Redefining the Acadian French Lexicon:
The Role of English Loanwords in Two Acadian Villages

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
in
The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
(English)

The University of British Columbia
(Vancouver)

February 2019

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The following individuals certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for acceptance, a thesis/dissertation entitled:

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Abstract
In existing lexicographical works on Acadian French English loanwords are underrepresented and often purposely excluded. Despite purporting to represent a comprehensive, modern depiction of Acadian French, lexical works, such as Yves Cormier’s *Dictionnaire du français acadien*, display demonstrable bias against English loanwords. The disregard for these loanwords results from a general fear that Acadian French is assimilating into the dominant language, English.

Using existing theory on language contact as a basis for comparison, I examine the speech and sociolinguistic situation of two Acadian villages, Wedgeport and Pubnico West. This corner of the Acadian diaspora has had some of the most prolonged contact with English and a great number of Acadianisms, as noted by Cormier. Because Acadian writers tend to edit out any traces of English borrowing, transcribed oral interviews were used as source data. Materials were collected from interviews conducted by native speakers from within the community to assure the most reliable representation of the Acadian French variety. There follows a discussion and categorization of the English borrowings found in these materials, taking a qualitative rather than quantitative approach. A proposal is made for future study and potential next steps of a dictionary project using these lexical items as a base for categorization and discussion.
Lay summary

This thesis project studies the Acadian French speech of Wedgeport and Pubnico West, two Acadian villages of south-western Nova Scotia, with a focus on the effect that contact with English has had. There is an in-depth discussion of several English-origin words from both villages’ speech and the beginnings of a categorization of the findings. These results are compared against the lack of discussion surrounding English influence in the existing dictionaries and glossaries of Acadian French. The historical context of these communities, and Acadian communities at large, is summarized to explain both the existence of these English-origin words and the reasons for overlooking them. Finally, the case is made for further study into this field and an expansion of the scope of existing works.
Preface
The interviews from Wedgeport and Pubnico studied in this thesis were conducted and collected by Cyrille LeBlanc and Carmen d’Entremont respectively, as outlined in the section on “Method & Data.” I then curated the materials, transcribing when necessary, and catalogued all English borrowings for linguistic analysis. The observations on the significance of these lexical items are my own.
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Abbreviations
AF – Acadian French
AUX – Auxiliary verb
DFA – Dictionnaire du français acadien
GA – Glossaire Acadien
GVPA – Glossaire du vieux parler acadien
IMP – Imperative verb
IMPF – Imperfect verb
INF – Infinitive verb
INTERJ – Interjection
INTERR – Interrogative
NS – Nova Scotia
PPT – Past participle
PRES – Present verb
REFL – Reflexive pronoun
SP – Simple past
SUB – Substantive
2Pl – Second person plural
Acknowledgements
I would first like to thank my supervisor, Stefan Dollinger, without whom this thesis could not even have been imagined. You fueled my interest in lexicography and gave me a new appreciation of my own mother tongue. Thank you for your continued patience and support through every step of the process and for the expertise you brought with you from your years editing, alongside my committee member Margery Fee, the second edition of *A Dictionary of Canadianisms on Historical Principles*. I would also like to thank Margery for, among other contributions, bringing with her a perspective on the greater socio-linguistic landscape of Canada that I had been missing. Lastly, I thank my family and friends for support of a different kind. You have carried me through it all, and your contribution cannot be overstated. My supervisory committee has helped me fill these pages, but your presence is felt in all the spaces between.
1. Introduction
Acadian French, henceforth AF, is a variety of Canadian French. It is spoken in Eastern Canada, predominantly in the Maritimes (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island), with some heritage speakers in Louisiana, US, and Saint Pierre and Miquelon, the French possessions in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The beginnings of AF are trickier to date. In the sixteenth century, Giovanni da Verrazzano gave the name ‘Arcadia’ to the region roughly encompassing present day Nova Scotia (NS), Canada. Arcadia lost the ‘r’ in the seventeenth century to become Acadia and was eventually associated with the French people who settled there. Although the first French settlers landed on Acadian shores in 1604, founding Port Royal, NS, in 1605, it was only in 1632 with the arrival of Isaac de Razilly and three hundred men and women that a sustainable community of Acadians can be said to have formed. Later, in the mid-1700s, the Acadian people would be forcefully removed and scattered during the Acadian Expulsion, with thousands driven off the land by the British and transplanted to France and the eastern coast of the US. Alongside those who escaped deportation, some Acadians resettled small corners of the Maritimes, forming primarily small, coastal communities. Others created new communities where they’d been displaced, notably in Louisiana (where they became known as Cajuns). Despite the fracturing of the Acadian population, several iterations of the Acadian language have survived across provincial and country-lines, though many speakers have suffered from intergenerational language attrition. Connie Eble discusses a similar shift among French Creole speakers in Louisiana through examining the Prudhomme Family Papers, as English became the dominant language and French was increasingly relegated to the realms of home and the church (Eble 2006: 95). West Pubnico and Wedgeport, the two Acadian villages in south-west NS that are the focus of this study, are home to two such threatened iterations of AF.
1.1 What is Acadian French
While recently AF has received more scholarly attention than previously (e.g. the *Journal of Canadian Linguistics: Acadian French* special issue, 53.1 in 2008), several widespread misconceptions about contemporary AF persist. Lexically, AF contains many words that have fallen out of use in other varieties of French (defined Type 2 – Preservations in the DCHP-2 typology, see Dollinger 2015: 3). It also employs special forms of preservations, such as French regionalisms that were never part of standard French, for example (e.g. *pigouiller* ‘to rummage; to pester’ and *friper* ‘to lick’). With the Acadian cultural renaissance of the mid to late twentieth century, these types of Acadianisms have received increasing attention and become appreciated as originally French markers of AF. However, the idealization of the dialect as a preservation of its regional French roots often minimizes the contact and influence that English has had on the formation and character of AF.

A good example of the latter is found in Yves Cormier’s *Dictionnaire du français acadien* (DFA)\(^1\). In the DFA, Cormier strives to provide “une image contemporaine du lexique français d’Acadie” [a contemporary picture of the French lexicon of Acadia]\(^2\) (Cormier 1999: 18).

Additionally, Cormier clarifies the label of AF:

> L’appellation français acadien sert à désigner la variété de français qui est parlée dans les provinces de l’est du Canada. [...] Le français acadien se distingue ainsi non seulement du français de référence que constitue la variété parisienne, mais également des autres variétés canadiennes qui se rattachent plutôt au français du Québec. (Cormier 1999: 12)

[The designation Acadian French describes the variety of French spoken in the eastern provinces of Canada. (...) Acadian French thus distinguishes itself not only from Parisian French, which serves as the standard, but also other Canadian varieties that are associated more with French from Quebec.]

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\(^1\) This author recognizes that a new 2018 re-edition of the DFA has been released, but at the time of my research, it was not yet available. Additionally, while a few hundred entries were added, they are primarily regional and marked as ‘old’, in the same vein as the existing entries, and as such do not change the argument of this thesis.

\(^2\) All English translations are provided by the author, Kristan Newell.
While useful, such a definition does not cover the complexity and politics of the current sociolinguistic situation. It also incorporates the assumption of a de facto monocentric standard based in France, which is, to say the least, questionable, given that French is spoken in numerous nations and that Standard Canadian French is distinct from Standard French French. Through the course of this paper, I will argue that a significant portion of AF has been excluded from the DFA, an exclusion based in a linguistic bias against English: particularly English loanwords that are the result of intense and prolonged language contact. In Acadian communities, such English loanwords in AF are often referred to derogatively as ‘Anglicisms,’ and although they are scattered throughout the DFA’s illustrative quotations, they are noticeably absent from its entries per se, barring the rare exception (e.g. back).

English loanwords are the proverbial elephants in the room that have been largely ignored in Acadian lexicography for various ideological reasons. Regarded as a sign of English influence and gradual assimilation, English loanwords have become increasingly stigmatized, even by those who use them, though, as I intend to show, they are an indelible part of AF in the 21st century.

This project aims to identify the range of English loanwords in AF that are in use today, predominantly in south-west NS, and the value of their study. When I speak of range, I refer to the types and not to each token of loan words; the latter would go far beyond the scope of this thesis and require a full dictionary project. The general aim of this project will be to more fully

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3 The term Standard Canadian French is employed here to acknowledge the commonalities that run through the several varieties of Canadian French, particularly in formal and educational settings, that distinguish it from the French spoken in France.
4 French French as opposed to Quebec French, or English English as opposed to Scottish English, is standard sociolinguistic terminology (e.g. Trudgill and Hannah. International English: a guide to varieties of standard English. 4th ed. London: Oxford University Press (2002)).
explore this neglected area of the AF lexis that has been culturally stifled, from the perspective of language contact. The project will produce, besides a more fully developed typology of English loanwords in AF, a substantial list of identified English loanwords that will add to discussions surrounding the nature of the dialect. This project positions itself as delivering some of the preparatory work for a more complete, contemporary dictionary of Acadian French, a dictionary that does not exclude English-based lexical matter.

1.2 Brief historical background

Today, the region of Acadia is much more difficult to define than previously. As was stated above, historically, Acadia referred primarily to what is present-day Nova Scotia, “but it is one of the ironies of Acadian history that most Acadians now live outside Nova Scotia,” with a majority living in New Brunswick (Reid 1992: v). The Acadian Expulsion, taking place between 1755 and 1763, displaced more than ten thousand Acadians and resulted in the current Acadian diaspora spanning Canada, France, and the United States. Acadia as a culturally homogenous territory ceased to exist as a result and has been absorbed into the Canadian provinces, except in its persistence in acts of identity by the Acadian people. The AF linguistic varieties are a vibrant expression of this identity and are as varied as each pocket of its scattered speakers.

Due to the Acadian Expulsion and this diaspora, AF has existed in a precarious position for centuries. It is a linguistic minority wherever it is found, whether the dominant language is English or Standard Canadian French. New Brunswick has been the focal point of study on all aspects of Acadian culture, with good reason: it holds the largest modern population of Acadians. The north-west, north-east, and south-east corners of New Brunswick are all considered Acadian regions, where AF still exerts enough influence to distinguish itself from the rest of the province (Cormier 1999: 40). For reasons of social network accessibility, this thesis focuses on West
Pubnico and Wedgeport of south-west NS, one of the oldest Acadian regions still francophone, despite AF speakers long being a marked linguistic minority.

The DFA itself recognizes that south-west NS is an Acadian region with “un nombre élevé d’acadianismes” [an elevated number of Acadianisms] due to its isolation from other varieties of Canadian French, but AF is far from uniform (Cormier 1999: 29). There are often as many variations as there are Acadian villages, making a truly comprehensive look at all the dialects and linguistic variables of spoken AF a complex task. It is much easier to group them together by approximate geographical location. Many villages would have been isolated from each other after the Acadian Expulsion, being separated geographically by primarily English-speaking communities. Each village would have evolved its dialect somewhat independently of the others due to the difficulty of travel before modern transportation. Categorizing the dialects as belonging to south-west NS is as close as most sources come to making comments on the regional variation of AF. In truth, south-west NS is divided along Clare and Argyle county lines, their collective Acadian communities referred to colloquially by locals as Par-en-Haut ‘up along there’ and Par-en-Bas ‘down along there,’ respectively. For this reason, I chose to make my focus even more specific to two Acadian villages of Argyle county, West Pubnico and Wedgeport, close in distance and in regional variation, but with reported differences between them. I will leave it unexplored at this point to what degree, if any, these varieties represent different dialects, as only a more ambitious study could answer this question.

While anecdotes among NS’s Argyle county locals abound, the differences between the West Pubnico and Wedgeport AF varieties have not been systematically studied. Because these two villages are in such close proximity, as Figure 1 shows, a mere half hour drive or boat ride away, they are lumped together under the category of south-west NS, along with the other Acadian
villages of the region. The Acadian villages of Argyle county are relatively isolated considering their proximity, because “the geography and allotment of land grants did not facilitate the development of a string of Acadian villages as was to be the case in the district of Clare or in northern Cape Breton,” NS (Ross & Deveau 1992: 79). Furthermore, “as the French and English-speaking settlements of Argyle evolved side by side, neither culture remained isolated from the other” (Ross & Deveau 1992: 79). Argyle county’s English communities separating Wedgeport and Pubnico, pictured below, include Plymouth, Arcadia, Lower Eel Brook, and the Argyles, while the Acadian villages lie out on the coastal extremities.
Barriers to education have certainly influenced the development of AF in West Pubnico and Wedgeport. A lack of formal education and connection to France historically played a role in the development of AF in NS more broadly: “unlike other ethnic groups, Catholic or Protestant, who arrived in Nova Scotia after 1763, the Acadians did not have an educated elite, nor could they call upon a mother country to provide them with clergymen or teachers” (Ross & Deveau 1992: 83). This uneducated social stratum of early Acadians had to face a number of challenges in terms of education more generally. As Ross and Deveau continue to explain: “partly due to the laws preventing Catholics from establishing schools and partly due to a lack of teachers, Acadians in Nova Scotia did not begin to receive any formal schooling until the early 1800s” (1992: 84).

Due to the long inaccessibility of formal education, the divide between the French of Acadians and that of their future teachers grew. Even when education was finally made available (as late as in 1939 for Grades 1-6), teachers were often from outside the community (Ross & Deveau 1992: 154). And when Acadian teachers were finally instituted, they had been educated in Standard Canadian French, not the AF variety. As a result, written materials in AF are difficult to obtain. There is a "sanitization process" in anything that is written down. Even in Acadian journal publications, like Le Petit Courrier, founded in 1937, Standard Canadian French is used. It is for that reason this project uses oral materials either in recorded or transcribed form to accurately capture AF as it is spoken in these Acadian communities. AF also presents difficulties when it comes to spelling, as there is no standardized way to spell Acadianisms. And because English loanwords are barely represented in the dictionaries and glossaries, there is even less precedent for spelling this category of Acadianisms. For the most part, the spelling reflects the etymology of the word, leaning heavily on the English spellings. But in the Wedgeport material
when English words have undergone a significant shift in pronunciation, I have attempted to
reflect that shift in the spelling (the choice to spell ‘job’ as *djobbe*, for example).

Carmen d'Entremont, author of *Contes, légendes, histoires et mystifications: La tradition orale
de Pubnico Ouest*, adopted a different standard of transcription for her speakers from West
Pubnico, which could cause some confusion. She has made some effort to standardize the dialect
as well, though to a lesser degree than most written materials. For example, she transcribes the
word pronounced [wɛlmʌ] as *moyennement* ‘very, extremely.’ There is a clear difference in the
AF pronunciation and the standard pronunciation, but the transcription makes no distinction. For
many English loans this is not an issue, but it brings into question mainly the standardized
spelling of verb endings and the variation in pronunciation between Wedgeport and West
Pubnico. Specifically, the difference between *boat* and *botte* ought to be questioned. Only my
own personal experience and knowledge of both dialects allow me to confirm there is in fact a
difference in pronunciation in this case.

1.3 The lexicographical problem
As a linguistic minority, AF speakers live, unsurprisingly, with their fair share of linguistic
insecurity (see Baker & Owens 1984 for a comparison with linguistic insecurity in Canadian
English speakers), manifesting mainly in resistance to English assimilation. Consequently,
loanwords derived from English are often seen as unwelcome “invaders” into the language. Even
in Quebec where French is the dominant language, there exists a protectiveness over the so-
called purity of the language. Quebec is known for taking this ideology to extremes,
incorporating even fewer English loanwords than France even though the Académie Française
strictly polices the French French lexicon.
This language purism is pervasive even in the lexical study of AF. As a result of this sociolinguistic situation, English loanwords, no matter how widely used, are largely passed over in the existing glossaries and dictionary of AF in favour of Acadianisms of other linguistic origins. This study primarily uses Cormier’s DFA, 1st edition, as its lexicographical context when researching the dialects of West Pubnico and Wedgeport for two reasons: the dictionary is the only one of its kind, and it is the most recent, methodical, and ambitious attempt at delineating the AF variety. The two other glossaries examined for this project include Pascal Poirier’s pioneering serial work, *Le glossaire acadien* (GA), and Éphrem Boudreau’s smaller scale, but more focused work on the Acadian French of Rivière Bourgeois, *Glossaire du vieux parler acadien* (GVPA).

1.3.1 Romantic notions of AF
Romantic nationalist notions of AF find expression in these lexicographical works that understate or outright ignore the impact of language contact with English on the dialect. In Anselme Chiasson’s foreword for the GVPA, he exclaims over the purity of the dialect in hyperbolic language:

> Ineffable beauté de la langue acadienne, douceur incomparable de cet idiome qui «naquit aux lèvres des Gaulois», qui résonne encore, et avec quel charme prenant, partout où cette langue s’est transmise avec une fidélité qui ne s’est jamais démentie au cours des générations d’Acadiens qui se sont succédées depuis l’arrivée en Amérique des premiers colons! (Chiasson 1988: 7)

[The ineffable beauty of the Acadian language, incomparable sweetness of this dialect that ‘sprung from the lips of the Gauls,’ that still resonates, and with such captivating charm, everywhere where this language has been transmitted with a faithfulness that has never flagged all through generations of Acadians who have succeeded each other since the arrival of the first colonists in America!]

Boudreau tempers this attitude somewhat in his preface when he writes, “maintenant que la masse des Acadiens a accès à l’éducation et que l’isolement n’existe plus, le parler moderne remplace rapidement le vieux dialecte de nos ancêtres” [now that the majority of Acadians have
access to education and isolation no longer exists, modern speech is rapidly replacing the old dialect of our ancestors] (Boudreau 1988: 9). While Boudreau seems to allow for the influence of ‘modern speech’ on AF, he still ignores the contact situation with English in his community.

Poirier too talks of ‘cette langue que nous avons conservée, est celle-là même que parlaient nos aïeux’ [this language that we have preserved, it is the same that was spoken by our ancestors] (Poirier 1993: 5). There is clearly a pervasive ideal of AF existing in a timeless vacuum, uncorrupted by outside influence.

In his dictionary, focused solely on Acadianismes, Cormier defines them as

non seulement des formes ou des expressions mais aussi des sens qui sont, ou ont été, en usage en Acadie et qui ne font pas partie du français tel qu’on le trouve décrit dans les dictionnaires généraux (comme le Robert ou le Larousse) qui correspond en général au français de France [...] les acadianismes sont désignés ainsi parce qu’ils sont en usage dans des régions francophones des provinces Atlantiques, mais qu’ils peuvent aussi être connus ailleurs en Amérique du Nord et notamment au Québec.

[not only word forms or expressions but also meanings that are, or have been, in use in Acadia and that do not make up part of French as we find it described in the general dictionaries (like the Robert or Larousse), which generally correspond to the French of France (...) Acadianisms are thus designated because they are in use in Francophone regions of the Atlantic provinces, but they can also be known elsewhere in North America and notably in Quebec]. (Cormier 1999: 24)

This initial definition is broad enough to include any Acadian words that differ from the Standard French French variety. But as the DFA’s actual entry of Acadianisme, shown above, suggests, the primary focus of Acadian French lexicography has been on Acadianisms of Gallo-Roman origin: Acadianisms are described ‘par rapport au français de France’ [in relation to the French of France]. There is an expected conflict that emerges when defining a non-standard dialect in relation to the standard and all its authority. The aim is to differentiate AF from Standard French French, while Standard French French remains the point of reference. In AF in
particular, there is a strong desire to legitimize AF by strengthening the connection with Standard French French and showcasing the archaic French French roots of certain Acadianisms. With pride in Acadian culture emerging in the late nineteenth century, there have since been many movements to preserve the AF variety. And gradually, after a long period of illiteracy in many Acadian regions, education in Standard Canadian French has become available to young Acadians across the Maritime provinces; “the establishment of such programmes,” however, “in which the emphasis is on standard French, with little regard for the home language, cannot help but reinforce the distance which exists between the vernacular and so-called good French” (King 2000: 14). As a result, Acadians themselves devalue AF dialects, especially those heavily mixed with English loanwords. Linguistic insecurity, derived from constant comparison with the standard, plagues the AF population: “[the French standard] is regarded as prestigious, and those who speak vernacular forms [of AF] often feel that their language is inadequate” (Boudreau & White 2004: 332). And, of course, the greater the English influence on AF, the more it is regarded as vernacular and non-standard. This perception of English loanwords, which, as will be argued, are an important part of AF today, explains why they are often neglected in the DFA and its lexical forerunners.

As a transplanted language, however, one would expect AF to feature many lexical borrowings (see, e.g. Balcom et al. 2008), including its English loanwords. But the DFA’s strict inclusion policy for English loanwords, which allows entries only for those borrowings attested in the nineteenth century or earlier with very few exceptions (Cormier 1999: 25), displays a bias against borrowings from English and not other borrowings, such as those from the First Nation Mi’kmaq language. An explanation for this difference might lie in the perception that the survival of the Mi’kmaq language is also threatened, like AF, by the preponderance of English.
This bias results in English loanwords representing a mere six percent of the Acadianisms treated in the dictionary, a vast underrepresentation, as this thesis will make clear, from a contemporary analysis of AF as it is currently used.
2. Theory
The AF from West Pubnico and Wedgeport is the result of prolonged language contact, since at least the founding of both villages (1653 for West Pubnico and 1767 for Wedgeport), in which English is the language of the majority in the region at large. English still holds certain positions of prestige in these communities. The sociolinguistic situation is, however, more complex than that. While AF varieties across the Acadian diaspora are often in similar situations (except for those in majority francophone regions) even in comparison with other Acadian communities, the level of language contact is rather elevated in Wedgeport and Pubnico. Therefore, we will employ Thomason and Kaufmann's (1988) framework of language contact situations to place these villages in relation to other contact situations.

Sarah Thomason explains that in its simplest form, “language contact is the use of more than one language in the same place at the same time” (Thomason 2001: 1). She goes on to elaborate that for this contact to be nontrivial and likely to lead to linguistic change, there must be some kind of interaction between speakers of different languages. She makes a distinction between contact-induced change that occurs in situations with imperfect second-language learning and change that occurs in situations in which imperfect learning is not a significant factor (Thomason 2001: 66). Imperfect learning will have played a role in the past in Nova Scotia, but in the present a practical level of fluency in English is a necessity for any AF speaker in the region. Considering the current state of affairs, we will be more interested in the latter kind of contact-induced change, which Thomason designates as the “crucial” part in borrowing in which “the interference features are introduced into the receiving language by people who speak it fluently” (Thomason 2001: 68).
There is some disagreement in the scholarly community, however. Donald Winford notes the lack of consensus on how to define borrowing (Winford 2012: 170). He in turn settles on defining borrowing as “the transfer of linguistic materials from a SL [source language] into a RL [recipient language] via the agency of speakers for whom the latter is the linguistically dominant language, in other words, via RL [recipient language] agentivity” (Winford 2012: 172). He uses slightly different terms, but otherwise presents a very similar definition as Thomason. For the purpose of this study, Winford’s definition will be used because of the emphasis he places on the agency of the speaker in borrowing words into the recipient language. It is important to note this agency as the attitude towards English borrowings by AF speakers is often negative. English borrowings are often seen – incorrectly – as unfortunate accidents, or English invaders into the language at worst. Despite their stigma, English borrowings would not exist in AF without the agency of speakers, and these borrowings deserve more attention than they have previously received.

Thomason and Kaufman list five levels of borrowing, from (1) casual contact (lexical borrowing only) to (5) very strong cultural pressure (heavy structural borrowing) (1988: 74-75). Using Thomason and Kaufman's scale, AF appears to be on level 2 – incorporating slight structural borrowing in addition to lexical borrowing – and at times even approaches level 3, particularly in the adoption of prepositions and in the phonemicization of even native vocabulary. In addition to non-basic vocabulary, AF borrows several function words from English, as will be explored in later sections. Phonological borrowing is also evident in the sample of speech studied. Determining what is an established borrowing and what is a nonce borrowing is difficult in a language contact situation like that of AF in NS. In Thomason’s terms, “several issues complicate the analysis of the transition from a code-switch to an interference feature”
(Thomason 2001: 133). Because the sample size of this study was relatively small, borrowings appearing in the speech of more than one person from either village were considered contenders as English loanwords.
3. Method & Data
The empirical part of this study takes a corpus linguistic approach. Although current Acadian journals, such as *Acadie Nouvelle* (NB), *Le Courrier* (NS), and *La Voix Acadienne* (PEI), might appear to be suitable materials for study, they suffer from the widespread bias against English and avoid English borrowings. With the spread of education in Standard Canadian French in Acadian communities, English borrowings disappear from the more formal registers of journal writing but persist in speech and less formal modes of writing. As such, I intend to focus on recorded and transcribed oral interviews with Acadians, ranging from middle-aged to elderly, with a geographical focus on the Acadian communities in the villages of West Pubnico, and Wedgeport. Lewis Poteet’s *The South Shore Phrase Book* (1988) and “Some Observations on the South Shore Lexicon” (1999) were written to characterize the region’s English words and phrases that seldom find their way into writing, because English speakers also drop their local expressions when they are writing formally. My collected materials include interviews from West Pubnico transcribed by Carmen d’Entremont in her thesis, *Contes, légendes, histoires et mystifications: La tradition orale de Pubnico Ouest* [Tales, legends, stories, and mystifications: The oral traditions of West Pubnico] (2006) and interviews conducted by Cyrille LeBlanc for the *Wedgeport Musée de la pêche sportive au thon* [Wedgeport Sport Tuna Fishing Museum] conducted between 2011 and 2015.

Carmen d’Entremont transcribed and compiled interviews of various speakers from West Pubnico in order to preserve and contextualize local folklore. Though perhaps not its intended use, I have found her sizeable collection, compiled over two years beginning in 2004, invaluable to my research on English loanwords. Additionally, d’Entremont is from the community of West Pubnico herself, and so the tenor of the interviews is comfortable and casual, as closely
resembling an informal conversation as possible. Reliable oral materials of AF are few and far
between. As such, d’Entremont’s contribution is notable.

As previously mentioned, the one difficulty with d’Entremont’s material from West Pubnico is
the method of transcription that obscures the pronunciation of certain words. The transcription of
thing (5), then (7), something (18), there (2), and whether (2) are suspect because of the
difficulty francophones have pronouncing the phonemes [θ] and [ð]. Consider also that in the
Wedgeport materials, with these same lexical items, I perceived [t] and [d] respectively in nearly
every instance. I chose to transcribe the Wedgeport examples accordingly (e.g. ting for ‘thing,’
den for ‘then’) to reflect the AF pronunciation as closely as possible.

Cyrille LeBlanc has also provided a great resource to the AF scholarly community in uploading
his Wedgeport interviews to YouTube for public consumption. The purpose of the interviews is
to showcase different aspects of the local history of Wedgeport by capturing the memories of its
residents; as with the materials from West Pubnico, however, the interviews provide equal
insight into the local dialect. LeBlanc is from Wedgeport and has long been active in the
community (I first met him nearly a decade ago working as a tour guide at the Wedgeport Sport
Tuna Fishing Museum). Like d’Entremont, he can communicate in the local dialect, so speakers
feel less pressure to perform in Standard Canadian French for the interviews.

Without these two interviewers’ own proficiency in the dialect and familiarity with their
respective communities, it would have been difficult to find material featuring such informal
features as English loanwords. Poplack and Tagliamonte discuss similar difficulties in accessing
the African Nova Scotian dialect: “in the African Nova Scotian context, as in many other
situations of asymmetrical status or power, the vernacular, or what members refer to as ‘slang,’ is
restricted to intimate interaction with fellow community members” (2010: 151). To surmount
these difficulties, they prepared field workers from the community to collect their data (Poplack & Tagliamonte 2010: 152). This project simply relies on existing material, previously collected by local interviewers, to gain similar access to the local AF dialects of Wedgeport and West Pubnico.

In total, sixteen speakers were chosen for study: eight from d’Entremont’s West Pubnico interviews and eight from LeBlanc’s Wedgeport interviews, further divided into four male speakers and four female speakers from each village.

All speakers interviewed are comfortably over the age of fifty, while many are decades older than that. This sampling of speech from older generations is dictated by the purpose of the original interviews. The interviews from West Pubnico concern traditional folk tales and would logically stem from the elders of the community. Similarly, the Wedgeport interviews explore the local history of Wedgeport and its once famous International Tuna Cup Match, which took place from 1937 to 1976, through the memories of the village’s elderly residents.

Selecting interviews of similar length proved difficult. Interviews of female speakers from Wedgeport were fewer and generally shorter in length than those of male speakers, so there were limited options in attempting to balance the materials. The nature of the interviews was also problematic. On the one hand, the length of the West Pubnico interviews is measured by number of transcribed pages and, on the other, the length of the Wedgeport interviews is measured by minutes and seconds of video, making for difficult comparison. See Table 1 below for full list of speakers and available information for each.
### Table 1: List of speakers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speakers</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Date of Interview(s)</th>
<th>Length of Interview(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florent d'Entremont</td>
<td>Pubnico</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>15 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harold d'Entremont</td>
<td>Pubnico</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>18 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurent d'Entremont</td>
<td>Pubnico</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>15 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rémi d'Entremont</td>
<td>Pubnico</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>5 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabelle d’Entremont</td>
<td>Pubnico</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>14 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lillian d’Entremont</td>
<td>Pubnico</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>16 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marjorie d’Entremont</td>
<td>Pubnico</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>7 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thérèse Amirault</td>
<td>Pubnico</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>17 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcide LeBlanc</td>
<td>Wedgeport</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>2011 &amp; 2014</td>
<td>24 minutes 15 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennis Doucette</td>
<td>Wedgeport</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>12 minutes 0 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emery Pothier</td>
<td>Wedgeport</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>8 minutes 15 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gérald Pothier</td>
<td>Wedgeport</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>2011 &amp; 2015</td>
<td>14 minutes 0 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agnes Murphy</td>
<td>Wedgeport</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>6 minutes 0 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annette LeBlanc</td>
<td>Wedgeport</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>9 minutes 0 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen Muise</td>
<td>Wedgeport</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2 minutes 0 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose Surette</td>
<td>Wedgeport</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>18 minutes 45 seconds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of tokens of English borrowings for each speaker was simpler to measure.

Assuming speakers, of the same sex and similar age, from both villages would use English loanwords at a similar rate on average, the samples of speech from Wedgeport appear smaller overall. I found an average of 72 total tokens per speaker from Wedgeport and an average of 102 total tokens per speaker from West Pubnico.

With few exceptions, borrowings used by more than one speaker, from either village, were considered as candidates for further study and will be discussed at length in section 5, Lexical Analysis.
4. Lexicographic Analysis
In the *Dictionnaire du français acadien*, Acadianisms are defined as words, expressions, or even meanings that are, or have been, in use in Acadian regions and that are not part of the Standard French French lexicon (Cormier 1999: 24). The DFA draws upon Poirier’s *Glossaire acadien* [Acadian Glossary] (1928, republished in 1993) and Boudreau’s *Glossaire du vieux parler acadien* [Glossary of Old Acadian Speech] (1988), and further unspecified novel corpus work on AF. The language of explanation is Standard Canadian French, while all illustrative quotations are, of course, in AF. But, occasionally, knowledge of English is presupposed, and to make full use of the DFA and its features its readers must be Acadian-French/Canadian-English bilinguals.

The English names for flora or fauna are sometimes given in the definitions to complement their Standard Canadian French equivalents, and English borrowings appear frequently in the illustrative quotations along with sporadic, untranslated English dialogue. Examples of English borrowings in the DFA’s quotations include those directly borrowed from English, such as *bull* ‘male cow’ or *bow* ‘a lowering of the head and torso’ (DFA 1999: 110, 209), which are fairly common, but receive no more than a Standard Canadian French gloss.

Other types of English borrowings found in the DFA include phonetic borrowings, those that undergo a marked phonetic assimilation, such as *spitoune* ‘spittoon’ (353); loan translation, those English words or phrases that undergo a literal translation from English into French, such as *Soeurs* ‘Sisters, nuns’ (69); and morphemic borrowings, those words that undergo a naturalization of the morphemic structure, such as *fider* ‘to feed (a farm animal)’ (209).

Although preponderant in the illustrative quotations and occasionally found in the metatext, namely in the extraneous glossing of fauna and flora in English, the presence of the English language in the DFA lies in tension with the dictionary’s treatment of English loanwords. Apart
from a handful, most of the English borrowings that appear in the illustrative quotations are not recognized as potential Acadianisms and lack their own entries. They are simply accompanied by brief glosses in parentheses in the quotations themselves and no more is said about them. To merit an entry, the DFA requires at least two attestations except if the word is found in the works of Antonine Maillet, a well-known Acadian author, when one example will do. The inclusion policy for English loanwords is more restrictive. Only terms with attestations from the nineteenth century or earlier are included, with only a couple of exceptions (Cormier 1999: 25). This policy implies that their treatment is beyond the predetermined scope of acceptable AF and further that more recent English loans are merely anomalies or nonce loans, the result of code-switching that should be discouraged. Especially in comparison with the clear favouring of Acadianisms of French French origins, the distaste for English loanwords, understood as signs of Acadian assimilation, is evident.

I argue that the DFA’s treatment of English loanwords ignores the widespread use of more recent English loanwords in contemporary spoken AF, if not in some written varieties, and may have, if not corrected, a negative influence on a budding AF lexicography and perceptions of AF more broadly.

The ways in which English appears in the DFA, often without a gloss or explanation, presumes knowledge of the English language on the part of the reader, despite presenting itself as an entirely French dictionary with only rare borrowings from English in its entries. But the DFA often presupposes bilingualism on the part of its reader. Cormier states that he created the DFA as a lexicographical tool for teaching French and that above all else “il permettra de porter à la connaissance de tous les Acadiens des mots qui sont employés dans des aires limitées de l’Acadie” [it would enable bringing awareness to all Acadians of words used in isolated regions
of Acadia] (1999: 18). While he may bring greater awareness to obscure Acadianisms, the DFA’s dependence on bilingualism makes it ill-suited as a teaching tool. The target language is Standard Canadian French, the source language and the illustrative quotations are primarily in AF, and Canadian English is relied on here and there in various functions. This presupposition of bilingual knowledge on the part of its AF readership consequently provides a glimpse into the complexity of the linguistic situation across Acadian communities. It is no longer a question of isolating AF to preserve it – many AF speakers already use and rely on Canadian English, Acadian French, and Standard Canadian French in different contexts.

Here, in this entry for *baille* (meaning 'tub', or in this case, 'wash tub'), we see untranslated English dialogue appearing in the quotation:

*Quand* Jack Woodstock pis sa femme aviont venu rester
When Jack Woodstock and his wife had-AUX come to stay-INF

par icitte, la vielle Tabou avait 'té là. Al’ a
around here, the old Tabou had gone there. She has-AUX

tant leumé la femme, pis quand a’ s’en allait al’
so liked-PPT The woman, so when she REFL.in went-IMPF she

a dit: ‘Don’t forget to come and see me and
has-AUX said-PPT: ‘Don’t forget to come and see me and

*I’ll show you my nice big baille.*’ Une journée la
I’ll show you my nice big tub.’ One day the
When Jack Woodstock and his wife had come to live around here, old Tabou went over there. She liked the wife so much, so when she left she said: ‘Don’t forget to come and see me, and I’ll show you my nice big tub.’ One day Jack’s wife went to see her and after they had talked for a while she said: ‘And where is your nice big boy?’ And the old woman brought her in the drum to show her the washing tub! (Cormier 1999: 77)

In this case, an understanding of both AF and English is necessary to understand the humour of the story, where the AF word for ‘tub,’ pronounced ‘baille,’ is confused with the English boy when the story’s narrator codeswitches without warning. Furthermore, the story’s English dialogue, exchanged between ‘Old Tabou,’ a bilingual Acadian, and Jack Woodstock’s wife, presumably an anglophone, remains untranslated and unglossed in the DFA. Notably, the AF variants for l’aimé (leumé), voir (ouar), and élan (élaigne) do get their own glosses, suggesting that these are perhaps less likely to be understood by the DFA’s intended audience than the English dialogue.

A quotation for breumer ‘to moo, bellow’ holds several different English borrowings, none of which appear in the dictionary as entries of their own:
Y avait une vingtaine de voitures et ils ont tout eu peur de racing avec le bull peur de se faire cornailler. Rien que Pite qui avait du choeur que ça marchait, toute en volait par derrière. Le boeuf avait la cheue droite qui pointait vers l’étoile du nord, et breumait comme un démon, et le pauvre cheval par dârière qui en pouffait.5

[There were twenty or so vehicles and they all got scared of racing with the bull afraid of getting impaled. Only Pite who had courage. We gave the signal to go, the horse and the bull, and I bet that it worked, everything was flying behind. The bull had its tail straight pointing towards the north star, and it was bellowing like a demon, and the poor horse behind it puffing.] (Cormier 1999: 110-11)

The infinitive racer, meaning ‘to race,’ appears to be a more convenient verb than faire la course as it is glossed. We also have le bull, which appears twice, though its standard equivalent le boeuf also appears in the very same quotation. This interchangeability suggests that the borrowing has not replaced the French equivalent, nor that the French has been lost, but rather that le bull is supplementary. The last example here is “I bet que ça marchait,” which I believe has been incorrectly glossed. The gloss je gage literally means ‘I bet,’ or ‘I wager,’ but from context and my own knowledge of the language, the sense seems to be a stronger affirmation, something closer to the idiomatic ‘you bet it worked!’

The entry for bocouite, itself a naturalized borrowing of ‘buckwheat,’ has a few more English borrowings in its quotations:

Y a chectemps, Pierre son of Ballot, big farmer, from deep in Lawville, raised a calf and last summer he started to feed his bull and took care of it the best he could; he made it eat oats, bread, eggs, and even buckwheat crepes and we thought that he gave it milk and tea and maybe whiskey...} (Cormier 1999: 97)

5 All notations, except for the bolding of English borrowings, in the examples taken from the DFA’s quotations are recreated from the DFA and are not mine.
We see the appearance of *le bull* again, but seemingly three instances of this borrowing in just the quotations under the letter ‘B’ is not common enough to justify its classification as an Acadianism in the DFA. *Feeder* ‘to feed,’ does appear as an entry, but *best* or *de son best* does not.

Beneath the definition for *berry*, the French equivalents *grisette*, *mocaque*, and *pomme de pré* are given, but then in the second remark Cormier provides, “en anglais: Mountain Cranberry” [in English: Mountain Cranberry] (91). And it is not only *berry* that receives this treatment. This tag, ‘in English’, appears under almost any kind of flora or fauna. It appears four times under *coco*, which can apparently designate many different plants depending on the Acadian region. The second usage, attested in Louisiana, receives only the description “herbe qui pousse dans le Sud des États-Unis” [Herb that grows in the South of the United States], the Latin name, *cyperus rotundus*, and the tag “en anglais: nut-grass” [in English: nut-grass] (144).

This tag indicates that the DFA employs English repeatedly to reach a larger portion of its audience. The French terminology for specific flora and fauna like that for *berry* and *coco* is too specialized for the general Acadian reader to recognize, but the English terminology is given as a possible point of reference. These examples are just one of the more obvious areas where English might have filled a gap in the AF lexicon.

Despite the reluctance to formally acknowledge English in the AF lexicon, the presence of English is felt all throughout the DFA, in its quotations and in its metatext. This strange tension in the dictionary reflects the tension with English in Acadian communities, stemming from the fear of assimilation. But this bias cripples a thorough examination of the lexicon and skews the contemporary image of AF that the DFA sets out to portray.
5. Lexical Analysis
The fourteen most common lexical items of English origin used by the sixteen speakers from both West Pubnico and Wedgeport can be categorized by syntactic function into four groups:

- adverbs and prepositions, such as about (19), back (36), now (10), and right (18)
- connectives, pragmatic markers, and particles, such as but (60), OK (25), so (84), well (32), whatever (5), and ya (98)
- nouns and adjectives, such as something (18) and whole (9)
- verbs, such as hauler ‘to haul, pull’ (12) and passer by ‘to pass by’ (7)

Each of these terms appears in all three word lists: a general word list, which is compiled with the criterion that each word must occur in the speech of at least one person from each village; a West Pubnico word list, where at least two speakers from West Pubnico use the term; and a Wedgeport word list, where at least two speakers from Wedgeport use the term. Additionally, these fourteen terms are among the most frequently used in the samples studied. A few notable exceptions include goddamn (15) from the general word list, anyway (31) from the West Pubnico word list, and botte (12) from the Wedgeport word list. These exceptions will be explored in later sections, although it is possible that the narrow scope of the material sampled has made them appear more exclusive to one or the other village than they are in actuality.

It is important to note that of these fourteen items only back appears in the DFA (Dictionnaire du français acadien), where two uses are recorded. This absence suggests a considerable gap in the documentation of AF (Acadian French) where English loanwords are concerned. The two definitions and examples provided for back from the DFA are:

(1) “En direction de, vers un endroit d’où la personne, la chose provient ou était. On s’en va back chez nous.” [In the direction of, toward a place from which the person, thing comes or was. We’re going back home.]

and

The absence of all fourteen terms except back from the DFA indicates that it does not reflect the actual usage of English loanwords in AF, despite its aim to portray “une image contemporaine du lexique français d’Acadie” [a contemporary image of the French lexicon from Acadia] (Cormier 1999: 18).

This study has found additional uses where back is not used in conjunction with a verb (as is the case with the two uses noted by the DFA). There is a total of 36 uses of back, some of which are reproduced here in example (3):

(3a) Et y s’en été back, dans de back o’ de
And he REFL.in went back, in the back of the line. Ça fait euj l’avais jamais vu back après ça.
That makes I him.had-AUX never seen-PPT again after that. And he went back, to the back of the line. As a result, I never saw him again after that. (Alcide LeBlanc)

(3b) Nex jour ou mès euj voiyit back le pêcheur
Next day Or when I see again the fisherman y dira, “j’ai ‘tê chu-vous – as-tu vu ma gaffé?”
he will say, “I have-AUX gone-PPT at.yours have.you seen my gaff?”
The next day or whenever I see the fisherman again he’ll say, “I went to your house – did you see my gaff?” (Dennis Doucette)

(3c) Ensuite j’ai ‘tourné back à Meteghan.
Then I have-AUX returned-PPT back to Meteghan.

Then I went back to Meteghan. (Rose Surette)

(3d) “Non, allez back vous coucher.” So ils avont été
“No, go-IMP back REFL-2pl to sleep.” So they had-AUX gone

se coucher back.

REFL to sleep again.

“No, go back to sleep.” So they went to sleep again. (Thérèse Amirault)

(3e) I avont assis Uncle dans le back seat.
They had-AUX sat-PPT Uncle in the back seat
They sat Uncle in the back seat. (Laurent d’Entremont)

(3f) Deux des fighters de la Head avont jumped-PPT sur
Two of the fighters of the Head had-AUX jumped-PPT on

le back de la charette pour essayer à hauler down Uncle.
the back of the carriage for to try-INF to pull down Uncle.
Two of the fighters from the Head (Pubnico Head) jumped on the back of the carriage to try to pull down Uncle. (Laurent d’Entremont)

(3g) Et i se tuiont de rire et i
And they REFL were killing-IMPF of to laugh-INF and they

bouniont back down se cacher.
were leaping-IMPF back down REFL to hide-INF.
And they were killing themselves laughing and leaping back down to hide. (Florent d’Entremont)
As Ruth King states in her paper “The Case of Back,” “back takes on the role of the French prefix re- with verbs” in both of its modern meanings: “‘return to a former state and place’ and ‘repeat an action or process’” (2000: 116, 118). These two meanings for French prefix re- are essentially the same as the DFA’s two uses for back. But not every use of back can be replaced by a French verb beginning in re-. The additional uses of back are the obvious exception, as in (3a), (3e), and (3f), where back appears as a noun or adjective. Perhaps significantly, (3e) and (3f) are both taken from the speech of Laurent d’Entremont, though another speaker, Alcide LeBlanc, also uses back in this way. Another exception is example (3g) where back is used in conjunction with bouniont, the third person plural imperfect form of bouner “to leave, to depart” (from bound away). Since bouner itself is an English loanword, it obviously does not have a Standard Canadian French form with re-. Down also appears to be working in conjunction with bouner and back in (3g). Rose Surette in (3c) interestingly chose ‘tournier back “to return,” using a shortened version of retourner notably missing the prefix re-, over the variant aller back “to go back” found in (3a) and (3d).

Example (3a) perfectly displays the range of back in AF, demonstrating both uses described by the DFA and a third idiomatic use with “back o’ de line.” The second DFA use of back, typically translated as “again,” is also illustrated here in (3b). This use shows that back has undergone semantic change in its adoption into the AF dialect (Type 3 in DCHP-2’s 6-tiered typology of Canadianisms, Dollinger & Fee 2017, “Introduction”). Example (3d) is curious because in the imperative portion of the example, back is positioned after the verb allez ‘go,’ but in the second portion it is positioned after coucher ‘to sleep,’ which is the only instance of it being used in that word order. This positioning may be to make a distinction between the different possible
meanings of back. I chose to translate the later half of the example as ‘they went to sleep again,’ but it could easily be interpreted as repetition of the first half as, ‘they went back to sleep.’ I believe there is a suggestion that back should be translated as ‘again’ because then the unusual choice in positioning more closely mimics the English word order.

Ya [informal ‘yes’] (98) is the term most frequently used by one speaker, with 45 mentions by Rose Surette. In comparison, Emery Pothier uses ya second most frequently for a total of 25 tokens, nearly half that of Rose Surette, and Dennis Doucette is third with 14 tokens. All three of these speakers are from Wedgeport, so it may be that the word is more commonly used there than in West Pubnico.

Rose Surette also had a high frequency of using so (36), dad/daddy (13), and even back (7) to some degree. Her interview was approximately twenty minutes in duration, longer than the other interviews from Wedgeport, which can account for some of the disparity between her and the other speakers.

The type about (in total 19) appeared in various forms (tokens), including bout, just about, and about it, and had two different uses (independent of form). As in English, about can mean “about, concerning” or “approximately, just about” as seen in example (4):

(4a) J’ai pris après la dguerre, ‘bout, ‘têtre une couple de semaines après.
I have-AUX taken-PPT after the war, about, maybe a couple of weeks after. (Gérald Pothier)
(4b) Aviez-vous l’même âge? Just about, ya.
Have.you-INTERR the.same age? Just about, ya.
Were you the same age? (CL) Just about, ya. (Emery Pothier)

(4c) J’allons point worrier about it. C’est bon rien.
We.go not to worry-INF about it. It.is good nothing.
We won’t worry about it. It’s good for nothing. (Harold d’Entremont)

Considering that conjunctions are some of the words usually borrowed only through more intense forms of language contact, given the AF-Canadian English social situation it is unsurprising that but (60) and so (84) appear on this list. Other conjunctions such as and (2), although (1), because (8), for (2), and then (7) also appear, but not as frequently.

Well (32) appears as a pragmatic marker as seen in example (5). Well is used more often by male speakers from both villages. Of the female speakers, only Thérèse Amirault and Rose Surette use it, while all but Dennis Doucette of the male speakers use it. Florent d’Entremont uses it the most with 13 tokens, one of which is illustrated in example (5).

(5) Well j’ai jamais tant ri de ma vie
Well I.have-AUX never so much laughed-PPT In my life
Well, I never laughed so much in my life (Florent d’Entremont)

There is a whole range of interesting verb loans that have been adapted into the French tense system. Hauler (12), for instance, meaning 'to pull, to haul', appears in many of its conjugated and non-conjugated forms, from the infinitive hauler/haler to third person plural of the imperfect tense, haulieng. Haulieng is a variant pronunciation of hauliont/haliont, which is the traditional
Acadian form of *haulait* (Beaulieu et Cichocki 2008: 35; Flikeid 1992: 237). *Passer by* ‘to pass by’ (7) is interesting because it is the most common compound verb with an English and French element, though it is certainly not the only one to appear, with *tcheindre* going ‘to keep going’ (3) also being a notable example.

*Whole* (9) is another example with multiple usages, and is once used in conjunction with *pilot*, as seen in example (6).

(6a) *Y voulieng point un whole pilôt de monde.*

They wanted-IMPF not a whole pile of people.

They didn’t want a whole pile of people. (Agnes Murphy)

(6b) *Ouais, ouais, une whole chasse-garderie. C’était une whole bande.*

Yes, yes, a whole chasse-garderie. It was-IMPF a huge group.

Yes, yes, a whole chasse-garderie [type of raucous group]. It was a huge group. (Florent d’Entremont)

(6c) *Ça fa, y’ara eu beaucoup d’monde den, sur*

It makes there.would have-AUX had-PPT many of people then, on

Deep Cove? Oh n’avait une whole monde.

Deep Cove? Oh there.were a big amount people

In that case, there would have been a lot of people then, on Deep Cove? (CL) Oh there was a bunch of people. (Rose Surette)

(6d) *Ouais, tous les vieux, lui et Noncle Leoff, une whole crowd, ont travaillé sur l’église.*

Yes, all the elders, him and Uncle Leoff, a big
group, have-AUX worked-PPT on the.church.
Yes, all the elders, him and Uncle Leoff, a big group, worked on the church. (Gérald Pothier)

5.1 West Pubnico – Wedgeport lexical differences
The most notable difference between the two villages’ lexicons relates to one of AF’s most frequently used open-class words: boat. West Pubnico speakers exclusively use boat (9) to refer to boats and ships, whereas Wedgeport speakers use the more integrated (into French) botte (12), with one notable exception: Emery Pothier says police boat once, while otherwise using botte. It would seem that Emery Pothier doesn’t naturalize boat in this instance because police boat is taken as a unit, a complex lexical item separate from the more general item botte. It may be noted that botte already exists in Standard French, meaning “boot.” Wedgeport Acadians avoid confusion with a simple distinction in gender, which occurs with other French homonyms (ex. un poêle/une poêle “stove/pan,” un livre/une livre “book/pound,” etc.). When botte is feminine, it means the standard “boot,” but when it is masculine it is the word for “boat” in the Wedgeport variant of AF.

The words that have two or more tokens from the Wedgeport speakers, but none from West Pubnico speakers, can be categorized into the four groups used above:

- adverbs, such as even (3)
- pragmatic markers, such as oh my god (3)
- nouns and adjectives, such as botte (12), cheap (2), couple (2), crowd (2), dad (14), djobbe (4), Germany (4), Holland (4), overseas (4), and steamer (4)
- verbs, such as sposer ‘to be supposed to’ (3)

All these last appear to be Wedgeport-specific words, though it is possible they could be found in West Pubnico with a larger sample of speech. The second most frequent lexical item in this Wedgeport category, botte (12), is also most likely to be specific to the village. As has already been mentioned, West Pubnico uses boat (9) as an alternative.
The most frequent, *dad* (14), is a bit of an anomaly, as 13 of those 14 tokens are attributed to Rose Surette. As previously mentioned, Rose Surette has the longest interview of the Wedgeport speakers, but she also uses the most English loans by far with 188 in total (compared with an average of 72 English loans per Wedgeport speaker on average). She appears somewhat repetitive with the lexical items used in her speech.

The expression *oh my god* (3) seems to have a slightly different colour than in English. The translation is essentially the same, but rather than expressing shock or surprise, it introduces an uncertain quantity, as can be seen in example (7) showing the use of all three tokens:

(7a)  *Oh my god n’avait yune, deuce, trois, n’avait*  
      Oh my god there.were-IMPF one, two, three, there.were-IMPF

‘tête une quinzaine de shantys quand-ce que moi j’ai  
maybe a fifteen or so of shanties when.that that me I.have-AUX

     coummencé à y’aller.  
     started-PPT to go
Oh my god there were one, two, three, there were maybe fifteen or so shanties when I started going. (Rose Surette)

(7b)  *Pis combin longteng que ça prend là pour faire*  
     So how much Long that it takes there for to make-INF

*yune? Oh my god...*  
*one? Oh my god...*  
And how long does it take to make one? (Cyrille LeBlanc) Oh my god... (Dennis Doucette)
(7c) Combin ça faisait longtemps que tu fais ça?

How much it was making-IMPF long that you make-PRES this?

Oh my god... une vingtaine d’années?
Oh my god... a twenty or so of years?

For how long have you done this? (Cyrille LeBlanc) Oh my god... twenty or so years? (Dennis Doucette)

Crowd ‘crowd’ (2) has an interesting second use. Gérald Pothier illustrates this use in example (6d), where it means a general, large group of people but is not particularly characterized by disorder or close proximity as in English. In this context ‘crowd’ would be an unusual choice to use in the English translation, as it is not typically ‘crowds’ that build churches.

Sposer ‘to be supposed to’ (3) is an interesting item, with an interesting form in sposit, as in example (8). Sposit appears to be third person singular in the simple past, now a literary tense in Standard Canadian French that is not heard in ordinary conversation but still used occasionally in AF. There is also the relation to I spose ‘I suppose, I guess’ (2), which appears in the general word list, to consider. Although sposer ‘to be supposed to’ (3) and I spose ‘I suppose, I guess’ (2) differ in meaning, they clearly share the same root.

(8) Euj sposit, faut sposit de’z render

We ought have-SP it needs ought have-SP to.REFL to return-INF

back au barracks.

back to the barracks.

We were supposed to, it was compulsory that we go back to the barracks. (Emery Pothier)
The proper nouns *Germany* and *Holland* should be questioned as Wedgeport-specific, since the two speakers that used them, Alcide LeBlanc and Gérald Pothier, were being interviewed about their time serving as soldiers in the Second World War, and it is unclear if they have a broader usage in AF. *Overseas (4)* should also be considered in the same category as these two proper nouns, since this word is also used by Alcide LeBlanc, Emery Pothier, and Gérald Pothier in reference to the Second World War.

The terms that appear exclusive to West Pubnico, having at least two tokens from West Pubnico speakers but none from Wedgeport speakers, can be divided by parts of speech into four groups:

- adverbs and prepositions, such as *along (2), around (9), and down (4)*
- connectives, pragmatic markers, and particles, such as *alright (4), anyhow (5), anyway (31), I guess (4), no (8), and whether (2)*
- nouns, adjectives, and pronouns, such as *boat (8), car (7), fancy (2), farm (4), ghost (3), gone (3), joke (5), light (6), party (8), shop (2), someone (3), stuff (8), thing (5), time (7) ‘party, exciting event; time,’ trick (3) ‘trick, prank,’ and yarn (7) ‘story, tale’
- verbs, such as *bouner (16) ‘to leave, to bound away,’ chaser (3) ‘to chase,’ happener (5) ‘to happen,’ jumper (2) ‘to jump,’ picturer (2) ‘to picure, to imagine,’ riguer (2) ‘to fix, to ready,’ sticker (4) ‘to stick,’ watcher (2) ‘to watch,’ and worker (3) ‘to work’

With a larger sample of material from Wedgeport, many of these terms will likely be found to be shared between the villages, so we are likely dealing with an artefact of the small sample sizes that are customary in sociolinguistics.

*Anyway* is clearly the most frequently used among these West Pubnico terms with 31 tokens. Thérèse Amirault uses *anyway* the most with a total of 16 instances. Only Laurent d’Entremont and Marjorie d’Entremont do not use the term. Instead, they are the only ones to use *anyhow.*

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6 Adverbs and prepositions are grouped together in this instance because of the overlap with *around,* where it can be used either as a preposition or an adverb.
Anyway and *anyhow* seem to be used synonymously, as in example (9), with the choice between them a result of personal preference.

(9a) *Anyway. Grand-père a conté assez de fois.*
Anyway. Grandfather has-AUX told-PPT enough of times.
Anyway. Grandfather told (it) enough times. (Marjorie d’Entremont)

(9b) *Anyhow, ça fait vingt-cinq ans que je dis les mêmes jokes.*
Anyway, it makes-PRES twenty-five years that I say-PRES the same jokes.
Anyway, it’s been twenty-five years that I’ve told the same jokes. (Laurent d’Entremont)

(9c) *Anyway, une gang de jeunes avont fait la soupe.*
Anyway, a group of youths have-AUX made-PPT the soup.
Anyway, a group of youths made the soup. (Thérèse Amirault)

(9d) *Anyway, pis Flavien et z-eux pêchiont des harengs, i seiniont, et le garçon a été au quai un soir et Flavien et z-eux s’apprêtiont pour aller out.*
Anyway, so Flavien and them were fishing-IMPF of herring, they were seine fishing-IMPF, and the boy has-AUX gone-PPT to the wharf one night and Flavien and them REFL.were readying-IMPF for to go-INF out.
Anyway, Flavien and those guys were fishing herring, they were seine fishing, and the guy went to the wharf one night and Flavien and them were getting ready to go out (to sea). (Florent d’Entremont)
There is a bit of judgement used with *fancy* (2) in example (10a). The sentiment expressed is that fancy things are for snobs that think they’re better than the simple Acadian countryfolk.

(10a) OK, bien, ils se rigourent manière de plus, point
    OK, good, they REFL rigged-IMPF sort of more, not
    fancy comme ceux-là de la ville qu’ils se croyaient manière
    fancy like those there of the city who they REFL believe-IMPF sort
    un degré de plus haut.
    a degree of more high.

    OK, good, they fixed themselves up somewhat more, not fancy like those from the city that think themselves of a higher class. (Thérèse Amiralut)

(10b) C’est dommage qu’ils ont point été restaurées, par
    It is shame that they have-AUX not been-PPT restored-PPT through
    rapport i y en a qu’étions vraiment des fancy cars.
    relation it there in has-PRES that were-IMPF really of fancy cars.

    It’s too bad that they weren’t restored, even so there were some that were really fancy cars. (Laurent d’Entremont)

*Gone* (3) only appears in conjunction with the verb *être* in example (11), which is logical considering *gone* is the past participle of ‘go’ and would require an auxiliary in English as well.

Notably, other forms of the verb ‘to go’ are absent from the material sampled.

(11a) Dans le même temps qu’ils étions gone down, moi
    In the same time that they were-AUX gone-PPT down, me
At the same time that they had gone down, I took my shotgun and got out of here and crawled to the other side. (Florent d’Entremont)

(11b) *Sa mère et z-eux étiont gone.*

His mother and them were gone. (Thérèse Amirault)

*Light* (6) is used to mean both ‘light’ and ‘lighthouse.’ *Light*’s secondary meaning could be the result of ‘lighthouse’ being shortened or the result of metonymy where the ‘light’ of the lighthouse is standing in for the physical structure. Both usages are illustrated in example (12).

(12a) *Ça escape dans les marshs et quand que t’as*

It escapes-PRES in the marshes and when that you have-PRES

*une petite light dessus, ça illuminate, là.*

a little light above, it illuminates-PRES, there.

It escapes into the marshes and when you have a little light on top of it, it lights up. (Florent d’Entremont)

(12b) *Sais-tu, tu parles des roches, i a venu*

Know-INTERR. you, you speak-PRES of rocks, it has-AUX come-PPT

*un bâtiment years ago, à terre, au sud de la petite*
a ship years ago, to ground, at the south of the little light [phare] du Cogginish.
lighthouse of the Cogginish.

You know, you’re talking about rocks, a ship ran aground years ago, south of the little lighthouse of Cogginish. (Harold d’Entremont)

_Time_ (7) is sometimes used to mean simply ‘time’ as seen in examples (13a) and (13b), but it is also used to mean a ‘party’ or a ‘good time.’ Laurent d’Entremont has an unusual use of _time_ as well in conjunction with _steady_ in example (13c). Carmen d’Entremont renders the word as _tyme_ in her transcription of the West Pubnico speakers when referring to a party in examples (13d) and (13e), but there is no obvious reason for the shift in spelling other than the change in meaning.

(13a) Mais, *no doubt que cent ans passé qu’i*
    Well-INTERJ, no doubt that hundred years passed that they believed-
    _tu sais, à toutes ces affaires-là, but with_
    you know, in all those things there but with time, _c’est passé ça._
    it.is-AUX passed-PPT that.

Well, no doubt that a hundred years ago they believed, you know, in all those things there, but with time, that’s passed. (Florent d’Entremont)

(13b) *At one time, par icitte, c’était de-même itou.*
    At one time, by here, it.was-IMPF of-same also.

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^7 Gloss added by Carmen d’Entremont, who originally transcribed the West Pubnico interviews.
At one time, around here, it was like that too. (Florent d’Entremont)

(13c)  
\[\text{but } \text{i} \quad \text{y} \quad \text{avait} \quad \text{un} \quad \text{gars} \quad \text{derrière,} \quad \text{là,} \quad \text{qu’était} \]

But it there was a guy behind, there who was-IMPF

à    applauder steady time.

at to applaud-INF steady time.

But there was a guy in the back, there, who was clapping away non-stop. (Laurent d’Entremont)

(13d)  
\[\text{Le monde de ces temps-là, quand ça faisait un} \]

The people of those times there when it made-IMPF a

tyme, i faisaient une soupe.

party, they made-IMPF a soup.

People back then, when there was a party, they made a soup. (Lillian d’Entremont)

(13e)  
\[\text{Ouais. Oh mais ouais, c’était le tyme.} \]

Yes. Oh well yes, it was-IMPF the good time.

Yes. Oh god yes, it was a good time. (Lillian d’Entremont)

\[\text{Yarn is used exclusively in the sense of \text{‘story’ or \text{‘tale,’ which is marked as a secondary and}}\]

\[\text{colloquial use by the Oxford English Dictionary, though it appears to be the main use in AF. It is a word that seems curiously favoured by West Pubnico speakers in example (14). It is also used in the sense of \text{‘gossip,}’ which West Pubnico has a reputation for, as referenced in example (14b).}\]

(14a)  
\[\text{Apparemment, t’as point entendu tout ces yarns-là} \]

41
Apparantly, you have not heard all those stories there.

Avant, toi.

before, you.

Apparently, you haven’t heard all those stories before, you. (Lillian d’Entremont)

(14b) 
Mais qui ce qui sait quand ce tu contes
Well who that who knows-PRES when that you tell-PRES

Une yarn à Pombcoup.
a yarn in Pubnico.

Well who knows when you tell gossip in Pubnico. (Lillian d’Entremont)

(14c) 
Anyway, ça a été une quite a while avant
Anyway, it has-AUX been-PPT a quite a while before

que la yarn a été out.
that the story has-AUX been-PPT out.

Anyway, it was quite a while before the story got out. (Harold d’Entremont)

Bounér (6) is the most frequent verb among the English loans exclusive to West Pubnico, and it is integrated into French by dropping the ‘d’ in ‘bound.’ It can be seen here in example (15).

(15a) J’avons pris chaque une galette et j’avons bouné for home.
We have-AUX taken-PPT each a cookie and we have-AUX taken off-PPT for home.
We each took a cookie and we took off for home. (Florent d’Entremont)

(15b)  
\[ I \quad avont \quad bouné \quad pour \quad la \quad Head. \]

They have-AUX left-PPT for the Head.

They left for the Head. (Laurent d’Entremont)

(15c)  
\[ So, \quad i \quad a \quad bouné, \quad i \quad a \quad été \quad au \quad baril \]

So, he has-AUX left-PPT, he has-AUX been-PPT to the barrel de miel.

of honey.

So, he left, he went to the barrel of honey. (Thérèse Amirault)

Items that appear on the general word list, but were not common enough to appear on all three lists can also be divided by syntactic function into three groups:

- verbs, such as *caller* (4) ‘to call,’ *driver* (3) ‘to drive,’ *firer* (4) ‘to fire,’ *helper* (2) ‘to help,’ *mover* (5) ‘to move,’ *owner* (4) ‘to own,’ *shaker* (2) ‘to shake,’ *starter* (8) ‘to start,’ *tchiendre going* (3) ‘to keep going, to continue,’ and *user* (4) ‘to use’
- pragmatic markers, connectives, and prepositions, such as *across* (2), *ago* (5), *because* (8), *boys!* (2) ‘boy oh boy, holy,’ *goddamn* (15), *I spose* (2), *I’ll-be-damn* (3) ‘I’ll be damned,’ *nex* (4), *now* (10), *of course* (3), *then* (7), *there* (2), and *you know* (13)

AF is known to use French nautical terms more generally and more widely in its lexicon than does Standard French French. These nautical terms include verbs such as *virer de bord* ‘to turn

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\(^8\) Adverbs are grouped into this category because of the overlap with *only*, where it can be used either as an adverb or an adjective.
around’ and débarquer ‘to get off/out of.’ *Rig* (2) is an example of taking an English nautical term and expanding its meaning, as seen in example (16):

(16a)  
\[ C’est \ ça \ la \ plus \ grousse \ rig. \]
This is it the more big thing.
That’s the biggest thing. (Dennis Doucette)

(16b)  
\[ Et, \ i \ aviont \ une \ rig, \ une \ affaire, \ une \ branche \ d’arbre. \]
And, they had-IMPF a thing, a thing, a branch of. tree.
And, they had this thing, a thing, a tree branch. (Harold d’Entremont)

This term also seems to be well established in the dialect as there is also the verbal form of *riguer* (2) in the list of terms exclusive to West Pubnico.

5.2 The effect of gender

“Labov’s principles” are three notable trends in gender-based linguistic change. The first, which resonated most clearly with this study of AF, is that “women use the standard more than men” (Dollinger 2015: 185). The second and third principles appear somewhat paradoxical: that “women use more standard forms in changes from above” (187) but that they also “use more of the incoming variant in changes from below,” with “above” and “below” referring to socioeconomic status (188). This apparent contradiction suggests a greater linguistic sensitivity on the part of female speakers, whether that be to standard or innovative forms. Dollinger goes on to explain that “this is only a problem, if it can be shown that the *same women* exhibit these contradictory inclinations” (189).

This study found that, overall, male speakers had far more English borrowings recorded in their speech than female speakers, with a group average of 104 to 70. This finding is skewed even
when considering that there was slightly more material from male speakers. This pattern, with the women taking on more standard features, is also consistent with Labov's principle and replicates earlier findings.  

Another explanation for their lower number of borrowings is that a few of the women sampled have a higher level of education (biographical information provided in their interviews) and as a result spoke a variation of AF closer to the standard with few English loanwords. Annette LeBlanc in particular used very few English borrowings, with only 10 tokens. An explanation might be that she spent three years in school in Quebec and then went on to teach at Wedgeport elementary school. Lillian d’Entremont and Marjorie d’Entremont also use a more standard variety of AF. Agnes Murphy has the second fewest tokens at 18, but it appears to be for entirely different reasons. She shows a considerable amount of unease in speaking French and her responses to the interviewer are simplified as much as possible, or she will occasionally switch into English.

In rural communities such as Wedgeport and West Pubnico, it follows that the women would have higher levels of education in general, especially considering the ages of speakers sampled were all above fifty. Even today, young men will drop out of high school to begin fishing careers, though it is less common than it once was.

Wedgeport female speakers have the fewest English loans with only 62 on average, West Pubnico female speakers come in second with 78, Wedgeport male speakers are third with 81, and the male speakers of West Pubnico had the most with 127 on average. There are always exceptions, but women from both communities tend to have higher levels of education, and as a

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9 The figures are an approximation based on the available information and not yet normalized.
result the men, especially the fishermen, are the ones who tend to use more informal speech, which in turn would include more English borrowings.
6. Conclusion
This project has used source materials that are oral in nature to study AF in its vernacular form. Without using a standard variety as the base point of comparison, the present study focuses on an undervalued portion of the AF lexicon: English loanwords. The range and number of English loanwords in contemporary AF are neglected even by more comprehensive lexicographers. Past lexicographers such as Poirier, Boudreau, and Cormier have steadily brought the AF lexis to public attention, but it seems at the cost of stifling the English-based portion of the AF lexicon. Of the more than fifty English borrowings discussed in this text, only back appears in their lexicographical works. Furthermore, back is only admitted to the DFA’s entries as an exception to the dictionary’s restrictive inclusion policies for English loanwords because of its undeniable prevalence.

If Cormier’s (2018) presentation in West Pubnico on the DFA’s second edition is any measure, AF speakers find much needed validation in these types of lexicographical work. These are the texts that define the variety: “une «variété de langue» est toujours tributaire des travaux qui la décrivent et qui, ce faisant, la constituent” [a “variety of a language” is always dependent on the works that describe it and that, in doing so, comprise it] (Arrighi 2014: 101). Granting English loanwords any kind of acceptance in the AF lexicon may sometimes be an ideologically unpopular position, but their prominence in contemporary AF, shown throughout this project, is undeniable and a matter of sociolinguistic fact, whether language purists approve or not. To those many AF speakers that use English loanwords in their everyday speech, I hope the attention given to them here may also be validating.

The presented cases show convincingly that existing dictionaries fail to consider the range of such loanwords in AF today and that AF lexicography is still not fully descriptive. Cormier’s
dictionary is an invaluable addition to Acadian lexicography, but as I have shown, it tackles the language from a historical and ideological perspective. In this common ideology of AF texts, French and English are firmly separated into two opposite poles, despite the intense contact between the two languages in many Acadian communities. On the other hand, Mi’kmaq loanwords are treated as a complementary part of AF. The historical tensions between French and English-speaking communities of the region, culminating (though by no means ending) with the Acadian Expulsion, no doubt feed this attitude. The source of this ideology is understandable, but it is untenable when considering the reality of so many AF speakers, and so the DFA’s stated goal of painting a contemporary picture of the variety lies in tension with its approach. Matters are further complicated by its attempt to simultaneously represent all regional and social varieties of the Acadian diaspora, an attempt that is bound to fail without greater resources.

The DFA’s coverage of English loanwords falls short with its limited criteria for inclusion; it favours other Acadianisms, particularly of archaic French roots, in line with a more general concern about the assimilation of French in Canada by English. Among educated speakers, their concern that their French does not align with either Standard Canadian French or standard French French appears even more marked. In future work, a focus on present-day AF in informal settings would undoubtedly be revealing. The Labovian method, for instance, could be gainfully employed to harvest lexical items for an AF dictionary of everyday usage. My findings also suggest there is a value in pursuing oral materials in the AF variety due to the self-censoring of written materials. Local museums and research centres are excellent resources for oral materials curated to preserve local history but only go so far to document the present-day variety. These often include interviews of native AF speakers by native AF speakers, which allows for an excellent approximation of natural speech. Archival material is, of course, limited when it comes
to present-day use, but they can be supported by sociolinguistic methods like the questionnaire. Following the model set by the *Dictionary of American Regional English*, outlined in Cassidy’s introduction (2013), combining archival with fieldwork data, a method also used by Pratt (1988), would be the best possible approach to fully consider the oral nature of the dialect.

This orality of the dialect is perhaps AF’s most distinct feature. It is intrinsically tied to the Acadian’s history of displacement, isolation, and lack of formal education in their native language. A further look into the ways English loanwords might have supplemented the variety and been adapted to it might help their acceptance into its lexicographical works. The more we understand the ways in which the variety is adapting itself to modern speech, the better we will be equipped to document and preserve it in all its forms, as so many within the community strive to do.

One of the next steps in the study of AF would be the formation of a lexicographical unit and dictionary project. While this is not the place to elaborate in detail on the constraints of such a project, some benchmarks could entail:

- Limiting materials to those from Acadian regions found within the Canadian Atlantic provinces would likely result in a more homogenous picture and simplify some of the task. Acadians of Louisiana, Quebec, and Saint Pierre and Miquelon are in distinct enough situations to warrant separate attention.
- Collecting interviews from existing archival materials and from fieldwork would help capture the orality of AF.
- Focusing particularly on English loanwords and neologisms would be required, since there appears to be little existing work done on them.

Such methods and focus would undoubtedly grant more insight into the speech of the understudied younger generation as well. Resources that are current and focused on the orality of AF would better appeal to the youngest generation of speakers. Though they are suffering the most from language attrition, there are many who would like to preserve their native tongue but
feel alienated by attitudes toward the vernacular, and particularly toward English loanwords. A
dictionary designed for them and present-day speakers of AF, might entice them to value their
variety of AF. And if Acadians communities wish to preserve their language, efforts must always
begin with the youngest generation.
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