses to speak French with Francophones, and English with Anglophones (FRIEND = FRENCH and English). With Allophones, Maria was observed speaking in a combination of French and English, often switching in midsentence. Additionally, Maria would speak with one friend in English, and turn to address another student in French. The language switch appears to be based on the language preferences of the other students. These language choices could reflect Maria's desire to appear as a friend to Anglophones, Francophones, and Allophones by speaking the language in which they are most comfortable, as suggested by Reyes (2004).

With regards to Fula, Maria chooses to appear disassociated from her native language by claiming that it does not symbolise anything for her and that it is purely "la langue de ma mère" (The language of my mother). Her rejection of a linguistic representation with the language demonstrates a lack of connection.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

Sara

In contrast to the other participants, Sara speaks minimal English and primarily communicates in French and Swahili. During Sara's *Anglais pour débutants* course (Ministère de l'Éducation et de la Formation, 1999), discussion occurred in French with her classmates and friends. Thus, Sara was using French to represent both social identities of a student and a friend (STUDENT=FRENCH, FRIEND=FRENCH). However, she often spoke in Swahili with her Congolese friend with whom she developed a closer relation. In this instance, Swahili was chosen to symbolize the social identity of a friend (FRIEND=SWAHILI). When addressing questions to the teacher, Sara spoke in French and appeared very reluctant to speak in English.

Sara: Madame, quoi? Quoi?

Teacher: Live

Sara: Live

Teacher: Live, I live in Ottawa

Sara: Okay, je vie Ottawa

Sara's rejection of English, a language she claims not to speak, along with her dismissal of English television and music, as stated in interviews, symbolizes her strong connection with her Congolese heritage and dismissal of the Canadian culture "je suis congolaise...je suis pas canadienne" (I am Congolese... I am not Canadian). Based on her rejection of English and clear preference for French and Swahili, it is clear that her French and Swahili linguistic representations are much more prominent than her English linguistic representations. Nonetheless, her use of Swahili in class could be viewed as a language of defiance against the PAL (2004), as well as the language of instruction (English), since it is not amongst the two preferred options.

Little is known of Sara's Lingala linguistic representation as she does not appear to speak the language frequently. Sara primarily speaks Lingala with her friends from the same Congolese region. "Mes amis parlent lingala aussi" (My friends speak Lingala also). In these situations, Sara elects to speak Lingala to represent her social identity of a friend (FRIEND=LINGALA).

Mohamed

Although Arabic plays an important role in Mohamed's home domain, he occasionally speaks in Arabic when assuming the identity of a friend with his classmates

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

(FRIEND=ARABIC). Mohamed claims to primarily speak French in French-language classes since “français, c’est une langue d’école” (French, it’s a school language), and with his Francophone friends. Therefore, Mohamed is adopting the roles of a student and friend while speaking French (FRIEND=FRENCH). However, Mohamed revealed that relatively few students speak French outside of class. “Il y a pas souvent qu’il y a des gens qui parlent en français” (It is rare that there are people speaking in French). Therefore, French remains a classroom language for Mohamed which he uses to further his education.

As Mohamed was observed in an English class, he spoke English in his role of a student (STUDENT=ENGLISH). Interestingly, Mohamed was the only student who was never overheard speaking in French during class. In one instance, Mohamed was defiant with his English teacher, who began to address him in French, but Mohamed chose to reply only in English.

Teacher: Qu’est-ce que t’es censé faire? (Okay, and what are you supposed to be doing?)

Mohamed : This

Teacher : Oui, pis qu’est-ce que tu ne fais pas? (Yes, and what are you not doing?)

Mohamed : This

This example illustrates Mohamed’s unwillingness to speak French when he is not required. Perhaps Mohamed chooses English because he prefers his linguistic representation as an English speaking student over his representation of a French speaking student.

Mohamed’s linguistic representations of an English and an Arabic speaking friend overlap during his Flip Cam footage in which he is playing video games and wrestling with two of his school friends. The three boys were observed code switching between Arabic and English, a common phenomenon when the social representation symbolized by a language becomes entangled with the same social representation symbolized by another language (Fishman, 1972).

Linguistic Proficiency

The proficiency of the student in each of the languages in his or her linguistic repertoire has been examined in accordance to his or her speaking and writing abilities. During initial interviews, the students explained which languages they spoke most often in different domains. Interestingly, no participant claimed to speak exclusively French the most often in the school domain. The students often highlighted their strengths and weaknesses with different languages.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

The ensuing analysis represents each of the four participants' linguistic proficiencies with respect to the languages in their linguistic repertoires.

Nimo

Trilingual Nimo speaks Spanish, French, and English fluently, yet claims to be the most competent in French as it is the language in which she reads and writes most frequently. Nimo prefers to write in French due to her stronger vocabulary. Moreover, she considers Spanish to be more of an oral language. Regardless, Nimo appears very proud of her Spanish language ability. When she visited her parents' native country of Chile, Nimo confesses that she was very confused between the different languages that she spoke. "J'étais très confuse avec les deux langues, donc je prononçais tous les 'r' comme (...) les 'r' anglais, donc rarr" (I was very confused with the two languages, so I pronounced all the 'r' like (...) the English 'r's, so rarr). During that trip, Nimo felt like a foreigner; however, she has since improved the pronunciation of the phoneme /r/.

Nimo remembered when she began elementary school and did not speak any English. She felt intimidated and agitated because her school friends and her neighborhood friends all spoke English. Nimo explained that she did not speak much when she was younger because she did not have a strong mastery of the English language. "Je me sentais comme un peu intimidée parce que je parlais pas l'anglais tellement bien, donc je parlais pas beaucoup, mais maintenant ça s'est amélioré" (I felt a little intimidated because I did not speak English very well, so I did not speak, but now it has improved).

Maria

Although Maria claims to only speak two languages, French (her "first language") and English, her native tongue is Fula. Maria has limited production ability in Fula as she is unable to speak the language but is able to understand when spoken to by her mother and sister. "Je comprends quand elle parle mais je suis pas capable de parler" (I understand when she speaks but I am not able to speak). In the home domain, Maria speaks French even when Fula is spoken to her. Consequently, Maria speaks French most often and claims that she is best able to relate with Francophones, whom she explains, have a greater understanding of her stories and jokes than Anglophones. Nonetheless, Maria seems to be competent in English and often uses English and

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

French in the same sentence. Instances of her simultaneous use of French and English are rampant in the transcripts of her interviews and classroom observations. Of the four participants, Maria's transcripts have the most evidence of code switching.

Sara

Sara has the most variation of language abilities of all four participants as she has different levels of abilities in the four languages in her linguistic repertoire. Upon arriving in Canada, Sara enrolled in a French-language school due to her strong mastery of the French language from her Congolese schooling

Sara considers herself to be very weak in English and rarely communicates in the language. "Je parle même pas, je sais même pas comment dire bonjour je pense" (I do not speak at all, I do not even know how to say hello I think). However, Flip Cam footage displays Sara conversing briefly with her sister in English. Regardless, Sara seems disinterested in learning English. "C'est juste parce que j'aime pas l'anglais" (It is just because I do not like English). Her negative attitude toward the language was also apparent during classroom observations. For example, while responding to the English questions in the activity, Sara would often write abbreviations, yet the other students wrote complete words and sentences. Sara also left many of the questions unanswered.

Sara is most comfortable with Swahili and French as she is only capable of some writing in Lingala. "Je peux écrire les lettres et tout ça (...) mais je peux écrire des choses" (I can write letters and all that (...) but I can write some things). Sara often watches French-Lingala Congolese movies and has some Congolese friends who also speak Swahili and Lingala.

Mohamed

Mohamed differs from the other students in that he is the least comfortable in French, yet he uses his native language in the most domains. Mohamed accords great importance to Arabic and does not want to lose his fluency. "L'arabe c'est ma langue primaire, pis j'aimerais la garder" (Arabic is my native language, and I would like to keep it).

Upon arriving in Canada, Mohamed spoke minimal French but was placed in a French-language school. To learn English, Mohamed later attended an English-language school, yet he credits playing video games and watching television for the majority of his language acquisition.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

During the interviews, Mohamed often used English vocabulary when he forgot the French equivalent. In only one instance, Mohamed didn't know a word in either French or English and was required to say the word in Arabic.

In referring to Allophone students who learn French and English outside of the home, Mohamed's teacher claimed that many develop fluency, but possess a limited vocabulary. As the teacher indicated, Mohamed speaks English and French proficiently but certain language abilities, most likely writing, suffer from a lack of development. Copies of Mohamed's English work during the observations revealed that he wrote using alternative spellings, such as those commonly found on the Internet, or incorrect spellings, which is most likely due to a lack of formal English education.

Language Prestige

Following Heller's definition of language prestige (2003, 2011), the languages in the four participants' linguistic repertoires were examined in function of the resources the participants gained from the use of a particular language. Heller recognizes the historical events that led to the prestige of French and English in Canada, while also acknowledging that other languages can acquire power if the speaker can gain social, educational, and material resources. Evidently, all participants will gain educational resources if they communicate in French or English with their teacher (depending on the language of instruction of the course), but some participants appear to use other languages as well for educational gain. Language choice for educational gain is defined as the use of the language of instruction of the course when discussing subject-related topics. For example, when Nimo and her teacher were conversing in French regarding her project, Nimo was communicating in French for educational gain. Social gains occur when participants discuss subjects unrelated to the course with their peers. The participants used a variety of languages for this purpose. Finally, material resources are described as physical gains (monetary or material worth) that the participant can receive for speaking a specific language. For example, Mohamed aspires to return to Lebanon to begin his future career. In this case, Mohamed will receive material gain from speaking Arabic.

The following section describes the resource gains of each participant in order to determine the prestige of the languages in their linguistic repertoires.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

Nimo

When asked which language Nimo spoke primarily with her friends, she replied “c’est surtout l’anglais” (it’s mostly English). Nimo perceives English as a highly prestigious language since it is the language she speaks predominately with her friends. However, since Nimo has some school friends who do not speak English, she uses both languages for SOCIAL GAIN. Moreover, English and French allow Nimo to access EDUCATIONAL GAINS as they are the languages she uses during class for group projects. In one instance, Nimo addressed the teacher in French, and then continued to discuss a project with her group members in both French and English.

In accordance with Heller’s definition of language prestige, Spanish would be perceived as less prestigious since Nimo claims that she can only speak the language with select people. However, when reflecting on Spanish, Nimo considered it a more beautiful language than French and “c’est facile aussi parce que (...) ça ressemble un peu au français” (It is also easy because (...) it resembles French a little).

Maria

As Maria stated that she is unable to speak Fula, it possesses a low level of prestige. Maria also demonstrates limited interest in learning the language since she stated that she did not have any time to learn it. “J’ai pas vraiment le temps d’apprendre [le peul]” (I really do not have the time to learn [Fula]). Since Fula has depreciated significance for Maria, she does not perceive any gains from speaking the language.

In contrast, English and French have high levels of prestige for Maria as she uses both interchangeably at school. Maria perceives English and French as possessing the same value and uses both equally as often. “Des fois je dis les deux dans la même phrase... elles sont pareilles, elles sont aussi importantes l’une que l’autre” (Sometimes I say both of them in the same sentence... they are the same, they are equally important). Maria uses both languages for SOCIAL and EDUCATIONAL GAIN at school as she addresses her friends in either English or French, depending on their preferred language, regardless of the topic (social or educational). Maria addresses the teacher primarily in French; however instances were noted when she spoke English to the teacher.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

Additionally, Maria explains that her older sister uses English at work and Maria therefore recognizes the potential MATERIAL GAIN from speaking English.

Sara

Sara is the only participant who asserted that French was the language that she predominately spoke at school (EDUCATIONAL GAIN). While other participants code switched to speak to different students, Sara claimed that French allows her to be understood by everyone (SOCIAL GAIN). Moreover, when asked about her future, Sara explained that she wanted to attend a French-language postsecondary school (EDUCATIONAL GAIN).

Unlike other participants, Sara does not have one particular home language. Although she claims to speak predominately Swahili at home, the Flip Cam footage revealed a mixture of French and English when conversing with her siblings. Consequently, French and English both provide SOCIAL GAIN for Sara.

Although Sara watches movies, and converses with some of her family and Congolese friends in Lingala, there appears to be fewer resources gained from speaking the language. Additionally, Sara is not overly interested in learning English and does not appear to perceive many resources from speaking the language.

Mohamed

For Mohamed, Arabic is the most prestigious language. Mohamed wants to maintain his Arabic language abilities as he aspires to return to Lebanon to live permanently. Consequently, he expects to receive MATERIAL GAIN in the future for speaking Arabic and therefore places significant prestige on the language.

With regards to French, Mohamed noted that he considers it “une langue d'école” and that he speaks English predominately at school, with the exception of a few Francophone friends with whom he speaks French. With his friends, Mohamed often speaks a combination of Arabic and English, as evidenced in his Flip Cam videos with his friends while playing video games. Ironically, Mohamed tells one of his friends “remember, the teacher knows what we're saying, so no swearing” to ensure that the student is careful not to use vulgar language, yet because Mohamed understands that the project is in French, he should be encouraging his friends to speak in French. At no point during any of the Flip Cam videos or classroom observation footage

did Mohamed speak in French. This resistance to use French demonstrates Mohamed's perception of low SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL, or MATERIAL gain from French language use.

Interestingly, since English is viewed as the language of opposition to French, Mohamed explains that nearly all the students speak English outside of class and that French is heard infrequently. Additionally, Mohamed alludes to English's 'cool factor' as it is a *lingua franca* among most students (SOCIAL GAIN).

Discussion

In response to our research question – “Within a French minority school, how do the interrelationships among Allophone students' desired linguistic representation, proficiencies in English, French, and native language(s), and the prestige of their languages affect language repertoire use?” - we can say that all participants have the ability to code switch with ease between languages. During interviews, classroom observations, and Flip Cam footage, each participant was observed code switching for various purposes. Frequently, the participants would code switch due to a lack of linguistic knowledge, as exhibited in Mohamed's interview when he was asked about his Arabic music preferences but was not able to explain the genre in neither French nor English. On other occasions, the participants code switched to change their linguistic representation, as demonstrated by Nimo's code switching between English and French to discuss a task with her teacher and her group members. Finally, language prestige caused participants to code switch, as exemplified of Sara who spoke with Swahili with her friend but French with her classmates because Swahili offered her specific social resources while French offered her educational resources.

In light of the students' minority context, it is not surprising that most (with the exception of Sara) had a strong mastery of both French and English. For social motives, Nimo, Maria, and Mohamed agreed that English was a necessary part of the school domain. Mohamed in particular alluded to English's “cool” factor when he explained that most students do not speak French outside of the classroom. Additionally, all participants agreed that membership to a predominately Anglophone community obliged them to speak English outside of school. As noted by McAndrew and Rossell (2005), friends can have a greater influence (as opposed to school and family) with regard to language choice. Nimo, Maria, and Mohamed were all observed speaking English with their school peers. This phenomenon is also explained by

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

Glaessner (1995, in Reyes, 2004), who noted that older students accommodate the linguistic abilities of their peers so that both speakers feel comfortable with the language. The three participants all indicated that they choose to speak English with their Anglophone or English-dominant peers and French with their Francophone and French-dominant peers.

An observation that was prevalent in the literature review and in the results was the influence of North American culture, particularly media. Both Dallaire (2003) and Haché (2003) raised concerns regarding the Francophones' contact with Anglophones, and Dallaire (2003) noted Francophones' choice to watch English TV and listen English music on the radio, leading to an increase in English language use. In the cases of Nimo, Maria, and Mohamed, extensive English language use was observed when speaking with their peers. In addition, the three participants appeared knowledgeable regarding North American culture. For example, in one of Maria's drama classes, her classmates were presenting skits with music. Maria knew the English songs and discussed the music with her friends. Similarly, Nimo also demonstrated an interest in popular music artists while filming with the Flip Cam. Moreover, Mohamed made multiple references in English to popular video games. Only Sara, who immigrated more recently, appeared less interested in North American culture. Nevertheless, it is evident that the majority of the participants actively participated in English culture. Since their Francophone classmates are also involved in the same culture, it would appear that Allophones use this commonality as a method to integrate themselves into the school community.

It is worthy of note that despite a disregard of the school's French language policy, all students displayed a mastery of French. Moreover, all participants had a background in French (either as a language spoken by their parents or as a language of instruction in their native country) which ensured a certain degree of linguistic abilities. Although Mohamed was never observed communicating in French outside of the interviews, he claimed that he would speak French in French-language-of-instruction courses and with Francophone friends. Additionally, the participants all accorded French a high level of respect and prestige.

In McAndrew and Rossell's (2005) study of Montreal French schools, French was undoubtedly and consistently the predominate language of the students; however, the second most commonly used language varied among schools, some favouring English and others favouring different native languages. In contrast, the participants in this Ottawa school did not appear to retain a predominant language choice. Interestingly, the secondary school students in

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

McAndrew and Rossell's research commented that there was an "absence d'impact du caractère plus ou moins coercitif de la politique linguistique appliquée par les écoles" (absence of impact from the more or less coercive character of the language policy enforced by schools) (2005, p. 110). A similar disregard of the PAL (2004) was noted in Ottawa as the students generally overlooked the policy during classes and especially between classes when students spoke any language within their linguistic repertoire. Regardless, French continued to be transmitted to the students by the teachers and the students continued to demonstrate a mastery of the language. The participants perceived French as a language of educational resources and subsequently accorded French a certain level of prestige (a factor in language retention and acquisition according to Araújo e Sá and Schmidt [2008]), which may aide in the protection of the language (a goal of the French language policy).

Presently, an anticipated outcome of the implementation of the PAL is an improvement in students' learning of French and the development of the French identity through an increase in their oral communication skills (2004). This policy has been disregarded in the sense that students are not primarily speaking French and their French identities are not privileged among their other linguistic representations. With the exception of Maria, no participant demonstrated a favour for the Francophone community above either the English community or their native language community. Although Maria had a strong association with the Francophone community, she had also developed an equally strong association with the Anglophone community through her friendships with Anglophone students at the school.

On the other hand, the Allophone participants did indicate that they developed their French linguistic knowledge in the school domain and have developed friendships with many Francophone students. In this sense, the PAL (2004) was successful in developing linguistic abilities and promoting Francophone culture.

Recommendations

Mougeon and Heller (1986) noted a shift towards bilingual students in Ontario French-language schools. They claimed that "in many cases teachers must find their own solutions for the particular needs of their classroom" (p. 222) and that the future of French-language education in Ontario would depend on legislation that encourages the development of supportive communities. In 1994, following the recognition of a multilingual student population, a PAL

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

draft was published to meet the needs described by Mougeon and Heller (1986) with regards to French language support from the community; however, teachers continue to have little guidance concerning the student's native languages. Gérin-Lajoie and Jacquet (2008) also noted that teachers felt ill-prepared to respond to the needs of their linguistically diverse students. Subsequently, the primary recommendation of this research to improve the PAL is to encourage the recognition of Allophone student's native languages within the school, a subject which was seldom discussed in the documentation (2004). Although Sara was the only participant overheard speaking her native language during class, Mohamed claimed to speak Arabic with his peers and Nimo would have spoken more Spanish at school if she had known more Hispanophones.

While French language protection is important in minority contexts, the school should also consider adopting a pluralistic approach which would recognize that students have a plurilingual competence that encompasses all the languages in their linguistic repertoire (European Centre for Modern Languages, 2007). When languages are perceived as resources, the use of multiple languages is a complex communication strategy which teachers should develop in students. This notion challenges the myth that code switching occurs due to a lack of linguistic proficiency since it rejects the former "compartmentalised" perception of students' linguistic competencies and recognizes that managing one's linguistic repertoire requires specific mental processes (plurilingual competence). The integrated didactic approach can be adopted in multilingual education to develop metalinguistic abilities (plurilingual competence), leading to the "intercomprehension of related languages" and a "receptiveness towards diversity" (Chandelier, 2012). While French would continue to play a dominant role in the school, it could also serve as a stepping stone to other languages. The European Centre for Modern Languages (2007) recommends that teachers help students acquire specific knowledge, attitudes, and skills in order to develop their plurilingual competence. For instance, students should recognize that languages are constantly evolving (knowledge), students should cultivate a curiosity regarding foreign languages (attitude), and students should be able to compare different linguistic features in different languages (skill) (European Centre for Modern Languages, 2007).

Multilingual students have already begun to develop a plurilingual competence as they require the use of the different languages within their linguistic repertoire for different contexts. Mohamed exemplifies this ability clearly when discussing his music preferences with the interviewer. When asked whether he listened to music in Arabic, he was unable to translate the

style of music that he primarily enjoys into either French or English. Mohamed was encouraged to say the term in Arabic by the interviewer and was invited to describe the style in French. In this example, Mohamed was able to use another language in his repertoire to communicate. Furthermore, Maria's interest in learning Arabic is another instance of plurilingual competence development as she appears curious regarding the language and enjoys mastering common phrases from Arabophone peers.

Conclusion

The aim of this research was to examine Allophone students' language repertoire use through the interrelationships among their desired linguistic representation, proficiencies in English, French, and native language(s), and the prestige of their languages. Additionally, the intent was to determine the degree to which the PAL (2004) was taken into consideration within the school and to make recommendations regarding its implementation. We were able to show that students were speaking in French within the classroom during French-language-of-instruction classes as they desired to present certain linguistic representations, possessed a high proficiency in French, and perceived French as a prestigious language. Nonetheless, students who were proficient in English, a language generally considered to be highly prestigious, also spoke significant amounts of English during class. Only Sara was observed speaking her native language within the school domain. The interrelationship of Sara's low English proficiency, high prestigious value of Swahili, and desired linguistic representation as a student strongly connected with her Congolese culture illustrates her limited use of English and preferred use of Swahili within the school.

Since French is only used during a portion of the Allophone students' time spent within the school domain, the PAL's mandate for French use is clearly being disregarded. However, the students all possessed a high proficiency in French, and perceived French as a prestigious language. They also desired to be perceived as successful students and therefore chose to speak in French with the school context. In this sense, the PAL's aim to protect, value, and transmit the French language, has been effective.

In order to further understand the phenomenon of language use by multilingual students, research should be conducted regarding a number of factors explored in this paper. After examining the roles of desired linguistic representation, language proficiency, and language

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

prestige, the present study maintains that these factors have unique interrelationships that directly influence language choice among Allophones.

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MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

Tables

Table 1

Comparison of participants

Participant	Grade	Gender	Course	Ethnicity	Language(s) Spoken in Addition to French and English
Nimo	8	Female	Citizenship	Chilean	Spanish
Maria	9	Female	Drama	Guinean	Fula
Mohamed	10	Male	English	Lebanese	Arabic
Sara	11	Female	English	Congolese	Swahili, Lingala

CONCLUSION

Allophone person A speaks French, English and an L3. Francophone person B speaks French and some English. Anglophone person C speaks English and some French. Allophone person D speaks French, English, and the same L3. Within a minority French-language school setting, what language(s) will person A use when speaking with persons B, C, and D on a one-to-one or group basis? This research has demonstrated that most Allophone students speak English or French, and rarely use their L3 at school. Nimo and Mohamed spoke English predominately with their friends and French during class, while Maria spoke French and English equally since she had a greater balance of Anglophone and Francophone friends. Only Sara chose to use her L3 (Swahili) with another Allophone.

The aim of this research was to examine Allophone students' language repertoire use through the interrelationships among their desired linguistic representation, proficiencies in English, French, and native language(s), and the prestige of their languages. Additionally, the intent was to determine the degree to which the PAL (2004) was respected taken into consideration within the school and to make recommendations regarding its implementation. We were able to show that students were speaking in French within the classroom during French-language-of-instruction classes as they desired to present certain linguistic representations, possessed a proficiency in French, and perceived French as a highly prestigious language. Nonetheless, students who were highly proficient in English, a language generally considered to be prestigious, also spoke significant amounts of English during class. Only Sara was observed speaking her native language within the school domain. The interrelationship of Sara's low English proficiency, high prestigious value of Swahili, and desired linguistic representation as a student strongly connected with her Congolese culture illustrates her limited use of English and preferred use of Swahili within the school.

Since French is only used during a portion of the Allophone students' time spent within the school domain, the PAL's mandate for French use is clearly being disregarded. However, the students all possessed a high proficiency in French, and perceived French as a prestigious language. They also desired to be perceived as successful students and therefore chose to speak in French with the school context. In this sense, the PAL's aim to protect, value, and transmit the French language, has been effective.

MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE USE

In order to further understand the phenomenon of language use by multilingual students, research should be conducted regarding a number of factors explored in this paper. After examining the roles of desired linguistic representation, language proficiency, and language prestige, the present study maintains that these factors have unique interrelationships that directly influence language choice among Allophones.

Anticipated Contributions

The proposed study would provide a voice to minority, those whose languages are not often recognized in society. Teachers in particular should be made aware of the different languages spoken by the students in their classes to ensure that the multilingualism that they promote is not subtractive.

Additionally, the proposed thesis would contribute to the field of multilingual education. Many recent studies on language use focus primarily on bilingualism (Kim & Starks, 2010; Mancilla-Martinez & Kieffer, 2010; Rasinger, 2010) while neglecting multilingual students. As Canada's immigrant population continues to grow, more research is required to understand how students manage the different languages in their repertoire. As this research is unique to Ottawa, it will make a small contribution to the image of Canadian multilingual students. Moreover, multilingual studies can help promote linguistic diversity, language learning, and language awareness. Multilingual research in Canada is still a relatively new field, stemming from bilingual research, and has created new questions regarding the definition of multilingualism. These findings will be able to enrich the field with new angles and perspectives.

Limitations of the Study

The primary limitation of document analysis is the possibility of obtaining incomplete information. Since the interviews were conducted for another purpose, the data set may be narrower than that which would have been acquired from having personally conducted the interviews. Additional challenges associated with interviews include the possibility of obtaining faulty, exaggerated or partial information from the participants, which may be the case with less articulate and shy interviewees (Creswell, 2007).

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- Information about supplementary online material

STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION

Some aid was received during the research process from a colleague who assisted in the transcription of the Nimo interviews. I, Shannon Sweeney, transcribed all other interviews. Additionally, I wrote this thesis with recommendations from my supervisor, Dr. Francis Bangou, and recommendations from my committee members, Dr. Diana Masny and Dr. Bernard Andrews.