

## Language planning and education of adult immigrants in Canada: Contrasting the provinces of Quebec and British Columbia, and the cities of Montreal and Vancouver

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Combining policy analysis with language policy and planning analysis, our article comparatively assesses two models of adult immigrants' language education in two very different provinces of the same federal country. In order to do so, we focus specifically on two questions: 'Why do governments provide language education to adults?' and 'How is it provided in the concrete setting of two of the biggest cities in Canada?' Beyond describing the two models of adult immigrants' language education in Quebec, British Columbia, and their respective largest cities, our article ponders whether and in what sense demography, language history, and the common federal framework can explain the similarities and differences between the two. These contextual elements can explain why cities continue to have so few responsibilities regarding the settlement, integration, and language education of newcomers. Only such understanding will eventually allow for proper reforms in terms of cities' responsibilities regarding immigration.

**Keywords:** multilingual cities; multiculturalism; adult education; immigration; language laws

### Introduction

Canada is a very large country with much variation between provinces and cities in many dimensions. One such aspect, which remains a current hot topic for demographic and historical reasons, is language; more specifically, why and how language planning and policy are enacted throughout the country. Whereas the province of Quebec and its most important city – Montreal – has French as the only official language, the federal government has both English and French, and most provinces and cities have English as their only official language. Furthermore, 21.3 per cent of Canadians, 78.1 per cent of *Québécois*, and 1.3 per cent of British Columbians have French as their mother tongue (Statistics Canada, 2011a).

Linguistic diversity across Canada is further increased as a result of continuing high rates of immigration. Indeed, during the past decade, Canada has maintained one of the highest per capita immigration rates in the world (CIC, 2012). Close to 250,000 immigrants arrive each year, settling mostly in the provinces of Ontario (42 per cent in 2012), Quebec (19 per cent in 2012), and British Columbia (16 per cent in 2012) (*ibid.*); and in the cities of Toronto (32 per cent in 2010), Montreal (17 per cent in 2010), and Vancouver (14 per cent in 2010) (FCM, 2011). As of 2011, more than one in five Canadians (20.6 per cent) were foreign-born, a proportion well above other G8 countries like Germany and the United States (both around 13 per cent in 2010) (Statistics Canada, 2011b).

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Such high rates of immigration imply that important efforts and resources need to be invested in the settlement and integration of newcomers, including in providing education in the local language. Indeed, many studies emphasize how local language proficiency is a crucial part of integration in the various spheres of life (e.g. see Adamuti-Trache, 2012), including in relation to transportation and housing (Kilbride *et al.*, 2011), to the job market (Derwing and Waugh, 2012; Chiswick, 2008), and to healthcare (Ng *et al.*, 2011; Battaglini *et al.*, 2007; Gagnon and Saillant, 2000; Olazabal *et al.*, 2010; Soulières and Ouellette, 2012).

While Canadian provinces operate within one single relatively influential federal structure, their demography and linguistic history vary in such a way that one would confidently expect important variation in provinces' language policies and in *why* and *how* language education is provided to adult immigrants. Moreover, the Canadian constitution allocates education as a provincial jurisdiction and immigration as a shared jurisdiction between the federal and provincial governments.

Taking into consideration the contextual elements at play, our article describes and tries to understand the similarities and differences as to why and how language education is provided to immigrants in two very different provinces and their biggest cities – the province of Quebec and the city of Montreal, and the province of British Columbia and the city of Vancouver.

### **Comparing adult immigrants' language education: Framework, approach, and context**

In this first section, we present the analytical framework, our approach to the research questions, and the main contextual elements at play to understand variations in language policy and planning in Canada.

#### ***The analytical framework***

Adult immigrants' language education sits at the crossroads of various policy domains: citizenship and immigration, education, economic policy, and employability. As Gazzola and Grin put it, 'just like public policies are a response to "public problems", language policies can be viewed as a response to "language problems"' (2010: 5). As one component of a broader language policy, adult immigrants' language education can be assessed as any other public policy; that is, in relation to the different phases of the policy process: policy formulation, implementation, compliance, reaction, evaluation, modification (Morris, 2010: 379–83). Similarly, researchers in the field of language policy and planning ask: 'What *actors* attempt to influence what *behaviour* of which *people* for what *ends* under what *conditions* by what *means* through what *decision-making process* with what *effects*?' (Cooper, 1989: 8). Among the main and central goals of using comparative approaches is that of 'assessing rival explanations' on a given public policy (Collier, 1993: 105).

#### ***The approach***

In order to assess the two models of adult immigrants' language education, our article focuses specifically on two questions: 'Why do governments provide language education to adults?' and 'How is it provided in the concrete setting of two of the largest cities in Canada?'

*Why?*

A report by the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership defines settlement and integration as a continuum that involves: meeting the needs of the immigrants (i.e. housing, education, nutrition, and healthcare); full and gratifying participation in the labour market and/or local economy; civic and community participation; and a sense of belonging in the community (Murphy, 2010: 11). Similarly, Omidvar and Richmond (2003) define social integration as the ‘realization of full and equal participation in the economic, social, cultural and political dimensions of life in [the immigrants’] new country’ (Derwing and Waugh, 2012: 3). In evaluating research on why language education is provided to immigrants, we primarily note that proficiency in the local language is one very important aspect of settlement and integration. Indeed, the ‘lack of knowledge of one of Canada’s official languages was still the most serious problem faced by refugees and other economic immigrants 4 years after landing’ (Xue, 2007, as quoted by Derwing and Waugh, 2012: 7). Moreover, ‘a critical ingredient of newcomers’ active participation in the host society are their language skills’ (Adamuti-Trache, 2012: 103). In short, three main streams of reasons as to why language education is provided to adult immigrants are found in the literature – that is, reasons relating to: (1) citizenship and nationalism; (2) jobs, industry, and economic benefits of immigration; and (3) social welfare and integration (Cleghorn, 2000).

First, local language competency is often a marker of national identity and/or belonging (Clarkson, 2014), and thus proficiency in the local language is conceived as a prerequisite in order to ‘understand the norms of the host society [and to] likely grow a sense of attachment to [the host society]’ (Adamuti-Trache, 2012: 109). As Simpson and Whiteside put it, ‘the one nation, one language ideology is interlaced with other beliefs about national identity, for example the ideal that the nation state should be as homogeneous as possible, and that a dimension of that homogeneity is monolingualism’ (2015: 2). Following this ideology, proficiency in the local language alone would allow full belonging and participation in the community. Further, immigration – and thus local language education – is related to citizenship and nationalism in the context of declining fertility and current population ageing. A body of literature – often written by francophones from Quebec, Ontario, and New Brunswick – stresses the importance of francophone immigration and of linguistic and social integration of immigrants into francophone communities in stopping the steady demographic decline of these communities in Canada (e.g. see Belkhdja, 2008; Burstein *et al.*, 2014; Ferron, 2008; Fourot, 2016; Fraser and Boileau, 2014; Marmen *et Corbeil*, 1999; Vatz Laaroussi, 2008). In order to achieve this objective, however, not only do immigrants have to choose French as their preferred official language – and eventually for their linguistic transfer – but they have to stay in Quebec or in other francophone communities. Learning the local language would thus be a first step for immigrants to contribute in this grand collective objective. For other authors, ‘a desire to learn Canada’s two official languages may be grounded in immigrants’ pursuit of a stronger sense of belonging’ (Burton and Phipps, 2010, as quoted by Mady and Turnbull, 2012: 132), or of greater economic wellbeing (Picot and Sweetman, 2005, *ibid.*).

Second, adult immigrants’ language education is often justified as crucial in achieving immigrants’ full economic potential. Integration on the job market has often been singled out as the most important aspect of immigrants’ integration into their new society. Studies show that immigrants’ greater local linguistic skills are associated with fewer difficulties finding a job and higher earnings and productivity (Chiswick, 2008). Another report states that, in 2003 in Canada, the employment rates for individuals with poor and weak literacy in the local language were 57 per cent and 70 per cent, respectively, ‘compared to 76% for the desired level of literacy’ (TD Bank Financial Group, 2009: 11). Finally, economists argue that greater local linguistic skills are

associated with increased productivity of other investment in human capital, including education and training (Chiswick, 2008).

The third main set of reasons for providing language education to adult immigrants is as a prerequisite for greater social welfare and integration in the community. One element often emphasized in the literature is how a lack of knowledge or proficiency in the local language is connected to smaller and less diversified personal networks (Rose, 2006; Thomas, 2011). These networks convey poorer information, leading to disadvantages in a variety of spheres. Damaris Rose (2006) argues, for example, that immigrants with smaller and more undiversified networks have greater difficulties finding suitable housing. Proficiency in the local language also has positive benefits with regard to education. Parents' linguistic skills have been associated with a similar level of success at school in their children (Gouvernement du Québec, 2014; TCRI, 2011). Further, a higher level of language proficiency is associated with greater engagement in post-secondary education upon arrival (Adamuti-Trache, 2012: 109), which in turn provides greater jobs and social integration opportunities (Derwing and Waugh, 2012: 7). Low levels of local language skills also have negative impacts on self-reported health (Ng *et al.*, 2011: 19) and on immigrants' access to the healthcare system (Battaglini *et al.*, 2007; Gagnon and Saillant, 2000; Olazabal *et al.*, 2010; Soulières and Ouellette, 2012). Low language proficiency is also identified as a risk factor of family violence among immigrant women (Ahmad *et al.*, 2004; Rinfret-Raynor *et al.*, 2013: 6). Finally, studies show that immigrants' greater local linguistic skills are associated with greater political involvement (Chiswick, 2008).

### *How?*

Differences and similarities in the reasons why language education is provided to adult immigrants do not necessarily translate into corresponding differences and similarities in the way this education is provided on the ground. Indeed, while these reasons may differ (and can be explained partly by the differences in demography and language history), it is possible that many components remain the same at the level of service provision (and can be explained in large part by a common history of settlement services and federal framework). Thus, what level of government – among the federal, provincial, and local levels – is responsible for providing local language education to adult immigrants? What actors are consulted in elaborating and making decisions over service provision? What language is taught? Finally, what actors are providing language education to adult immigrants?

In sum, beyond exploring to what extent reasons and motivations to provide language education to adult immigrants vary between provinces, we explore whether these variations are accompanied by corresponding variations in how this education is provided.

### **The context**

In addition to describing the models of adult immigrants' language education in Quebec, British Columbia, and their biggest cities, our article ponders whether and in what sense demography, language history, and the common federal framework can explain the similarities and differences between the two provinces.

#### *Demography and language history*

As mentioned in the introduction, demography and language history vary greatly from one part of the country to another, potentially impacting on language policy and planning, and on the

language education provided to adult immigrants. Table 1 outlines the linguistic composition in Canada, Quebec (and its largest city, Montreal), and British Columbia (and its largest city, Vancouver) in terms of mother tongues in 2011.

**Table 1:** Mother tongue by provinces and census metropolitan area (CMA)

		Mother tongues			
		English	French	Other	Multiple
Quebec	Total	7.7%	78.1%	12.3%	1.9%
	Montreal (CMA)	11.6%	63.3%	22.0%	3.1%
British Columbia	Total	70.3%	1.3%	26.5%	1.9%
	Vancouver (CMA)	56.0%	1.1%	40.3%	2.7%
Canada	Total	56.9%	21.3%	19.8%	2.0%

Statistics Canada (2011d)

Table 2 shows that it is not only the proportion of people having French and a non-official language as their mother tongue that varies across Canada and between cities, but also the non-official languages spoken themselves.

**Table 2:** Most spoken mother tongues in Montreal and Vancouver

CMA	Montreal	Vancouver
English	2 (11.6%)	1 (56.0%)
French	1 (63.3%)	11 (1.1%)
Spanish	4 (2.9%)	9 (1.4%)
Italian	5 (2.9%)	
Chinese (not otherwise specified)	7 (1.0%)	4 (4.9%)
Cantonese		3 (5.6%)
Mandarin		5 (3.9%)
Punjabi		2 (6.1%)
Tagalog		6 (2.1%)
Arabic	3 (3.4%)	
Creoles	6 (1.3%)	

Statistics Canada (2011d)

Indeed, while Chinese languages and Punjabi are by far the most frequent in Vancouver, they rank much lower in Montreal. Conversely, Arabic, Spanish, and Italian are the most spoken non-official languages in Montreal.

Behind these numbers come important variations in terms of the linguistic history of Canada. First, the original settlers and colonizers of Canada came very largely from two European countries speaking different languages: French and English. Although aboriginal people and languages are not discussed in our article, it is useful to be reminded that Canada was established by European settlers on a land inhabited, prior to colonization, by indigenous people. One impact of European colonization of the Canadian territory – beyond the dramatic decrease of the aboriginal population itself – has been the near disappearance of most indigenous languages. In 2011, only 63,000 persons declared an indigenous language as their mother tongue in Canada, and only 17.2 per cent of indigenous persons reported being able to converse in an indigenous

language. Further, the proportion of indigenous persons able to do so decreased by 2 per cent between 2006 and 2011, while their population grew by a whole 20.1 per cent in the same period (Statistics Canada, 2011c).

The British conquest of French North America in 1760 was followed by multiple attempts at assimilating French-speaking residents. Whereas the pursuit of the linguistic and cultural assimilation of the French Canadians lessened once Canada was created in 1867, the demographic weight of French as a mother tongue among the Canadian population has been steadily declining. For example, a 1912 regulation banned elementary school teachers from speaking French, for which Ontario's premier Kathleen Wynne issued a formal apology to francophones through the provincial legislature in February 2016: 'Regulation 17 showed a disregard for Franco-Ontarian identity and equality, and on behalf of the government of Ontario I offer an apology' (*The Canadian Press*, 2016).

French speakers represented 29 per cent of the population in 1951 and 21.7 per cent in 2011. For the city of Montreal alone (not the metropolitan area), the majority of residents with French as a mother tongue has been declining as well, from 68 per cent in 1951 to 52.4 per cent in 2011 (Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1953; Ville de Montréal, n.d.) with the proportion being 63.5 per cent for the entire metropolitan area (Statistics Canada, 2016). The demographic weight of Quebec among all Canadian provinces has also been declining, from 27.9 per cent in 1971, to 23 per cent in 2015 (ISQ, 2015: 23). As a consequence, Quebec seats in the federal parliament decreased from 26.6 per cent in 1976 to 23.3 per cent in 2015 (Elections Canada 2010; Elections Canada, 2012).

In addition to a history of conquest and a steady demographic decline of both francophones across the country and of Quebec's weight among the provinces, the history of socioeconomic inequalities experienced by francophones – even in Quebec – must be mentioned. Indeed, until the 1960s, despite a majority of francophones in the province of Quebec, the language of commerce and of work was mainly English. Indeed, francophones were less instructed, under-represented among higher professional levels, and gained smaller revenues (Dickinson and Young, 2008; PCO, 1970).

Finally, as a francophone province within not only a majority English-speaking country, but an even larger majority English-speaking North American continent, Quebec struggles to convey to its newcomers the importance of preserving French as the common language. Until the 1970s, 90 per cent of newcomers to Quebec chose 'to integrate into the minority English speaking community' (Bouffard, 2015: 50). The appeal of English remains understandable today, in a country and 'in a continent where the overwhelming majority speaks not only a different language but *the* language of globalization' (ibid.: 49).

In sum, the history of conquest and of socioeconomic inequalities, the harsh reality of linguistic demographic decline, and the historical tendency of immigrants to integrate into the anglophone community have had very deep impacts in Quebec. In that province, the fear of English and – to a certain extent – of other languages has been quite strong, particularly regarding its most populated city and main receiver of immigration: Montreal.

The British Columbian linguistic history is very different. The French minority has always been very small in number. It accounted for 1 per cent of the population in 1951 and still does today. The French–English struggle has thus been much quieter – if not absent. Whereas the percentage of British Columbians with English as their mother tongue has declined substantially, most notably in Vancouver (from 86 per cent in 1951 to 56 per cent in 2011), the English language has never been fundamentally threatened. Compared to French in Quebec, English remains incontestably the first official language learned by immigrants in British Columbia. In terms of demographic weight among Canadian provinces, British Columbia's grew from 10.2 per

cent in 1971, to 13.1 per cent in 2015 (ISQ, 2015: 23). As a consequence, British Columbia's seats in the federal parliament increased from 7 per cent in 1976 to 12.5 per cent in 2015 (Elections Canada, 2010; Elections Canada, 2012).

In sum, we observe extremely different demographic and language histories in Quebec and British Columbia. These major differences can clearly be expected to have impacts on each province's language policy and planning.

### *The federal framework and immigration*

In Canada, being a federation of provinces, jurisdictions are allocated to one level or shared between two. Immigration is shared, whereas education and municipal affairs come under provincial jurisdiction.

Major transformations have taken place with regard to immigration in Canada in the last decades. First, the immigrant selection process was altered following the adoption of the Bill of Rights 1960, which made inevitable 'the removal of immigration regulations restricting access of non-Europeans' (Cardozo and Pendakur, 2008: 23). References to race or regions of origin were thus replaced in the selection criteria with skills and qualifications and, in certain cases, languages spoken (*ibid.*). Second, the idea of multiculturalism emerged in the 1960s and was formalized in the Canadian Multiculturalism Act adopted in 1971. All Canadian provinces have since embraced immigration as a source of human and demographic, as well as financial, capital (Paquet, 2016). Further, 'the federal government and several of its provincial counterparts have placed a priority on immigration matters in recent years, linking it to a multitude of other prominent policy areas' (Tolley *et al.*, 2011: 3, as quoted by Gunn, 2012: 3). In other words, questions relating to immigration were introduced in many policy domains outside that of citizenship and immigration *per se*, including education, work, and economy. Most importantly, whereas provincial governments had been quite shy to undertake responsibilities regarding the shared jurisdiction of immigration, they have become more interested in the field since the 1970s (Gunn, 2012: 3) and increasingly active since the 1990s. Indeed, led by the intervention of the province of Quebec, all Canadian provinces have since, with the federal government, signed bilateral agreements regarding immigration, adopted immigration policies, taken part in the selection of immigrants, and contributed to the establishment of various organizations promoting greater integration among newcomers (Paquet, 2016).

Provinces have further developed various programmes for the settlement and integration of immigrants. As discussed below, adult immigrants' language education is one important aspect of these models. Despite all this, the federal agency overseeing settlement and integration in the country is Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). Although Quebec, Manitoba, and British Columbia 'are responsible for the design, delivery, and administration of settlement services', this responsibility is transferred with the 'objective of achieving comparable newcomers' settlement outcomes' (CIC, n.d.(a)). The bilateral accords have attributed Quebec a special right for the integration of newcomers in the province. Financial compensations are provided for Quebec to provide integration and settlement services 'as long as they correspond to those offered by Canada in the rest of the country and as long as all permanent residents of the province, whether they were selected by Quebec or not, can have access to them' (House of Commons of Canada, 2010: 1).



*Municipal affairs*

In Canada, the 1867 Constitutional Act assigned to the provincial governments exclusive jurisdiction over municipalities. Thus, municipalities are not constitutionally recognized and do not – at least formally – constitute an order of government of their own in Canada (Young, 2009: 106). One impact of this provincially exclusive jurisdiction is that provincial-municipal systems vary considerably across the country. While Canadian municipalities have no formal responsibilities, except in Ontario, regarding education, healthcare, and social services – all provincial jurisdictions – they are often key actors in implementing federal and provincial policies and programmes (ibid.: 115). Immigration is clearly one of the policy domains in which local governments and municipalities have been increasingly active. Indeed, most immigrants to Canada choose to settle in big cities. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities stressed that in 2010, two-thirds of immigrants settled in Canada's three most important metropolitan areas: Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. In 2011, 17 per cent of immigrants to Canada (FCM, 2011) and 76 per cent of immigrants to Quebec chose to settle in Montreal (Emploi Nexus, 2016), making up 34.4 per cent of the residents of the city of Montreal. In the same year, 14 per cent of immigrants to Canada chose to settle in Vancouver (FCM, 2011).

In practice, it means that '*day-to-day* issues of multiculturalism are *renegotiated* and *settled* in only a few cities' (Good, 2008: 1). Thus, Canada's biggest cities are active in the field of immigration because they are 'the first point of contact between newcomers and government due to the day-to-day dependence of immigrants on various local public services' (Gunn, 2012: 1). According to Good (2008), some municipalities have been very responsive to increasing numbers of newcomers in their territories – for example, through contributing 'to community capacity building by funding community organizations that serve immigrants and ethno-cultural minorities'; through establishing 'separate units in their civil service to facilitate access and equity in governance and service delivery as well as to manage diversity'; and through establishing 'governance relationships that support their efforts in equity policy', including with the business community (ibid.: 7).

Despite the fact that municipal 'front-line service providers are key players in the successful settlement, attraction, and retention of immigrants, municipalities have been left on the sidelines of immigrant policy and funding decisions' (Gunn, 2012: 4–5), with senior levels of governments dealing more frequently with 'special-purpose non-profit societies' (Kataoka and Magnusson, 2007: 20).

Finally, although municipalities are formally a jurisdiction of the provinces, there is a general trend towards more direct relationships between municipalities and the federal government (Andrew, 2014; Stoney and Graham, 2009). Multiple reasons explain this trend, including the importance of contemporary urban challenges, and the explosion of municipal costs as a partial consequence of decentralization and of relatively low recent investments in infrastructure (Lalonde, 2016). Reviewing the literature on the topic of municipal-federal relationships, Lalonde notes that most federal funding transits in provincial hands before landing in municipalities. Furthermore, municipalities' roles and relationship with federal agencies largely depend on the relationship between their respective provincial government and the federal government (ibid.).

In sum, while the Canadian federal framework can be a unifying factor, it leaves room for considerable variation – for example, in the fields of immigration and municipal affairs – and even for provincial emulation. These possibilities have impacts on language policy and planning – and, most importantly for us, in terms of why and how language education is provided to adult immigrants.



### **The analytical framework: A summary**

Following policy analysis frameworks and, specifically, language policy and planning, our enquiry into language education for adult immigrants compares why and how it is provided in Quebec and British Columbia, two very different provinces of Canada, and in their biggest cities. Our ultimate goal is to ponder the impacts of demography, language history, and the federal framework on these policies. Table 3 summarizes the elements addressed here.

**Table 3:** Analytical framework and approach

<b>Describing and comparing</b>	<b>Pondering the impacts of vectors of differences and similarities</b>
<p><b>Why?</b> What are the main reasons for providing language education to adult immigrants?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizenship and nationalism reasons</li> <li>• Jobs, industry, and economic benefits reasons</li> <li>• Social welfare and integration reasons</li> </ul>	<p><b>Demography and language history</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language's minority or majority status in the country and continent</li> <li>• Language's power of attraction as first official language learned</li> <li>• Language's growth or decline in Canada</li> <li>• Province's growth or decline in Canada</li> <li>• Other historical elements (history of conquest and of socio-economic domination)</li> </ul>
<p><b>How?</b> What are the main internal features of adult immigrants' language education?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language taught</li> <li>• Responsible level of government</li> <li>• Language education service providers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Federalism as vector of differences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In relation to immigration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increased provincial intervention</li> <li>○ Bilateral accords between provinces and the federal government</li> <li>○ Provincial choice of criteria for the selection of immigrants (level and type of skills, languages spoken, etc.)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• In relation to municipal affairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Municipalities as creatures of the provinces</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Federalism as vector of similarities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In relation to immigration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bill of rights</li> <li>○ Multiculturalism Act</li> <li>○ CIC interventions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• In relation to municipal affairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Municipal-federal relationship</li> <li>○ Municipalities conceived as a level of government</li> <li>○ Municipalities' exclusion of policy design</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### **Language education for adult immigrants in Quebec, British Columbia, and their respective largest cities**

With the above framework and approach in mind, we now turn to describing and comparing why and how language education is provided to immigrants in Quebec, British Columbia, Montreal, and Vancouver.

### **Language laws and official languages**

In order to protect French outside of Quebec, and English within Quebec, the founding law of Canada, the 1867 Constitutional Act, already contained language provisions, the bulk of which relates to children's education. The Act also recognized both French and English as formally equal in Canada. However, the conclusion of the report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (also called the Laurendeau-Dunton Commission) held by the federal government of Canada in the 1960s emphasized that bilingualism had been 'mostly symbolic (stamps, bank notes, etc.) and mere translation of laws and certain administrative documents' (SLMC, n.d.(a)). Responding directly to the commission's recommendation, the Official Languages Act of 1969 states that:

The English and French languages are the official languages of Canada for all purposes of the Parliament and government of Canada, and possess and enjoy quality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all the institutions of the Parliament and government of Canada.  
(SLMC, n.d.(a))

Coherent with the notion of a federation, the Official Languages Act applies only to federal jurisdictions and institutions. Provinces can also be active in the accessory field of language, insofar as they are intervening within the scope of their jurisdiction.

#### *The province of Quebec and the city of Montreal*

Montreal is the economic and cultural centre of the province of Quebec and also the most populous francophone city in the Americas. Its population is approximately 1.6 million, and that of Greater Montreal, 3.8 million. Quebec is the only province to have French as its sole official language. The second article of the city of Montreal's charter categorically states that it is a francophone city (Gouvernement du Québec, 2000).

In response to increasingly vocal and organized groups in favour of valorizing and protecting the French language within Quebec, the government adopted in 1974 Quebec's first language law: the *Loi sur la langue officielle* (Law of the Official Language, Bill 22). However, this bill, requiring public signs to be in French and promoting bilingualism, was considered unable to meet the linguistic challenges that Quebec increasingly faced (Bourhis and Landry, 2002). The government of the separatist Parti Québécois thus adopted in 1977 the much more powerful *Charte de la langue française du Québec* (Bill 101). The charter's main objectives were: (1) to halt the assimilation of French speakers to English; (2) to ensure the socioeconomic predominance of the francophone majority; and (3) to promote the assertion of the French fact (i.e. all that concerns French; SLMC, n.d.(b)). Today, the charter requires commercial signs to be predominantly in French and immigrant children in Quebec to attend French schools, reversing the immigrants' tendency to send their children to English schools (McAndrew, 2002: 70). Many other laws in Quebec are significant in terms of language, including a few regarding municipalities – with Montreal among them – and immigration (SLMC, n.d.(c)).

#### *The province of British Columbia and the city of Vancouver*

Vancouver is the economic centre of the western province of British Columbia. While the city itself was home to only 603,502 people in 2011 (the eighth largest city in Canada), Greater Vancouver was home to over 2.3 million residents (the third largest metropolitan area in Canada). Between 2006 and 2011, the population of Vancouver grew by 4.4 per cent, while that of Greater Vancouver grew by 9.3 per cent (Metro Vancouver, 2012). Like most other provinces

and cities, and coherent with the very low proportion of francophones in both the province and city, British Columbia and Vancouver have English as their only official language.

British Columbia's laws and programmes relevant to languages have been scarce, if not wholly absent. In fact, the legislature has never adopted a language law. The province's legislation, however, does contain a small number of language provisions and references to language. Most of these deal with the requirement for people to understand and express themselves in proper English and the possibility of using a translator. Other references are in simple declarations of non-discrimination on the grounds of language, place of origin, and so on. The only reference to language in which the state makes a commitment involves aboriginal languages. Indeed, the First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Act is meant to 'support and advise ministries of government on initiatives, programs and services related to Native heritage, language and culture' (SLMC, n.d.(d)).

### ***Immigrants' settlement, integration, and adult language education***

The federal government of Canada has provided language instruction for newcomers since 1947, at the same time as the Citizenship Act was adopted (CIMSS, 2012: 7; Cleghorn, 2000). The focus of language education was thus citizenship and, to a certain extent, assimilation to the Anglo-Saxon and English-speaking majority (Ciccarelli, 1997; Cleghorn, 2000). As Cleghorn notes, 'prior to Quebec's control over immigration beginning in the 1960s, language training for adult immigrants was English only' (2000: 28). From 1965 to the mid-1980s, language education evolved from a focus on citizenship into two different streams of classes for two different types of immigrants. The Department of Manpower and Immigration provided language education to immigrants in the labour force while the Citizenship Branch of the Department of Secretary of State – with a much smaller budget – provided language classes to immigrants not planning to join the labour force (ibid.: 27–30). Although the federal government had been active in language education since 1947, it extended its intervention to settlement services only in 1979, with its Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program. Until then, the settlement and integration needs of immigrants were met – if so – 'by voluntary organizations such as community centres, ethnic organizations, church groups, and women's organizations' (ibid.: 32). Along with this programme, and the current merged settlement and integration programme, CIC has been overseeing immigrants' settlement and integration. Its preferred pattern of service provision has been, and remains, outsourcing to community service providers.

#### *The province of Quebec and the city of Montreal*

As mentioned, Quebec became more directly involved in the field of immigration in the 1970s and was then followed by the other Canadian provinces. The first bilateral agreement on immigration between the government of Canada and a province was signed with Quebec in 1971. With the current agreement – Immigration: The Canada–Quebec Accord – signed in 1991, Canada commits itself:

to withdraw from the delivery of services for the reception and linguistic and cultural integration and placements of immigrants. Canada provides compensation to Quebec for such services, as long as they correspond to those offered by Canada in the rest of the country.

(Béchar, 2011: 3)

The yearly grant assigned to the government of Quebec for these services amounted to \$320 million in 2013–14. While similar agreements exist with each province, none is more extensive and matched with as much federal grants as the one with Quebec (Béchar, 2011).

Adult immigrants' language education is called *francization* in Quebec, suggesting a process through which a person appropriates progressively the French language until it becomes part of her or his identity. Only French language classes – and no English ones – are provided for free to immigrants in Quebec. *Francization* classes are available to immigrants in various formats and they may qualify for allowances that, in certain cases, even cover transportation and childcare costs (MIDI, 2015a). No comparable programme exists outside of Quebec to support immigrants while attending language classes (CIC, 2012). Quebec's settlement and integration framework includes two programmes of language education and of financial aid for adult immigrants (*Programme d'intégration linguistique pour les immigrants* and *Programme d'aide financière pour l'intégration linguistique des immigrants*); and two programmes for settlement, per se (*Programme d'accompagnement des nouveaux arrivants* and *Programme régional d'intégration*).

The proportion of newcomers knowing French upon their arrival grew from 36.8 per cent in the 1994–8 period to 62.3 per cent for the 2009–13 period (MIDI, 2014a). It was 58.6 per cent in 2015 (MIDI, 2014b: 24). A new immigration policy was adopted by Quebec in March 2016 (MIDI, 2015b), and the preparatory document to the policy made clear how much of a priority *francization* was among the various interventions in settlement and integration:

In addition to the recent increase of French immigration, the *francization* of immigrant people . . . is one of the strategies that the Government of Quebec implements to ensure the perennality of the French fact on its territory, as well as the successful integration of immigrant people.

(MIDI, 2014a: 15, our translation)

The first tenet of the policy is that 'immigration plays an important role in boosting Québec's prosperity and in the vitality of the French language' (MIDI, 2015b). *Francization* is meant to make these two priorities and objectives of the policy overlap. Indeed, 'immigrants' ability to fully participate in Québec society is deeply intertwined with the language issue' (ibid.: 5).

In Quebec – like in the rest of Canada – most contacts relating to and services regarding settlement and language education are provided by community organizations. Out of the 51 service providers listed on CIC'S website in Montreal, 43 (84 per cent) were community organizations. The services they most frequently provided were: general French language education (72.5 per cent); services for francophone newcomers (54.9 per cent); and help with daily life (31.4 per cent). No municipal organization was, however, listed as service provider, including language education services (CIC, n.d.(b)).

While evaluating the outcomes of the immigrants' settlement and integration programmes in Quebec, in relation to similar services available across Canada, CIC writes:

To help individuals prepare for life in Canada and the citizenship test, information is often provided through settlement services, particularly via language training curricula. Language curricula in Quebec also follows this approach; however, the focus is on providing information about Quebec culture.

(CIC, n.d.(c))

In retrospect, Paquet (2016) suggests that Quebec's approach to immigration has been holistic, seen as a collective project in selecting immigrants over economic as well as social criteria.

The city of Montreal, like most regions in Quebec, concludes immigration agreements with the province's Ministry of Immigration, Diversity and Integration (*Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion*, MIDI) and thus contributes to assessing needs and planning intervention in this field. Municipalities – including Montreal – are rarely mentioned in programmes regarding

immigrants' settlement and integration. There are no mentions of Montreal and municipalities in the Immigration: Canada–Quebec Accord. The only reference to the city of Montreal in the MIDI annual report of 2014–15 is related to the objective of regionalizing immigration; that is, reducing the proportion of immigrants settling in Montreal. MIDI's (2008) adult immigrants' language education action plan, *Pour enrichir le Québec: Franciser plus, intégrer mieux* (To enrich Quebec: Make more French, integrate better), makes no mention of municipalities or of Montreal. One opening to cities' and regions' roles in the field of immigration is, however, found in the preparatory document to the new Quebec immigration policy. It states their role in: (1) building welcoming and inclusive communities; (2) gathering concrete information and knowledge on actual needs and challenges as met in day-to-day activities; and (3) working against racism and discrimination (MIDI, 2014a: 54).

In a brief on immigration management submitted to the government of Quebec in 2011, the city of Montreal asked for: (1) an official recognition of its role in immigrants' settlement and integration; (2) an increased budget for the *francization* of immigrants in Montreal; (3) the automatic transfer to Montreal of 10 per cent of federal grants for immigrants' settlement and integration; and (4) increased budgets for immigrants' social housing (Ville de Montréal, 2011: 6). Despite the government of Quebec's rare mention of Montreal in immigration policies and programmes, the city has been relatively responsive to immigration in the sense discussed by Good (2008). First, the city of Montreal has contributed to community capacity-building through: funding various community groups; being an active member of various collaborations on immigration; adopting a charter of rights and responsibility; and creating an intercultural advisory council. Second, the city has a *Plan d'accès à l'égalité à l'emploi* (PAÉE). Third, the city has created the Nexus programme, which is a municipal programme in Montreal that provides businesses with information, tools, support, and references regarding the recruitment and sustained employment of professionals trained abroad (Emploi Nexus, 2016). Hence, the city intervenes through not only collaborating with service providers, but also by funding them (Ville de Montréal, 2011).

#### *The province of British Columbia and the city of Vancouver*

The first bilateral agreement on immigration between the governments of British Columbia and of Canada was signed in 1998 and the current agreement – the Canada–British Columbia Immigration Agreement – was signed in 2015. Contrary to the prevalent model in the rest of Canada (except Quebec and Manitoba), the accord operates a transfer of responsibility in the field of settlement and integration services (Paquet, 2016). However, whereas the Immigration: Canada–Quebec Accord stipulates the federal government's withdrawal from the delivery of services for the reception, linguistic and cultural integration, and placements of immigrants, the Canada–British Columbia Immigration Agreement emphasizes collaboration, negotiation, consultation, and cooperation, rather than strict division of authority between the province and the federal government. For example, 'collaboration'/'to collaborate' is used seven times (none in the Quebec accord); 'negotiation'/'to negotiate' is used seven times (once in the accord); 'consultation'/'to consult' is used sixteen times (none in the accord); and 'cooperation'/'to cooperate' is used five times (five in the accord as well).

The yearly grant assigned to the government of British Columbia for the delivery of services for the reception, linguistic and cultural integration, and placements of immigrants amounted to \$114 million in 2010–11 (Derwing and Waugh, 2012: 4) – around half of which was allocated to language education. In addition, federal funds were also allocated to Enhanced Language Training, a smaller language education initiative (ibid.). WelcomeBC and the Settlement and Integration Program are the main programmes through which settlement integration happens in

British Columbia. The Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces Program, and the Vulnerable Immigrant Populations Program complete the picture.

The proportion of newcomers speaking either French or English was 73 per cent in 2011–12 (Government of British Columbia, 2013), much higher than the proportion of newcomers speaking French in Quebec. In its annual report of 2011–12, WelcomeBC writes that language ability is critical to the success of immigrants in the province's labour market and communities. According to the programme, though most newcomers are highly skilled and educated, 'a lack of English language ability correlates with immigrant unemployment and underemployment which costs the economy in productivity and economic growth, and impacts immigrants' successful social and economic integration' (ibid.: 10). Furthermore, they estimate that 'a 1% increase in literacy produces a 2.5% increase in the level of labour productivity and that every 1% comparative increase in national literacy scores would boost national income by \$32 billion' (ibid.: 8). In this explanation of why language proficiency is important, we notice a phrasing that is financial and economic, rather than social or citizenship-related.

English language services for adults (delivered mostly by community organizations) and English as a second language (delivered by publicly funded post-secondary institutions) are the main vehicles of adult immigrant training in the province (Government of British Columbia, 2013). Of the 36 service providers in Vancouver listed on the CIC website, four were in the education sector; one was a private company, and the remaining 31 (84 per cent) were community organizations. The services they provided most frequently were: help with daily life (72.2 per cent); help finding jobs (41.7 per cent); mentoring (38.9 per cent); and general language education (30.6 per cent). A few municipal libraries were also listed as settlement and integration service providers (CIC, n.d.(b)). We notice here that a much lower proportion of service providers offer language education than is the case in Quebec.

British Columbia's settlement and integration policies and programmes refer more frequently to Vancouver and municipalities than does Quebec's to Montreal. For example, the importance of consulting municipalities and local governments is mentioned in the Canada–British Columbia Immigration Agreement: 'The Parties agree to cooperate to work with Local Governments in British Columbia to explore issues related to their respective interests in immigration and pursue opportunities related to communities' interests in immigration' (Government of Canada, 2015). Whereas the city of Vancouver is not directly mentioned in the British Columbia Immigration Task Force report, one of its recommendations is 'to engage industry, local governments, and non-governmental organizations in settling and integrating immigrants' (Minister of State for Multiculturalism, 2012: 20). Furthermore, British Columbia's Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces Program 'has actively recognized the role and participation of municipal governments in the immigrant settlement process' (Dickson *et al.*, 2013: 23). Municipalities have thus 'felt that a closer partnership between BC and municipal governments of some major immigrant reception cities has been established' (ibid.).

In 2014, Vancouver finally entered into an agreement with the government of Canada's CIC 'to undertake a Local Immigration Partnership (LIP)' (City of Vancouver, n.d.). The Vancouver Immigration Partnership (VIP, 2016) is a first step towards establishing – with the collaboration of dozens of local organizations and community leaders – the very first Vancouver Immigrant Settlement and Integration Strategy. The VIP's main focuses are: (1) the strengthening of intercultural and civic engagement; (2) the creation of welcoming and inclusive workplaces; and (3) the assessment of newcomers' needs in areas such as housing, health, and access to local and municipal services.

Vancouver has been responsive to immigration (City of Vancouver, 2014: 14): first, it has contributed to the community through actively consulting community groups and leaders, funding



settlement and integration service providers, and creating the city's Multicultural Advisory Committee (2014). Second, the city created the Equal Employment Office, Vancouver. Third, it established the Hastings Institute, a community city-owned corporation that provides employment equity and diversity training to private- and public-sector (non-municipal) organizations based on programmes developed for the city (Good, 2008). Furthermore, Vancouver describes itself as one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse cities in Canada. Mayor Sam Sullivan organized in 2007 an immigration task force and elaborated a vision about its role for the future, to ensure that: 'Vancouver, working with other levels of government and key stakeholders, will play a vital role in the development of best policies and practices related to immigration issues at a local level' (Sullivan, 2007).

### **Similarities and differences in why and how language education is provided to adult immigrants**

We have noticed that, while Canadian citizenship objectives are not wholly absent from the discourse on adult immigrants' language education, these citizenship and nationalism reasons are absolutely central in why *francization* is enacted in Quebec. In the francophone province, and in francophone communities across Canada, immigration is seen as a way to reverse demographic decline and to revitalize the French language. Thus francization – along with the selection of French-speaking candidates to immigration – is essential to attain these objectives. Conversely, the financial and economic discourse is what is central in British Columbia's explanations of the benefits of both immigration and language education to immigrants. The economic and job-related reasons are also increasingly present in Quebec's discourse on immigration and language education.

Similarities and differences are also noticeable with regard to service provision. First, only French is taught to immigrants in Quebec. Conversely, in British Columbia, classes are formally offered in both official languages – while in reality, English classes are much more readily available. Both provinces have benefited, through bilateral agreements in immigration concluded with the federal government, from the transfer of responsibilities and grants. Quebec's agreement is, however, phrased in terms of strict division of authority, is much more extensive, and is matched with more grants than the one signed by British Columbia. Both provinces have their own adult immigrant language education programmes. Municipalities in both Quebec and British Columbia have no formal role regarding immigration and language education. The government of British Columbia, however, appears in discourse and action more open than that of Quebec to recognize the role of municipalities in relation to immigration. British Columbia is also less opposed to the establishment of a direct relationship between the city of Vancouver and the federal government. Similar to the pattern of service provision preferred by CIC, most settlement, integration, and language education services are provided in both provinces (and both cities) by community organizations. We nonetheless note that while language education is provided by the vast majority of service providers in Quebec, it is employment services that are available through the vast majority of service providers in British Columbia. Finally, while no Montreal municipal agencies are listed by CIC as official service providers, these roles are undertaken by a few Vancouver public libraries.

### **Conclusion**

As we have seen, both similarities and differences exist between Quebec and British Columbia in terms of their respective language policies and plans and, in particular, the language education given to adult immigrants.



Citizenship and nationalism reasons are more obviously central in explaining why language education is provided in Quebec compared to British Columbia. This difference can largely be accounted for by the differences in demography and language history. Indeed, whereas the demographic weight of Quebec (and of French) in the country is declining, that of British Columbia is on the rise. The power of attraction of learning English is also much higher than that of learning French among immigrants. Further, immigrants to Quebec have historically been very eager to join the anglophone community, whereas no comparable phenomenon was experienced in British Columbia. In a way, demography and language history have prompted the Quebec government to build a strict linguistic framework – explaining, for example, why immigrant children are required to attend French schools and immigrant adults are not offered the choice of which official language to learn upon arrival. In comparison, language issues have had very little importance in British Columbia where English has been, and remains, uncontested. Immigrants are thus conceived as a solution to Quebec's and French demographic decline in Canada, but – in the government of Quebec's perspective – the benefits can only be cashed in if immigrants speak French or go through *francization* upon arrival. Both provinces, however, claim that immigration and offering language education to immigrants are beneficial to the job market and the economy.

The federal framework can account for both similarities and variations as to why and how language education is provided to immigrants in Quebec and British Columbia. First, the adoption by the federal government of the Bill of Rights and of the Multiculturalism Act have had deep impacts on immigration policies across the country, as well as on the discourse surrounding immigration, settlement and integration, and language education. Second, CIC's involvement in settlement and integration services and preferred patterns of service provision – that is, outsourcing to community organizations – seem to have had unifying impacts on the way these services are still provided today in both British Columbia and Quebec.

The federal framework can also explain certain variations. Indeed, the allocation of jurisdiction to provinces – for example, municipal affairs – and the sharing of others – such as immigration – have allowed for variation and even emulation among provinces. Quebec's interventions in immigration have thus prompted all the other Canadian provinces to become active in this field. Linguistic controversies and tense Quebec–Canada relations have also had an impact on cities' involvement in the field of immigrant settlement and integration in the province. As immigrants establish mostly in Canada's big cities, they are in the prime locations where adult language education is provided. Formally, municipalities are, however, provincial jurisdictions and have no official role in immigrant settlement and integration. Thus, Montreal and Vancouver intervene mainly in this field through their collaborations with service providers – mostly community organizations – and senior levels of government. In comparison with British Columbia – which has allowed Vancouver to develop the VIP, of which CIC is a partner – Quebec has seemed much less eager to recognize the role and responsibilities of Montreal with regard to immigration, or to allow direct municipal-federal relations in immigration issues.

Thus, the Canadian experience in matters of language policy and planning – and more specifically, of adult immigrants' language education – illustrates how much these policies are informed by context; in our case, by demography, language history, and the federal framework. While there is little dissent about the necessity and positive outcome of language instruction, the *why* and *how* are subjected to local circumstances. Furthermore, whereas most immigrants land, learn, and work in Canada's biggest cities – among them, Montreal and Vancouver – these contextual elements can explain why cities continue to have so few responsibilities regarding the settlement, integration, and language education of newcomers. Only such a contextual understanding will allow for proper reforms in terms of cities' responsibilities regarding immigration. Given the

importance of immigration for the development and thriving of communities, a stronger, more concerted action at the levels of government and of cities is indicated.

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