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French Borrowing in Quebec English

1. Background

Quebec English (QE) has been increasingly affected by Quebec French (QF) since the "silent revolution" of the 1960s, when the French-speaking majority in the province began to assert its political will. It is no coincidence that Wallace Lambert did his influential studies of language attitudes while working at McGill University in Montreal (see, for example, Lambert et al. 1960, 1966), studies that reveal that minority language speakers may see majority speakers in a more positive light than they do their minority language-speaking peers. His work, in part an attempt to understand and reduce linguistic tensions, led to the widespread move to French immersion language education in English Canada beginning in primary school. The passage of the Charter of the French Language (Bill 101) in 1977 is at the centre of social, economic, political and linguistic changes that have brought many members of a traditionally isolated monolingual and elite English-speaking community into regular contact with French through the "francization" of public life. ¹ Marc V. Levine documents the shift in his aptly titled The Reconquest of Montreal: Language Policy and Social Change in a Bilingual City (1990).

The evidence of French influence on English in Quebec has been far less studied than the reverse, however, because French Quebec has always seen the vitality of its language as the pulse-point for cultural survival. Thus, it seems unlikely that anglophone (first-language English speaking) Quebeccers will ever be cautioned to "avoid gallicisms" with the persistent anxiety that francophones (first language French speakers) are still adjoined to "éviter les anglicismes" (see Colpron 1998). French is now the only official language in Quebec, and therefore appears secure (despite the continued concern of Quebec nationalists, see Quebec 2001). English, although the minority language in the province, is supported by an array of institutions, including newspapers, hospitals, radio and television stations, theatre companies, publishers, and English postsecondary institutions, including three universities (Bishop's, Concordia and McGill). Also, many municipalities, including Montreal, offer bilingual services (see Trahan 2001). The rate of bilingualism moved above 40% in 2001, and, it seems, will continue to increase: "Within Quebec, the growth in the bilingualism rate from 1996 to 2001 was even greater than in the previous five-year period. In 2001, two out of every five individuals (40.8%) reported that they were bilingual, compared with 37.8% in 1996 and 35.4% in 1991" (Canada, Statistics Canada). Quebec anglophones reported 66% bilingual, with francophones around 37%. However, younger francophones in the province report a rate of over 53%. Allophones (those whose first language is neither English nor French) report a bilingualism rate over 50% – this group is now trilingual, at least (Canada, Statistics Canada). Thus Quebec,


particularly Montreal, despite the legal preference for French, might be described as in a state of stable or "equal bilingualism" (Winford 2003, 27) at least since the failure of the second referendum to revise Quebec's status in Canada in 1995. Most studies focus on Montreal, where 80% of Quebec's anglophones live (Greater Montreal population, 2001 census: 3.4 million; 67.3% mother tongue French; 12.1% English, 18.5% non-official). Quebec City, where only 1.5% of the population is anglophone (Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson 2006, 187) is also included in many studies.

2. Loanwords as Contact Phenomena

The rate of borrowing is limited in cases of "equal" bilingualism, and the reasons behind such borrowing are complex (Winford 2003, 38; Poplack 1989). Further, in Montreal, where the rate of bilingualism is so high, it is difficult to distinguish loanwords that are or will become integrated from nonce borrowing or code-switching (see Poplack, Sankoff and Miller 1988). It's worth noting that even in areas of heavy contact, the amount of borrowing is slight, although it may loom large for those who feel threatened (and perhaps are threatened) with linguistic assimilation. Borrowing "actively symbolises" prevailing power relations, however, it does not cause them (Halliday 1978, 3). In a study of the influence of English on the French of the Ottawa-Hull region, part of the "bilingual belt" along the Quebec-Ontario border, Poplack (1989) found that loanwords (integrated and nonce-borrowings) constituted between 1.9 and 4.7 per cent of the subjects' vocabularies, depending on where they lived, their social class and their bilingual competency (146). Reporting on this study, Poplack, Sankoff and Miller conclude that bilingual proficiency "is not an important influence on overall rate of borrowing," although "high occupational status inhibits borrowing rates". They conclude "that the rate of borrowing (especially of nonce loans) is dependent on the norms of community behaviour, rather than on lexical need" (97, 96). What matters most are "the tendencies present in [the] speech community" (97). In a more recent study, Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson (2006) find the percentage of French loanwords in Quebec English to be less than a quarter of one per cent (207). This might be compared to the findings of a study of Dutch and French in Brussels: "Treffers-Daller (1994) finds that there are ten times as many (tokens of) French borrowings in her Dutch data (2.55%) as there are of Dutch in her French data (0.29%). This can be attributed to the relatively high status of French, reflecting the historical dominance of French-speaking Flemings, as well as the numerical preponderance of French speakers in Brussels itself" (Winford 2003, 39). English is the dominant language in North America and only since 1977 has it moved to minority status in Quebec.

3. Studies of French Contact in Quebec English in Newspapers

Before the appearance of digitized full-text databases most studies followed a similar methodology: scanning newspapers – usually the Montreal Gazette and the Quebec City Chronicle Herald – for suspected contact features and checking the results with major dictionaries, French (of French and Quebec French) and English (usually British, American and Canadian). Manning and Eatock (1982) searched unspecified issues of the Gazette and the Chronicle Herald for 1979 and 1982, and characterized their study as a pilot study in need of a bigger database. Roberts (1983) scanned 12 issues of the Gazette and 5 of the Chronicle Herald for 1979. Both these studies classified their findings by following categories devised for English loanwords in Quebec French by Darbelnet (1976) and Colpron (1st ed. 1982). Fee (1992) scanned 7 issues of the Montreal Gazette for 1989, and 23 issues of Chronicle Herald, 1991, and compared her findings with the same items in the Toronto Globe for 1985 (the first year it was available on CD-ROM). Russell (1996) surveys the literature and outlines the methodology for assembling a corpus at Université de Sherbrooke. Grant-Russell (1998) analyzes two years of the Gazette (digitized for 1994 and 1995) and newspapers from other Quebec towns. Her focus in this paper is on how one can judge the degree of integration of loanwords. She concludes, in this "research project still in progress" that "this analysis of a written corpus of Quebec English has revealed a liberally francized lexicon" (484). Palmer and Harris (1990) discuss contact phenomena in the annual reports and minutes of meetings of the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal in 1970 and 1971 and then in 1981 and 1982 to conclude that French was increasingly influencing OE between 1970 and 1982.

McArthur (1989) is based on a 25-item survey undertaken in 1981 to judge the attitudes of 200 informants towards this and other less frequent borrowings, including those called fausses amis (e.g., "globe", which means "blame") or faux amis (e.g., "librairie", which means "bookstore") or "bookstore" in French (bibliothèque translates the English 'library'). He too used the Gazette as one source of test items. The 25 items included some control items – "universally accepted" in world English – garage, elegant, perspective, collaboration, and devour. Then McArthur included a set of words that he categorized as "locally acceptable expressions": anglophone, dépanneur ("corner store"), confessional (for "contributional"), as in "confessional school", animat (group leader), "chair", collectivity (people as a whole, "community"), subvention ("grant" or "subsidy"), and permanence ("permanent employment or tenure"). Then came a set that he categorized as "locally dubious expressions," formation ("training in a subject or skill"), professor ("teacher at a secondary school"), planification ("planning"), recuperate ("to get back, recover"), resume ("to summarize"), primordial ("essential"), and finally, those he felt were "locally ambiguous expressions": library ("bookstore"), remark ("to notice"), formula ("form"), demand ("to ask"), apprenticeship (from apprentissage, "learning or acquisition of knowledge"), delay ("period of time", "deadline"), and souvenir ("memory"). The respondents, who were mostly language teachers at all levels (146), university students (19) and the rest from a range of other occupations, were asked to categorize the expressions in terms of acceptability and then give their emotional response to their correctness. There were 31 anglophones from Quebec and 63 from outside the province, and 93 francophones from Quebec and 13 from elsewhere. His conclusion is that there is a prima facie case for considering that French does indeed influence English lexical usage in Quebec [...]. Francophones incline to be more tolerant of gallicisms, anglophones brought up in the province less tolerant of gallicisms, but more tolerant than
anglophones not brought up in the province. Additionally, the evidence suggests that even those non-Quebec anglophones, having resided in Quebec, develop altered perceptions of certain English usage in the province and beyond it, and that these altered perceptions incline toward French usage. (75-76)

Nonetheless, Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson (2006) found only 4 loanwords in the spontaneous speech of their informants: metro, for subway, Québécois(e) for Quebecker, cegep (short for Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel) and stage (internship, or work term). However, their focus on recent loanwords from QF to QE caused them to overlook some contact phenomena (to be discussed below).

4. Other Studies of Quebec English

Several other studies of Quebec English argue that even small linguistic differences can be diagnostic of important differences (what might be called "the shibboleth effect"). Note that although the following studies deal with QE or Montreal English they are not focusing directly on contact phenomena. However, contact or the bilingual nature of the communities they are studying sometimes produces the data they elicit, or explains it, or both. Boberg concludes his study of regional variation in lexis in Canada and the United States this way: "In Canada, the strongest lexical boundaries were found to divide the English-speaking community of Montreal from neighboring regions to the east and west" (2005, 53). The common words that distinguish Montreal English from other regional varieties include loanwords (dépanneur or dép for corner store, stage for internship, work term, or apprenticeship, and guichet for bank machine), a cognate with a regionally distinctive sense (chalet for summer cottage), and loan translations (all-dressed pizza for pizza with all the toppings, and one-and-a-half/two-and-a-half apartment for studio or bachelor apartment) (Boberg 2005, 36). These words were volunteered by his subjects. Although he notes that "it might be argued that variables featuring unique Quebec variants were overrepresented in the ... questionnaire," the variants under consideration are "new variables" that "represent such domains as modern technology, school life, and fast food - aspects of daily life for the majority of the population" (23).

Hung, Davison and Chambers (1993), on the basis of a study of (aw)-fronting, argue that the Montreal anglophone community is not part of the Canadian middle-class urban linguistic speech community found in Toronto, Vancouver, and Victoria: "perhaps its anglophone population is not a community in any real sense, but merely a non-francophone fringe" (265). Boberg's study of phonetics in Montreal broadens this insight, finding distinctive features in Jewish and Italian English speakers which he attributes to ethnic residential concentration. These features do not derive from French, but rather from the isolation of these communities from each other and from other Canadian English varieties. He concludes that "the English-language community of Montreal is an exception to the general lack of strong linguistic differentiation among European descended ethnic groups in North American cities" (2004a, 563).

5. Quebec English vs. Franglish

QE is English that uses either French loanwords not found in Canadian English (CanE) or that have been long integrated into English more frequently or with a different range of meaning than CanE. This is not the same as Franglish, which Roberts (1983) defines as "English (including integrated French borrowings) containing or spoken with non-integrated borrowings called gallicisms" (204). Franglish is usually spoken by those learning English, rather than fluent bilinguals. Non-integrated borrowings (also called gallicisms, faux amis or false friends) include such jargons usages as réunion for meeting, decevred (from decevoir) for disappointed, retarded for late, and library for bookstore. However, in a bilingual context, even obvious gallicisms may pass in conversation (the hearer understands what the speaker meant to say and lets it pass), and gradually some less obvious ones may become acceptable. Tom McArthur, a Scot, remarks of his own time in Quebec "I found myself surrendering to the pressure of frequentness, beginning to use expressions that are QE but not WE [World English], simply because I heard them so much or because the influence of French is so pervasive" (2). As his study shows, opinion varied on the acceptability of these terms, but the overall tendency was to "incline towards French usage" (1989, 2). Interestingly, an example of one of McArthur's "locally dubious expressions" seems to have crept into Poplack, Walker, and Malcolmson (2006): "This is of primordial importance for the large-scale studies of linguistic variation currently being carried out on the Quebec English Corpus" (195, my emphasis).3 Thus, it can be argued that the border between QE and Franglish is blurry and evolving, even in academic prose.

6. Recent Loanwords

Of words that are directly lifted from French, the best-known, such as dépanneur (sometimes clipped to dép) and caisse populaire (for credit union, sometimes clipped...
to *caisse pop*), are usually obvious even to those who use them in everyday speech because they are French words often pronounced as in French (although clipping cuts out some non-English sounds in these examples). Once such borrowings have been determined to derive from French by checking a dictionary, an easy way to tell whether they are more common in or limited to Quebec is to check a full-text newspaper database, such as *Canadian Newstand*, which contains the Montreal *Gazette*.4 The loanword *kétaire* (also spelled *quétaire*), which means tacky, kitschy or passé, is found 93 times in the Montreal *Gazette* between 1985 and 2007, whereas searching on the whole database (in this case, of 48 Canadian English newspapers) produces only 10 more hits. *Quétaire* is found 28 times in the *Gazette* and 6 in the *Globe*. It seems safe to say that *kétaire/quétaire* is borrowed from French (note that accent marks are absent in English newspaper text). The degree to which the word is integrated into QE and when it began to be used would require more analysis; there are some repeated news stories, in some it is found in a direct quote, whereas elsewhere it is used in the text, and some of the named journalists use it more than once. Many instances are marked as a loan with quotation marks or by being translated or explained. Cultural journalism is obviously a genre that cries out for more synonyms for *cornball, cringe-worthy, embarrassingly dated,* etc. and so the high number of hits in this genre (it clusters in music, television and movie criticism) would likely drop to zero in a database of academic or even bureaucratic prose. But no one can say it’s not there, out in the language, marking those who use and understand it as from Quebec.

Because French is the sole official language in Quebec, place names and names for institutions have no official translation, and thus one finds references to the provincial police as *Sûreté du Québec* (again sometimes anglicized as SQ, pronounced "ess cue") or to "the régie" meaning government office (see Trahan 2001 for more). Acronyms abound, such as SAQ (pronounced "ess eh cue" or like *sack*), from *Société des alcools du Québec* (the liquor store). Although these words may not be familiar to English speakers in the rest of Canada, they are no more derailing than other regional usages, like the Saskatchewan use of *bunnyhug* for hooded sweatshirt.

### 7. Borrowing vs. Code-Switching

Poplack and Meechan (1998) deals with the problem of distinguishing borrowing from code-switching, and non-borrowing from the use of integrated loanwords. They distinguish L1 and L2, categorize multiword alternations as code-switching, and analyze the difference between nonce one-word borrowings from integrated loanwords statistically: "The methodological innovation was to statistically compare the patterning of these items [possible nonce-borrowings] with analogous identified items in the same corpus" (Sankoff 2002, 651). Sankoff comments:

> The clear progression that exists between individual, nonce-borrowed items, which testify to the productivity of other-language access for the individual bilingual speaker, and the social ratification of borrowing at the community level, can thus be studied independently of the muddy waters of code-switching. (651)

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4 Although comparing items in Quebec English newspapers with items in those outside Quebec is suggestive and often convincing, there is no way to measure or compare numbers of occurrences per thousand words, which would be more conclusive.

8. **French Cognates, Favoured Variants and Semantic Shift**

English borrowing from French has gone on since the Norman conquest, thus explaining the high number of integrated loanwords from French in English; Thomason and Kaufman note that there was "massive lexical borrowing" from French between 1150 and 1400 (328; Brinton and Arnovick 2006, 239-39). The result is a substantial set of cognates: "While the proportion of French-origin items in English basic vocabulary is 7%, the amount of useful and frequently-used French-origin vocabulary is rather large" (329). In their study, Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson (2006) "exclude 'established' loanwords, here defined as French-origin words attested in the Canadian Oxford Dictionary (Barber 2004), prior to the birth of the informant" (207n). Excluding a cognate because it appears in a Canadian English dictionary does not take into account that the meaning of such cognates may differ in QE from Canadian English or World English. Coverage of small regional varieties in standard desk dictionaries is not always comprehensive (see Dollinger and Brinton 2008). Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson 2006 mention *terrace* as an example of a word that would be excluded from further consideration (207n). However, this approach leaves out evidence of contact, that is, integrated loanwords that are more common in QE than in CanE because of pressure from a high frequency French cognate or whose meanings have shifted, or both.

In Montreal, one meaning of *terrace*, in both French (*terrasse*) and English, is "outdoor eating area attached to a restaurant," a place which in Toronto is usually referred to as the *patio*. To test this difference in usage of an established English loanword in Quebec, a search was done on the Toronto *Globe and Mail* (1977-1 Nov 2007) and the Montreal *Gazette* (1985-1 Nov 2007) on the forms "restaurant terrace" and "restaurant patio".

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><em>terrace</em> refers to Quebec</th>
<th><em>patio</em> refers to Canada (but not Quebec)</th>
<th><em>patio</em> refers to Quebec</th>
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<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
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(The Canadian *Newstand*, ProQuest)

The results suggest that in Toronto, *patio* is used in this sense, while in Montreal, *terrace* is used for Quebec and *patio* for outside the province.5 Obviously, if the texts

5 Greater Toronto has around 2% francophones, 2001 census.
6 The French spelling *terrasse* appears 1121 times in the *Gazette*, and only 46 times in the *Globe* and *Mail*.
were in a database where a concordance program could be used, a larger number of examples could be examined to test this suggestive finding. And of course, stories in newspapers travel from place to place, as do writers, so a much larger number of examples (or a careful reading of each example) would be needed to be definitive.

Here, we have some evidence of pressure from French causing an established English loanword to be used more in Montreal English than in Toronto English, but also of semantic sorting in Montreal English between *terrace* and *patio* in this particular sense. *Terrace* cannot really be called a loanword or a borrowing from QF, because it has been long integrated into World English; rather it is an example of what Chambers and Heisler call favoured variants in QE, "well-established Canadian English variants that happen to resemble the standard French forms" (1999, 46). It is also an example of what Dollinger and Brinton (2008) call a type 3 Canadianism, that is, the semantic change of an existing form.

Words and expressions that are of low frequency in Canadian English can be "resurrected" because of the existence of a high-frequency cognate in French, like *fête* for holiday or celebration. This sort of borrowing has been analyzed in Canadian French:

In Canadian French internal borrowings are particularly numerous [...] Often, however, these are not straightforward borrowings from English, but rather instances of archaic French which live on due to the support of English, a phenomenon labeled *anglicismes de maintien* or *anglicisme-maintien* in the literature. Thus the word *brevage* 'drink' which in French has long since acquired the pejorative meaning of 'brew', 'booze', is still used with a neutral meaning in Canadian French, due to the influence of English *beverage*. (Hausmann 1986, 29)

Cognates may undergo a semantic shift in a bilingual context if some but not all senses overlap in the two languages, as with *primordial*, where the French sense is appearing in QE. Another example of this shift is *dossier*, defined as "set of documents, esp. a collection of information about a person, event, or subject" (Barber 2004). In French, *dossier* means personal file, police file, or project (as in a school project) (Ormual-Grenon 2004). In QF, the sense may even be wider (although these extended senses are not recorded in Shyati 1988), as this comment about how to translate *dossier* into English in Trahan (2001) indicates:

Departments review and process files, not dossiers. Council meeting agendas contain x number of files every month. Lawyers handle files or cases. Persons convicted of crimes have criminal records. Politicians often refer to issues simply as files. (100)

*Dossier* is used widely in Ottawa (a bilingual city, it should be added) to mean a minister's portfolio. But some examples in the *Gazette* appear to go farther, extending the sense of dossier to include artist's portfolio, issue or even mandate.

Dure-Dure's official deadline for submissions for 2007 programming is tomorrow, but dossiers [portfolios] sent by the end of next week probably will be considered, artistic director Jean-Pierre Caissie said. (Gazette 30 Mar 2006 D8)

Even though the Bloc's avowed goal is to defend the interests of Quebec and it does not run candidates outside this province, Duceppe said that the party already speaks up on a wide variety of issues. "There is not a dossier [issue] that we haven't raised, even if we were not the official opposition". (Gazette 14 Jan 2006 A1)

The two ministers issued a statement that transportation, life sciences, and aeronautics will be the major dossiers [issues] discussed between the two levels of government. (Gazette 28 Feb 2006 A11)

"I think at the press conference I was clear enough," Bacon said. "We're discussing a matter of jurisdiction and not a matter of the environment. I think my dossier [mandate?] was clear enough, loud and clear." (Gazette 31 Oct 1990 A6)

Some other examples where such semantic shifts have occurred are *population* (sense extended to mean 'the people', as in French: "it's up to us to explain to the population the richness and the importance of a strong English-speaking community") Gazette 3 June 1992 A5) and *security* (extended to include the French meaning 'safety': "When people talk to me about fences, they are there for security reasons. Instead of crossing at intersections, people would cross in the middle of the street and could get hit" Gazette 5 Oct 2007 A2). Sometimes the shift is subtler, amounting to a shift in connotation, formality, etc. Words with negative connotations in English, like *functionary* (civil servant, bureaucrat) are used neutrally, because of the French *fonctionnaire*, which is the usual term. *Ameliorate* is a fairly formal word in English, as a search of its use in the Toronto *Globe and Mail* reveals, but pressure from French appears to explain this very informal usage found in the *Gazette*:

"There's no amelioration with that guy," Senechal complained. "He has no interest in hockey. His most important interest is girls." (Gazette, 8 Jan 1990 C3)

These shifts have been noted for particular items in many of the newspaper studies discussed above, but now their study could be undertaken systematically by working through English-French cognates and checking newspaper databases to determine what is going on semantically in the whole category, provided the appropriate search tools were available.

9. Politically Charged Words

The set of loanwords that has been integrated most thoroughly into QE and beyond into Canadian English is the set of words that deal with Quebec politics, especially language politics (see Coulombe 1995 and Richler 1992 for two different perspectives). Because much of the debate over these issues has been carried out in the national media and by some of the most important public figures in the country, many words related to the debate are quickly disseminated and integrated into the domain of Canadian political discourse. These borrowings are signs of struggles to redefine cultural norms, just as are the new words associated with feminism and anti-racism (Cameron 1995). Examples of words that have already moved into Canadian English from the post-Bill 101 project are *anglophone* (4107 hits in the Toronto *Globe and Mail*), *francophone* (7846) and *allophone* (296), words that mark lines of inclusion and exclusion in Quebec. In Quebec, *nation* in French has always referred to the province, and the provincial legislature has been called the *Assemblée nationale* since 1968. Quebec nationalists don't usually call themselves separatists, which is a Canadian nationalist or federalist term: Quebec nationalists see themselves as already a whole, not as having to separate from another whole and so use other terms, such as *Quebec nationalist, independentist, or sovereignist*. Particular words become sites
of contention and word choices that might appear neutral in one location are loaded in others. Cognates and loanwords increase or decline in frequency depending on such sociopolitical influences.

*Canadiens* once used to refer to French Quebecers and survives in the name of the NHL hockey team, the Montreal *Canadiens* (in French, *les Canadiens de Montréal*). Their main nickname in English is 'the Habs,' a clipping of a French name for the team, *les Habitants*, which means, in QF, farmers). This word has, as Pierre Coulombe (1995) explains, been replaced by others:

> Why did the appellation *Canadiens* give way to *French Canadians* if not because Confederation failed to respect their identity? Why did the French Canadians of Quebec then begin to identify themselves as Québécois, if not because they saw Quebec as the only place where they could be themselves? Why do the Québécois of French origins today increasingly designate themselves as Franco- or French-Québécois if not because the budding Quebec citizenship does not succeed in recognizing their identity? (135)

Here is a slightly less sympathetic comment on the same struggle over meaning:

To deflect any charge of racism, separatists have had to insist that the Québécois included everyone in Quebec, when it is obvious that it is made up of Quebec "French Canadians" – the so-called pure laine descendants of the early settlers from France" (Gazette 8 Dec 1993 B1).

The first version of the Parti québécois language bill mandated "increasing numbers of Québécois at all the levels of business," with the understanding that Québécois referred to those of French-Canadian ethnic origin. It soon became apparent, however, that there were difficult and socially explosive implementation problems with such a policy. How would a "Québécois" be defined? Was it simply someone who could speak French? Someone born in Quebec who spoke French? An ethnic French Canadian? (Levine 1990, 167)

Because the label *Québécois* was seen as ambiguous, two expressions borrowed from French were used to make the sense perfectly clear, *pure laine* (pure wool, dyed in the wool) and *de vieille souche* (with old – deep – roots). Both refer to the descendants of those French speakers who arrived before the British Conquest of Quebec in 1759. Interestingly, these expressions are used neutrally or positively even in the Montreal Gazette: "Parent is pure laine, vieille souche, and has shown herself time and again to be the kind of godmother the Quebec women's movement needs" (Gazette 7 May 1990 C1). But others claim ownership as well: "We're making history," said the thoroughly bilingual Jones, who calls herself "une Afro-Québécoise de souche" (Gazette 21 Oct 1993 D11).

10. Methodological Questions

Despite the relatively small number of studies, there is no clear consensus on the state of Quebec English or how to study it. Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson (2006) claim that theirs is "the first empirical measure of the true impact of the French lexicon on Quebec English" (186). They say "the received wisdom is that English, *qua* minority language, has undergone contact-induced language change," but continue "there has been surprisingly little scientific evidence to support these claims" (186): "Much of the available literature is preoccupied with gallicisms [...] assumed to be unique to Quebec. These lists tend to be based on newspaper searches to the neglect of the spoken language where linguistic change originates and spreads" (186). Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson argue that this "research tradition" investigating French loanwords in QF "implies that lexical manifestations of contact function as agents of structural change, an idea with no basis in scientific fact" (186). The conclusion of this paper (there are more to come from this project) is that despite supposed alarm that French might be eroding English, the borrowed forms they find are extremely rare and used "with full speaker awareness": "This is hardly the kind of bilingual language use that can be expected to lead to contact-induced change" (210). They do report that of the informants who raised the issue (almost half of them), "the overwhelming majority (79.83% depending on speaker cohort) believe that French is influencing English" and that those who elaborated "cited the lexicon as the area most affected" (Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson 2006, 206). Of course, the differences between what people do, say, feel and believe about language use are widely known, so these opinions do not invalidate the study's conclusions. The contact phenomena in their sample of 185 anglophones born and educated in Montreal and Quebec City are few and are, they argue, unlikely to lead to grammatical change, but "if contact-induced change is occurring in Quebec English, the research design described here will allow us to detect it" (211).

Although Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson (2006) does not included a detailed account of the interview technique, "all fieldworkers were native speakers of Canadian English and most were members of the respective communities in which they collected data" (192), to reduce the Observer's Paradox (Labov 1972, 68-69). Part of the problem is definitional. Is QUE only the English spoken by anglophones in spontaneous conversation with other anglophones, all born and educated in either Montreal or Quebec City? Chambers and Heisler (1999) "aim for demographic cross-section of the survey area rather than a population of indigenes as in traditional dialect surveys. Our reasoning is straightforward: some proportion of urban speech communities is made up of people who were born outside the community and have some status in it" (41). Further, much QUE is produced in interactions between anglophones, francophones and allophones, usually outside the home. Patricia Lamarr et al. note that "informal settings [...] and spaces less easily identified with a language 'community' are more likely to be characterized by bilingual and multilingual practices" (abstract). Could the interview design have suppressed evidence of contact, given that speakers might converge towards usage of someone they knew to be a francophone bilingual? (On problems with the sociolinguistic interview in similar contexts, see Macaulay 2002, 287-88 and Fought 2002, 454-55). Nonetheless, this

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7 Ironically, Chambers and Heisler (1999) state that "the discoveries of regional dialect patterns that might be influenced by language dominance in a bilingual setting constitute the first empirical – that is, non-anecdotal – evidence for the influence of Canadian French on a variety of English" (46).

8 In the interest of full disclosure, Fee (1992) is among these studies, which have all been discussed above.
study usefully counterbalances the findings of those researchers actively (and perhaps over-enthusiastically) looking for contact phenomena, and the Quebec English Corpus clearly provides a useful resource for the study of language contact.

Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson (2006) appear to define “contact-induced language change” as something other than lexical borrowing, since the studies they categorize as unscientific have certainly proved that such borrowing is a feature of Quebec English. However, their definition is not in line with Donald Winford’s Introduction to Contact Linguistics (2003), which states “we will use terms like ‘contact-induced changes’ and ‘cross-linguistic influence’ as general labels to cover all kinds of influence by one language on another” (my emphasis, 12). And indeed both he and Thomason and Kaufman in Language Contact, Creolization and Genetic Linguistics (1988) provide scales of borrowing that begin with simple lexical borrowing of the kind most obvious in QE (see Winford 2003, 45; Thomason and Kaufman 1988, 74-76). Winford notes that “[s]ometimes […] significant lexical borrowing may have effects on the lexical semantics as well as other aspects of a language’s structure. Situations involving structural borrowing, that is, borrowing of features in phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics, are somewhat rarer […]” (12). By defining “contact-induced language change” narrowly, limiting the study of contact to speech (indeed, apparently to spontaneous speech with another anglophone), and defining all other studies as unscientific and non-empirical, Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson have cleared the ground for their methodology and object of study (i.e. grammatical change in spoken English rather than lexical borrowing in written English).

Linguistics has properly and productively demarcated the part of language it can explain scientifically, but this leaves out a great deal of what most people call language (see Harris 1993). Unfortunately, then, a huge no-scholar’s-land opens up between the methods and focus of linguists and that of lexicographers, comparative literature scholars (see Dominik 2004, Ladouceur 2005) and translators (see Simon 1995, 2006), among others. Few of these researchers categorize their work as scientific, although their expertise at the borders of two languages is considerable. And their analysis of written English can be useful, empirical, and even scientific – if this last word is taken to mean that analysis is backed up with evidence that can be checked and with findings that can be replicated. Certainly studies of lexical borrowing and semantic shift ideally require tagged corpora with a sufficient range of genres and a sufficient number of words, representing a range of Canadian English, spoken and written, something that does not yet exist for CanE although the Strathy Language Unit at Queen’s University has made some progress towards this goal (see Fee and McAlpine 2007, 639-53) as has the corpus at the Université de Sherbrooke described in Russell (1996).

11. Written English in the Study of Borrowing

Writing has long been used as a resource by linguists (Schneider 2002; Bauer 2002). Indeed, Thomason and Kaufman argue that many of the early loanwords from French to English came via written French (1988, 329). If this is so, then the "spoken language" cannot be the only place "where linguistic change originates and spreads" (Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson 2006, 186), unless, of course, "linguistic change" is defined very narrowly. Although large-text databases may cause problems of "writer identification" (such important information as age, gender, first language, other languages, education, profession, etc. is likely to be unavailable), Russell makes the case that "evidence of interference in … edited published texts is […] more significant" (1996, 433) than that occurring in informal speech or writing, as does Roberts: "Gallicisms abounding in written texts, which are generally revised, are a clearer indication of the francization of a language than oral speech, in which Gallicisms could be passed off as a temporary aberration due to lack of concentration" (Roberts 1983, 203). Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson (2006), however, argue that not only those items used "unreflectingly" in speech rather than "rhetorically" that is "with full speaker awareness, for specific discourse functions" (209) can be categorized as true loanwords. Here, obviously, we are in a struggle over how to distinguish integrated loanwords from nonce-borrowings, spontaneous from reflective speech, and speech from writing, and we are in an ongoing philosophical debate that reaches beyond the scope of this paper (see Harris 1993, Robinson 2003, and Eckert, Bucholtz and Coulpaud 2003).

Newspapers are obviously an easy way to probe language from year to year, particularly now that they are online (see Dollinger 2006). However, they do not produce a clear picture of QE, given that much QE is produced in specialized contexts that rarely would be recorded in the newspaper. As Grant-Russell notes, "[a]n analysis of borrowings based on a journalistic corpus alone would produce a skewed picture of the Quebec lexical landscape" (1998, 483). Further, the Montreal Gazette appears to report the direct speech of francophones in English accurately, without "anglicizing" it, which possibly explains why there were 89 examples of the word planification (planning) in a recent search (as opposed to two in the Toronto Globe and Mail, both French quotations). In other words, some of the "written" evidence is actually "spoken". Often the story itself provides information about the speaker and detail about the context, and usually can confirm whether or not the speaker was speaking English when the quoted word under consideration was used. However, one would need to investigate the policies of the Gazette around translations from French in direct quotations before placing too much weight on findings based on numbers alone.

General-purpose newspaper databases, as I hope has been demonstrated above, are extremely useful in the study of lexical borrowing and semantic shift. Because they are widely available, research findings can be checked, and as Laurie Bauer says, "[r]eplicability of this type is a sign of good science" (2002, 102). These databases provide an easily accessed source of diachronic evidence that can corroborate findings in speech studies or suggest new directions for research. Although computer databases and corpora have lifted lexicography to a new level, many of the features of QE discussed above are still not handled well by dictionaries, primarily because the words and senses involved belong to a tiny and evolving regional subset of the lexicon of CanE and World English. Marie-Ève de Villiers (2005) has begun work on the QE side in her comparison of two newspapers, Le Devoir (Montreal) and Le Monde (Paris) for 1997, work that makes it clear the study of borrowing in QE and QE should be an integrated study. Many research tools made possible by digitization are still not available on the web, such as corpora or word frequency lists of various varieties of English and French. As Bauer (2002) suggests, public, or better still, standardized open access corpora, would allow researchers to produce better information on contact phenomena and other important questions about language.
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