

## INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

**The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.** Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

# UMI

A Bell & Howell Information Company  
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor MI 48106-1346 USA  
313/761-4700 800/521-0600



**FRENCH CANADIAN ADOLESCENTS**

**IN A**

**MINORITY MILIEU**

*By*

*Cindy Lynn Roche* ©

*A thesis*

*submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements*

*for the degree of*

*Master of Arts*

*in the*

*Department of Sociology*

*Faculty of Arts and Science*

**LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY**

**THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO**

**April 1997**



National Library  
of Canada

Acquisitions and  
Bibliographic Services

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale  
du Canada

Acquisitions et  
services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

*Your file Votre référence*

*Our file Notre référence*

**The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.**

**The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.**

**L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.**

**L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.**

0-612-33441-4

**Canada**

## Table of Contents

	Page
Acknowledgement .....	ii
Abstract .....	iii
<b>CHAPTER 1: Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Rationale .....	2
Personal Standpoint .....	5
Research Design and Methodology .....	8
Definition of Terms .....	10
<b>CHAPTER 2: Review of Literature</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Social Identity and Ethnic Boundaries .....	15
Maintaining Boundaries .....	19
Choosing Boundaries: Interaction and Bilingualism .....	28
<b>CHAPTER 3: Research Design and Methodology</b> .....	<b>38</b>
Theoretical Foundations .....	38
Research Questions .....	40
Design .....	40
Ethical Considerations .....	46
Analysis and Interpretation .....	48
<b>CHAPTER 4: French North and West Towards Thunder Bay: Historical, Geographical and Social Overview</b> .....	<b>51</b>
Socio-historical Presence .....	51
Our Francophone Community .....	54
Participant Profiles .....	56
Different Influences .....	62
<b>CHAPTER 5: Summary of the Findings</b> .....	<b>67</b>
Environment and Social Location .....	67
Lifestyle and Language Maintenance .....	82
Ethnolinguistic Vitality .....	101
<b>CHAPTER 6: Discussion and Conclusion</b> .....	<b>118</b>
The Environment .....	119
Lifestyle and Language Maintenance .....	123
Ethnolinguistic Vitality .....	130
Conclusions .....	133
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>135</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	

## **Acknowledgement**

I appreciate the assistance that has made this trek to my thesis and degree possible. Thank you to everyone who contributed to my success in this endeavour:

Tom Dunk introduced me to the "culture" of sociology, and also informed my understanding of social relations. He permitted me entry to the field and gave me ways of seeing. Since Jim Stafford taught me about research methods and gave me the first feedback on my proposal; this research project has come a long way since I am glad to have had both of you on my Committee and to have written a thesis that met your standards. Chris Southcott has been my supervisor and ensurer of sociological soundness. His patience, persuasiveness and input has shaped the quality of my work. I have learned a lot because of his direction and suggestions.

Mary Clare Courtland, my mother, not the professor, has had a huge role in my achievement. For the start she gave me and the support she continues to give, I am indebted. Her compassion, concern and commitment for me and my development has enabled me to get this degree. Thanks mum for all your help.

This research was possible because of my francophone contacts. I must thank Denyse Crepeau for sharing her language with me, as well as the French Canadian adolescents I've taught in Thunder Bay who have welcomed me into their community. Thanks too, to Steve and Chris Hogg, Rebecca Menhart, and Christie Courtland-Bennett who listened or encouraged me when I needed them to. Uncle Joe Courtland, who is currently finishing his doctorate, has lent a sympathetic ear and continues to prime me for making my next move. Special mention for Sheila Wilson who worked as much as me on this thesis and who made it look so good — I owe her a case of thank you's and more.

## **Abstract**

This inquiry describes the lived experience of minority francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay, Ontario. A snowball sampling approach was used to recruit 22 participants for interviews where they were asked to talk about the environment, the constraints upon their community, and the ways in which they maintain a lifestyle celebrating language and culture in the minority milieu. The findings reflect how francophone identity and ethnolinguistic vitality are sustained, even as minority group members must also participate in domains of activity where English predominates. Within these pages there is an echo of young voices telling what it is like to be French Canadian in this particular city.

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

This study describes the lived experience of French Canadian adolescents in a predominantly English community. Focusing on how francophone identity is maintained or changed as members of the group participate in their social environment. The inquiry has been structured by concerns about the proximity of the dominant language and culture, its effects on minority group members, and the result of interaction and contact on the ethnolinguistic vitality of the French minority community in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Social boundaries, ethnolinguistic vitality, and social identity for French Canadian adolescents in a minority milieu were key constructs in this study. If French Canada is to remain a linguistic and cultural reality, then it is important to know how "l'identité française" is constructed, as well as how it is lived in minority situations. In essence, this is a summary of how francophone lifestyles are lived in this particular environment. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 22 francophone adolescents living in Thunder Bay, Ontario, a city that is predominantly English speaking and officially unilingual. The following questions delineated the research:

1. What opportunities exist for linguistic and cultural maintenance in a minority milieu?
2. What is the lived experience of minority francophone adolescents within a dominant English culture?
3. How do social contacts contribute to or change francophone identity and ethnolinguistic vitality?
  - 4.1 When do francophone minority adolescents use English or French?
  - 4.2 In what contexts do they use French?
  - 4.3 In what contexts do they use English?
5. In what ways does the dominant (English) culture influence the language use of francophone minority adolescents?
6. How do community demographics, social organizations, and individual standpoints affect experience in the community?



## **Rationale**

The francophone community in Thunder Bay is a small part of the local population. In the 100% census calculations, only 2690 people claim French as their first language in the city of 113 946 (1991 Census Profiles, Part A, 1992, p. 440). Of the 3370 people who claimed multiple responses to the question of mother-tongue, 660 defined themselves as English and French, and 35 chose French with a non-official language (p. 440). In the 20% census population, only 1065 people claimed French as their home language (1991 Census Profiles, Part B, 1992, p. 716). By knowledge of official languages, 22 claimed French only, compared to 7790 who assert their knowledge of both (p. 716). In the census question that refers to ethnic origins, 4755 people claim French ancestry (1991 Census: Ethnic Origin, 1993, p. 44). By comparison, 5790 claim British and French, 3440 claim French and other, and 6075 claim British, French and other (p. 58). One elementary school and one section of a local high school offer a curriculum for French First Language [FFL]. Adolescents may choose this program, attend an immersion program with English students, or attend English first language schools. Those who select the third option would take only the French courses specified as "core." A few francophone associations and social groups in the city try to provide opportunities for the community to come together. However, there is little that makes francophones visible to the dominant social group (unlike the Finnish business district or the old Italian neighbourhoods). The question, then, is how the members of this minority group can maintain their ethnicity when they must adapt to and participate in an English speaking society? In particular, how do francophone youth live the experience and how is their ethnolinguistic vitality influenced by their situation as a minority in the community?

Studies on the francophone minorities tend to focus on the maintenance of the French language and the preservation of its cultural heritage. The literature suggests that francophone minorities are at risk of assimilating into the dominant society and are in danger of losing their language and culture (Maxwell, 1977; Smith, 1992). Studies have shown that as generations of French Canadians (or other minority group) become more integrated with English society, they begin using the French mother-tongue or first language less and less, so that the group slowly assimilates and disappears (Maxwell, 1977, p. 6; Smith, 1992; Driedger, 1971; Desjarlais, 1983). Researchers suggest that socio-political factors such as residential concentration, economic and institutional completeness or cultural organization can help to maintain and revitalize French

minority populations (Gérin-Lajoie, 1993; Heller, 1987; Maxwell, 1977; Mougeon, et al, 1984; Roosens, 1989; Tardiff, 1993). Ethnic occupational and neighbourhood enclaves have become less common as minority group members join the larger society and move away from their cultural ties (Maxwell, 1977). While French adults will maintain some linguistic contacts and social ties with their community, there is concern that subsequent generations will grow up fully immersed in English society and be assimilated in the process (Maxwell, 1977). Minorities must find ways to maintain their language groups and sustain their culture. The home and the school, in particular, have been identified as necessary havens for the preservation of the French language and culture because these are the primary locales of learning and socialization (Allaire & Fedigan, 1993).

The literature on minority francophones suggests that the risk of language loss and assimilation requires group resistance to the dominant culture, a maintenance of ethnic boundaries such that members can keep their cultural heritage (Desjarlais, 1983; Driedger, 1979; Maxwell, 1977; Smith, 1992). While research studies conducted to date have identified cultural risks and social protection factors, they often stop short of describing the linkages among minority language group members and the ways in which they forge their social identity as a community within the larger society. Research investigations have begun to consider what is significant in the social identity that arises out of the experience of living in a minority milieu (Roosens, 1989; Fishman, 1977; Tajfel, 1974; Cazabon, 1996).

Stebbins' (1995, 1996) lifestyle research on francophones living in Calgary describes activities and contacts that foster a French Canadian lifestyle in the West. The idea of multiple areas of activity and alternate identities for several possible lifestyles allows the minority to maintain their language and culture, while also becoming bilingual. He argues that even as minority francophones engage in the dominant culture for the majority of their work, leisure and community participation, they also participate in some francophone spheres of activity in their "off-time" (p. 130) that sustain a francophone "way of life." Stebbins (1996) suggests that having a particular lifestyle forms a basis of identity for minority populations, although it may not be suitable for other things a person might do. The focus on lifestyle shows how Franco-Calgarians demonstrate fluid social boundaries and maintain ethnolinguistic identity.

Roosens' (1989) meta-analysis of qualitative studies conducted over a period of fifteen years

demonstrates how groups in various minority situations have maintained, adapted, or lost and revitalized ethnicity. Roosens' work with ethnic minorities in Europe, Canada and South America describes how groups are received into the dominant society in which they must live and participate, as well as the ways in which they have dealt with their situation. He found that people adapt themselves to their environment and identify elements necessary to ethnic consciousness or ethnolinguistic vitality. Roosens (1989) argues that social identity can be flexible so that it enables people to move among various groups in different ways for different reasons (pp. 17-18). He found that people in ethnic minorities who preserve or revitalize their heritage often do so by maintaining flexible social identities such that they are able to participate in the dominant society and still exist as members of an ethnic group.

Gilbert (1996) uses a cultural geographic approach in research on official language minorities in Ontario (French) and Quebec (English) in Southwestern Ontario. Her research interest is with the language milieu that exists in various cities. She maintains that the boundaries of identity and the language(s) used in social interaction differ so that comparisons should not be made across milieu. Measures of dominant language usage and assimilation arguments fail to address the milieu in particular. She suggests focusing on stability and change, as well as on the institutional, social, and political structures that exist within the community that contribute to minority language practices, regional dynamics, and group effectiveness — all elements in maintaining a minority identity.

Cazabon (1996), beginning from his own experience and ideas, argues that minority language researchers need to do representational studies to show minority experiences as lived, rather than marginalizing minority populations within the framework of assimilation studies. He notes that a conceptual model of the minority experience would give voice to the group's "(in)-quiétude, authenticité, colère et sincérité" (p. 19). He contrasts the nature of these experiences with the work he does for his university job or government contracts. The circles of inclusion and exclusion in the research process need to be open so that a researcher may create a social space for minority people within the academic literatures. "S'il se fait beaucoup de recherche, on n'entend pas souvent l'écho" (p. 14). That "echo" is the voice of francophones resonating in the words intended as descriptions of minority experience.

This study is community-specific to francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay, because such a focus

opens a window of understanding on a particular minority experience. Roosens' research and theories inform the study which explores the ways in which participants negotiate social boundaries that reinforce their distinction as a minority group, while also allowing their participation in the dominant community without detracting from their French identity. The idea of lifestyle articulated by Stebbins illustrates the dynamics of the minority adolescent's experience. The missing "echo" described by Cazabon appears in this research through the voices of participants who live as the francophone minority within the anglophone milieu.

### **Personal Standpoint**

The researcher in qualitative inquiries has the responsibility of recognizing her bias so that preconceived notions will not influence the collection or the interpretation of data (Glesse & Peshkin, 1992; Kenna & McKirby, 1989). Briefly, I shall describe the personal perspective which may have influenced my research, my focus, and my study. This discussion serves to enhance the research process by making visible where I stand in relation to the people I am trying to give voice to.

My mother once worked as a coordinator for the government of Quebec and travelled frequently to communities around the province. She hired a babysitter to care for my sister and me. Denyse moved in with us the day I began kindergarten. She minded us for six years until she got married. From the first day with Denyse we knew things would be different because she did not speak any English. I really liked learning to speak French. I remember laughing as Denyse taught me to roll my r's. What a gift to be given! French was a mandatory part of the school curriculum too, so I always felt lucky to have her. I became fairly fluent and comfortable with French, proud to be bilingual because Trudeau said that's what Canada was.

When I got older, I had some French friends and belonged to a French gym club. I was twelve or thirteen by the time it became apparent to me that my francophone peers often corrected my French and seemed to relish doing so. At first, I appreciated the help; but within a couple of years I grew tired of fighting their "superior" attitudes. I understood that I would never speak French well enough to be fully accepted by francophones; all my early efforts amounted to my being an English girl who spoke some French. It made me both sad and angry that I had tried and apparently no one cared. What a contrast to my family circle where everybody was proud of my bilingualism and said, "Cindy speaks French."

I was 15 when I came to Thunder Bay, Ontario because my mother had accepted a university

appointment here. The move to Ontario brought new insights. Many people thought I was French since I had come from Montreal and Quebec was a francophone province. The fact that I speak French does not make me French, but few here could distinguish language from identity. I have always had to explain to people that I speak French because I had "une gardienne française" who lived with us when I was little. I learned that all of Canada was not really bilingual — which contributed to the idea people had of my Frenchness.

I began to regain my confidence in my ability. Writing in French was far more difficult than speaking the language; I kept trying to become bilingual. I studied French all through high school, appalled that neither teachers nor students actually spoke the language and that the emphasis was placed solely on grammar. In high school I decided that I wanted to teach French and share its beauty. The more I studied, the more I hated the focus on grammar. By the time I had finished my BA in French, I was sick of grammar. My professors had ignored good ideas in the papers I wrote because they were so concerned with form! Now that I know and understand the form I'm glad; but I appreciate that learning French and having the motivation to learn, has far more to do with understanding francophone culture than linguistic rules. What was missing from my classes was contact with people, and a context in which to apply the rules.

At age eighteen, I applied for a job as an unqualified substitute French teacher. I knew my French was adequate to facilitate classes because I speak it well and am familiar enough with the grammar taught incessantly in Ontario schools. The calls to supply in core French and immersion classes came slowly at first — a day here or there every couple of months, grade one, then grade two, rotation in all classes at an elementary school, three days with eighth graders, sometimes at a secondary school. I learned that I was one of very few French supply teachers. Limited numbers of those who have teaching certificates for French almost guarantees these teachers full-time jobs.

One day a request came to teach ESL and geography to students in the French first language section at a local school. I was terrified, afraid of being found out. They graciously accepted me and overlooked my "true" identity. Secretly, I have always thought myself lucky to work with them because I had missed the community and had no French ties in Thunder Bay. (Only Denyse, who lived so far away, could discern that my French was not as good as it used to be.) So I was introduced to the French community, and got to know its young people. They have made me feel welcome, and my fears of being found out lessened the more time

I spent with them, included to a certain degree and appreciated. I enjoy working with the minority francophone youths who seem so much like I was when I was an English kid growing up in "la belle province." Still, sometimes I get nervous that I cannot be French, and that I can do justice to their language.

My ideas about speaking French have shifted over the years. I may not be perfectly bilingual, but I speak French well. I am not francophone; however, a part of me wants to share in French culture. I still hope to teach French some day. I would like Canada to be a truly bilingual country. I would like to see more English people in places like Thunder Bay wanting to learn the French language and to discover the culture. French is a part of my heritage and culture.

The idea for this study evolved out of my experience working with French first language students in a secondary school in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Class sizes are small. They know each other well and get along almost like they were family. francophone students would attend their classes together, laughing and arguing, helping one another with their work, using English or French or switching between both languages. They would cooperate with one another and the two languages flowed between and around them. I found their communication habits intriguing and wondered how they arrived at this fluidity between English and French.

Slowly I began to appreciate the complexity of their situation. I was impressed by the students' bilingualism and imagined great potential in such language flexibility. I began to notice how they used each language for particular purposes. For example, they almost always used French to address a teacher or to discuss their work; in contrast, they seemed to choose English for "unofficial" talk between themselves, to chat about social lives and weekend plans. While all of the students were francophone and appeared to be bilingual, some seemed to lean toward dominance in one language or to avoid using the other; the majority, though, seemed to be fluent in both languages and the latter group appeared to benefit from the presence of those on either end of the continuum.

When I taught immersion and core French I noticed that the dynamics of francophone students in these classes were completely different from French mother-tongue classes. These adolescents would be the only French students in their classes, a fact sometimes respected and sometimes criticized. Their language behaviours and interactions with classmates were quite different from the students in the French first language program. They, too, spoke fairly fluently in both the majority and minority languages. Some

classmates appreciated their presence and affirmed their francophone identity; but others made them feel uncomfortable and self-conscious of their advanced language proficiency. The students spoke French with me and seemed to enjoy the contact. Even in my earliest acquaintance with them, as I thought about my research, it was apparent that they represented another facet of the minority francophone experience.

I decided to conduct a research study which would describe the nature of the experiences of minority French Canadian youth. The study explores minority adolescent francophones' experiences in Thunder Bay, their interactions with the dominant community, how their francophone ethnolinguistic vitality is affected, and how respondents' social identity is shaped.

### **Research Design and Methodology**

The study was qualitative with a non-emergent design. Participants were twenty-two francophone adolescents between the ages of 13 and 20. A method of non-probability sampling called a snowball sample (Li, 1981, p. 31; Marcut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 57) was used to contact participants. Each participant was asked to identify a francophone who might be interested in participating in the study; these participants, in turn, identified others, and so on. Fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted over the summer and fall of 1995. Interview questions were revised over the course of meetings as new directions emerged. Analysis was done after the data collection, but reflections were made during the research process which influenced understanding and later inquiries. The setting for this research was Thunder Bay, Ontario.

The thesis is organized into chapters which parallel the research process: literature review, francophone presence in Ontario and Thunder Bay, the methodology, the presentation of data, the discussion of the findings, and a conclusion that summarizes all research found.

Chapter 2 presents literature that was relevant to this study of minority francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay. Key to the literature review are the various theoretical perspectives on identity, minority experiences, and the ethnolinguistic vitality of minority groups. Considerable attention is given to research studies that have addressed the issues of minority francophones who live outside Quebec. The discussion is concerned contrasting views about language and cultural maintenance in minority situations, as well as the social influences which promote or discourage the vitality of the local group. Finally, the literature is described in terms of the way it fits with this particular study.

Chapter 3 describes the research methodology, the theoretical foundations for the choice of methods, and the way the study went. Qualitative research methods were chosen for this research because it permitted the researcher to delve further into the discussion of minority experience than previous studies have allowed for. Interviews were done in the summer and fall of 1995 with a snowball sampling of 22 French Canadian adolescents. The group ranged between the ages of 13 and 20; attended French First Language, French Immersion or core French for their schooling in grades 8 to 12, and in university and college. Questions were asked about what it is like to be a francophone adolescent in Thunder Bay, their sense of the anglophone community, their sense of self and their ways of maintaining language and culture. This chapter also describes the codes and categories used to make sense of the data and reviews the analysis process.

Chapter 4 provides a thorough description of the francophone presence in Ontario and its migration westward. This chapter also includes a description of the francophone community in Thunder Bay and the resources available to members of the minority. Participant profiles that introduce each respondent to the reader are found in this chapter in order to emphasize their place with the provincial and regional context. These profiles demonstrate the differences within the minority community and the various influences in their background that may affect their experience in Thunder Bay.

Chapter 5 describes the findings of this research inquiry. Of utmost importance in this discussion is the environment in which the minority lives and the social location of francophone adolescents. The second significant finding reflects the maintenance of a francophone lifestyle among minority adolescents, and the ways in which it is possible. Finally, findings on the ethnolinguistic vitality of the participants and their community are presented. The most significant thing in their maintenance of French and adaptation to English is their bilingualism.

The discussion in Chapter 6 brings the findings into perspective by considering what they mean and what that suggests in relation to other research. The discussion focuses on how the minority community withstands isolation and the difficulties of their situation to maintain their language among their children. Further, the ethnolinguistic vitality of adolescents is achieved and sustained by the same processes that counter-act assimilation losses. The ethnolinguistic vitality of francophone adolescents living in unilingual Thunder Bay is positively strong because of their understanding, cooperative awareness of their social location



within the local anglophone environment. The vitality of "French" among minority adolescents results from the combined effort by members of the close francophone community who encourage them to maintain their French identity.

The conclusion reached is that I have made a fair description of the adolescent francophone community in Thunder Bay and that they succeed, despite the difficulties, at attaining and maintaining a French lifestyle within francophone pockets of experience in their everyday lives as minority group members. The home and school in particular, friends and community groups as matters of interest, make it possible for francophone adolescents to have contact with others who speak their language and to maintain their identity as a cultural group. While there is reason for concern over linguistic and cultural loss, this study suggests that bilingualism must be considered in particular contexts and should not be confused with assimilation.

### **Definition of Terms**

- $L_1$  is an abbreviation used by language researchers to describe the mother-tongue or first language of an individual or group (Landry, Allard & Th  berge, 1991).
- $L_2$  is an abbreviation used by language researchers to describe the second language learned by an individual or group (Landry, Allard & Th  berge, 1991).
- **Additive Bilingualism** refers to the learning of a second language with no negative impact on the maintenance of the mother tongue. Additive bilingualism should encompass: a high level of competency in both communicative and cognitive academic aspects of  $L_1$  and  $L_2$ ; maintenance of a strong ethnolinguistic identity and positive beliefs toward one's own language and culture while holding positive attitudes toward the second language; and the opportunity to use one's first language without it being used exclusively for less valued social roles or domains of activity (Landry, Allard & Th  berge, 1991, p. 886; Lambert, 1978).
- **Ambiance** (French) refers to the degree of French within home or school that supports development of francophone identity and maintenance of language and culture (Landry & Allard, 1990).
- **Anglicizing Elements/Anglicization** refers to the influence of the second language, English, that interferes with the maintenance of French language and culture in minority situations: the prevailing

belief is that the greater the English influence, the greater the pull toward anglicization (Desjarlais, 1980).

- ***Assimilation*** is the cultural cross-over that occurs as members of an ethnic or language minority disregard or lose their ties to their ancestral community as they increase their participation on the homogeneous terrain of the majority society (Landry, Allard & Th  berge, 1991).
- ***Boundaries*** refer to inclusive and exclusive, subjective and objective ideas about membership in a group. Boundaries mark the distinctions that exist between the different groups in a society; as well as pertaining to the particular social characteristic that make a group distinguishable within its membership (Barth, 1969).
- ***Culture*** is a way of life among a people and the social legacy they share; it is a symbolic system of elements and structures that order and inform the behaviours people exhibit (adapted from Geertz, 1973).
- ***Diglossia*** is a situation in which two languages serve different functions for some of the people in a multilingual situation (Barth, 1969; Roosens, 1989).
- ***Environment*** refers to the social milieu within which a group lives, and to which they must adapt.
- ***Ethnic Enclave*** refers to a protective, proactive network of linguistic and culture contacts within which a minority group will sustain itself (Driedger, 1979).
- ***Ethnolinguistic identity*** is the sense of social self that corresponds to one's ethnic and language group membership (Landry & Allard, 1990).
- ***Ethnolinguistic vitality*** is a concept used to assess how the members of a language or ethnic group see themselves and are aware of the differences between themselves and others. It measures degrees of ethnicity, and whether or not a community has the strength to remain a distinct entity within a larger community (Landry, Allard & Th  berge, 1991; Landry & Allard, 1990).
- ***Language maintenance*** is the continued use, practice and knowledge of one's first language, particularly an issue in minority situations (Allaire & Fedigan, 1993).
- ***Lifestyle*** is a "distinctive and recognizable way of life based on interests or social conditions, or both.

It is comprised of values, attitudes, orientations and behaviour patterns that will in certain circumstances form a base of identity for participants in that lifestyle" (Stebbins, 1996, p. 131).

- *Social Contacts* form the various bases of interaction between individuals that foster or discourage minority group membership and cultural maintenance (Landry, Allard & Théberge, 1991).

### **Limitations**

The small sample size was a limiting factor in this research because the study could not cover the full range of minority experiences. The findings are not generalizable; however, they may be transferable to similar settings and contexts (Guba & Lincoln, 1986). Another limitation is imposed by my focus on vitality, without benefit of supporting literature. Too late I discovered the researchers who used the ideas I have tried to express in this text. It is unfortunate, but I could not fit "everything" in.

### **Summary**

This chapter provided an overview of the research study which describes the experiences of minority francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay. Key considerations in this research are the ethnolinguistic vitality of the local French community, as well as the ways in which francophone identity in the minority milieu is maintained or changed. The snowball sampling method was used to recruit the twenty-two participants. Semi-structured interviews were used in data collection and data analysis was ongoing.

The findings of this research suggest that minority francophone adolescents maintain their language and French lifestyle, in spite of the constraints on their community, and they become bilingual in the process. The anglophone environment isolates francophones and requires them to adapt to the dominant society by speaking English. The social location of francophone adolescents in this situation is that they need English in order to participate in the larger community. The presence of the dominant anglophone group and the unilingual status of Thunder Bay prompt concerns about the difficulties of being a minority, as well as the ways in which language and culture can be maintained and assimilation losses avoided. The participants suggested that their home and school environments provide the initial context for their francophone identity. As they develop wider interests and a larger network of activities, francophone adolescents are conscious of their minority status and make efforts to participate in events where they will have contact with other francophone friends. Finally, the findings suggest that francophone adolescents are a minority with highly positive ethnolinguistic vitality which sustains their language and "identité française."

## **CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

People use language to interact, to express themselves, and to understand others. However, language is more than a tool of communications in multicultural societies, it is also a characteristic of social distinction between many varied social groups. Language is a key symbol of ethnic distinctiveness. Fishman (1977) describes language as the "quintessential symbol" of the commonality between a people based on a shared sense of heritage and history, as well as on their uniqueness in comparison to other groups in a culturally diversified community (p. 25). Language and ethnicity contribute to the development of self and social identity in that people feel akin to those who share similar traits and values. Hertzler (1965) argues that language is influential in a person's socialization and enculturation (p. 391). He maintains that language is something shared by a community that permits "a certain esprit du corp" (p. 400).

This chapter reviews the literature related to the social identity and ethnolinguistic vitality of minority francophones. Discussions of minority francophone populations generally focus on the maintenance of the French language and the preservation of its cultural heritage. Giles, Bourhis and Taylor (1970) suggest the vitality of an ethnolinguistic group is that which makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and collective entity in intergroup situations (p. 308). The concept of ethnolinguistic vitality is used to assess how members of a language or ethnic group see themselves and are aware of the differences between themselves and others; it also measures the likelihood of a group remaining a distinct entity within a larger community (Landry, Allard & Th  berge, 1991, p. 881). Landry, Allard and Th  berge (1991) identify four types of social capital that are components of ethnolinguistic vitality: demographic, economic, political, and cultural. These socio-structural variables affect a group's position in society. Another factor in ethnolinguistic vitality is the linguistic contacts that are possible for group members, what "milieux de vie" allow individuals to experience the vitality of their community (p. 833). Sociological assessments of these variables can indicate the ethnolinguistic vitality of the group, as well as provide a starting point for a discussion of how a francophone lifestyle can be manifested in a predominantly English-speaking milieu.

This chapter describes the boundaries between and around groups, influences on ethnic identity, and the results of interethnic contact. The literature review includes theoretical standpoints, as well as research

studies that have focused on minority francophone populations in Canada. Although quantitative studies of assimilation risks and maintenance discussions dominate, more recent studies are focusing on qualitative descriptions of social location, lifestyle and ambiance, and the vitality of ethnicity and identity among French Canadians who live to the West and East of Quebec. These researchers are looking at the same things, but their ways of seeing and discussing are rather distinct! One talks of doom and gloom and hopelessness, the other shows real experiences that are positive despite the constrictiveness of diglossic situations where minority group members really have to have two languages if they want to keep their mother-tongue and still participate in the larger environment which is dominated by a majority group whose language is different. These researchers investigate similar questions, the perspective of the second group emphasizes the instances of minority ethnolinguistic vitality rather than focusing on losses and assimilation.

This chapter reviews the literature related to the ethnolinguistic vitality and social identity of French Canadians in minority situations outside Quebec. This review of the literature is organized around the key theoretical and research based discussions on ethnicity, identity and minority group membership. The first section situates this literature review within the areas of ethnicity and ethnic groups. It serves to explain how ethnic identity matters and what happens as groups come into contact with one another in multicultural societies. Language and ethnicity are critical elements of identity in the multicultural milieu. The second section attends to the ethnolinguistic vitality of minority groups and the ways in which language and cultural boundaries can be maintained to protect the identity of the group. The boundaries of identity, however, can also be flexible and adaptable so as to accommodate situations where another group, with its customs and practices, dominates. The general discussion of language and ethnicity turns to minority groups next. Recognizing that minority populations cannot live in isolation, the third section considers how ethnic groups may cross boundaries and how bilingualism may occur among members of the minority community. Language shift processes will lead to either bilingualism in situations where it is possible to maintain the first language and culture, or to assimilation into the dominant society while language and culture fall into disuse or are lost.

Bilingual development earns more of the attention in this research; the last part of the language and

ethnicity section discusses how bilingualism and biculturalism occur, as well as how the experience affects identity, whether positive, negative, additive or subtractive, bilingualism is vital to understanding the minority adolescent's experience. This perspective reflects the ways in which minority francophones may negotiate the boundaries of their experience in anglophone environments to pursue practices that permit some measure of French lifestyle

### **Social Identity and Ethnic Boundaries**

Barth (1969) suggests social identity "entails social processes of exclusion and incorporation whereby discrete boundaries are maintained despite changing participation and membership in the course of individual life histories" (p. 10). Barth describes ethnic groups as a form of social organization with the "critical feature of self-ascription and ascription by others" (p. 13). In a multicultural situation or pluralistic society, an ethnic community may not accommodate all forms of social identity: the disparity between values and organizational facilities requires that subdominant (minority) group members identify with majority statuses in some situations. Minority group members may identify with the majority society when ethnic membership does not lend itself to belonging to social groups or other situations. Since particular social contexts may vary, as will individual reasons for doing certain things in certain ways at different times, ethnicity needs to be thought about in terms of the social boundaries surrounding groups and the interaction that takes place between minority group members and the dominant society. Barth explains that:

The general feature of all minority situations lies in the organization of activities and interaction: in the total system, all sectors of activity are organized by statuses open to all members of the majority group, while the minority status system has relevance only to relations within the minority and only to some sectors of activity, and does not provide a basis for action in other sectors, equally valued by the minority culture. (p. 31)

In pluralistic societies, ethnicity is constrained in that people must participate in a system dominated by one group; thus, cultural diversity is relegated to religious and domestic sectors of activity (Barth, 1969, p. 16). Barth suggests that although society may contain several ethnic groups, interaction between the members of different groups "takes place entirely within the framework of the dominant group's statuses and institutions, where identity as an ethnic minority member gives no basis for activity, but may in varying degrees represent a disability in assuming operational statuses" (p. 32). This perspective implies that the participation of ethnic or language minorities in the wider social system depends on strategies of adjustment.

Leclerc (1992) describes language as a symbolic code of identification and differentiations for people in bilingual or multicultural situations (p. 33). He suggests that language is the catalyst of identity among francophones in terms of being a distinct people in North America (p. 33). He explains that language is often the last refuge for groups trying to resist the socially dominant culture. As a symbol of belonging, language protects people from "others." Leclerc argues that linguistic identification comes about because of a "need to be distinguishable from others, to count only on ourselves or what is rightfully ours, to know our authenticity" (p. 35, trans.). Edwards (1985) suggests that the risks to cultural identity faced by minority group members tend to make them more likely than majority group members to stress their groupness (p. 46). Language and ethnic identity become more crucial concerns when there is contact between groups, and especially when there are social obstacles for those in the minority (pp. 46-47). The importance of language in ethnic identification reflects the influence of symbolic associations in our ways of sorting our environment. Language links us to our ancestry and to other people who share our cultural values. Even among individuals who cannot use their ethnic language, it still stands as representative of "our group," the first group in our personalized community experience.

That sense of belonging to the ethnic group and sharing a language is important to the ethnolinguistic vitality of a minority group. Ethnolinguistic identity is a factor of knowing one's self and one's heritage, and recognizing how that is different from other's experience. Language is a valued part of identity because it symbolizes so much of ourselves. Equally important to the vitality of an ethnic group is their sense of themselves as a distinct social entity in their contact with other groups, as in the comparisons they make between themselves and others. Ethnicity informs our knowledge of the world, and speaks to others of who we are.

Interaction between people belonging to different groups raises concerns about contact, what their loses and gains may be, and what will become of their ethnolinguistic identity. The environment in which a minority group lives and the nature of its social relations with the dominant society greatly influence how identity is expressed in various socio-linguistic and geographic locations. The effect being a minority has on an ethnic group will differ according to circumstances in each situation and the way in which the minority group adapts (or does not) to the majority community.

Roosens (1989) supports the idea that ethnic identity is a relational construct that may shift in significance as people come into contact and interact with others who are different. He argues that ethnicity means little without the existence of ethnic groups or categories (p. 19). He explains that cultural traits are a combination of characteristics an ethnic group ascribes to itself and considers relevant to form a social border between one group and others, "different in its own eyes and in the eyes of others" (p. 12). Roosens reiterates the thesis developed by both Barth and Tajfel that "the intensity with which a group profiles itself as an ethnic group; and with which people stress their ethnicity, generally increases where there is intense spatial-geographical and social contact between groups" (p. 12). Greater consciousness of self is possible and necessary when comparisons to others are readily visible.

Barth (1969) argues that there are three forms of adaptation that enable subordinate groups to partake more fully in the social and cultural arenas offered by society. Minority groups can be totally incorporated into the pre-established society by assimilating and abandoning their distinctiveness; they can relegate their ethnicity to a separate sphere of identity and activity, while participating in the larger group for most social interaction; or a group may emphasize their ethnicity and use it to influence the host society (p. 33). Barth's explanation of ethnicity illustrates how the boundaries of identity are flexible, so that even as self-concepts change for participation in various social contexts, the contact can also reinforce the distinctions of language and culture between ethnic groups, thereby bolstering ethnic consciousness and influencing the vitality of the community.

Tajfel (1974) also describes membership and social identity in terms of flexible boundaries. He argues that people belong to numerous groups which contribute to their image of "self," so that social boundaries arise and change according to social comparison processes employed in the course of interaction (p. 69). Recognizing identity in socially defined terms suggests that a group to which a person belongs will need to reflect attributes positively associated with one's social identity; where a group's attributes do not correspond to the sense of self, individuals have the choice of leaving the group or re-interpreting their position by remaining a member but engaging in actions that will bring about desirable changes (p. 70).

Tajfel (1974) suggests that distinct characteristics of a group achieve their importance in relation to "perceived differences from other groups and the value connotations of these differences" (p. 71). An



individual's sense of his or her group, and the things associated with it, become meaningful when other groups are available to compare with. According to Tajfel, "the reason for behavioural and evaluative intergroup differentiation is to be found in the subjects' need to provide order, meaning, and some sense of social identity to their situation" (p. 75). People see themselves in relation to others, same or different; ethnic or other forms of social identification reflect values, circumstances, and categorization such that associations and actions may shift in different contexts.

Stebbins (1996) argues in favour of researching the minority rather than its losses. His investigations (1994) of the lifestyle patterns among francophones in Calgary have shown that francophones may work in English, but they organize their leisure time around French speaking friends, relatives, and activities, such that they enjoy a distinctive lifestyle. Stebbins asserts that researchers need to examine the diverse lifestyles that exist within daily life. His main argument and conclusion is that the geographic element of concentration is secondary to the symbolic aspects of language. Minority populations belong to a symbolic community consisting of social networks, heritage ties, groups of friends and perspectives of culture and identity (p. 136).

Stebbins (1996) defines lifestyle as: "a distinctive and recognizable way of life based on interests or social conditions, or both. Comprised of values, attitudes, orientations and behaviour patterns that will in certain circumstances form a base of identity for the participants in that lifestyle" (Trans. p. 131). Stebbins presents a conceptual model for recognizing a minority francophone lifestyle; focusing on these patterns allows a precise lens through which to see the minority and know it. He suggests focusing on activities and contacts that contribute to a French Canadian lifestyle. As long as some people in the minority milieu are living a francophone lifestyle for some of their daily experience, they can be seen to exhibit some vitality that supports survival of the language community.

The discussion of ethnic identity and the boundaries around social groups raises concerns about what influence the majority group will have over the minority and how the ethnicity of the minority group will be affected. The result is a vast body of literature which stresses the dangers of assimilation and the importance of maintaining minority language and culture. Often, maintenance of the minority community is addressed in terms of the social capital assessment of ethnolinguistic vitality which focuses on those variables that contribute to the ethnic identity of a minority community and its relationship to other groups in society.

## **Maintaining Boundaries: Ethnicity**

The concern in the discussion of identity and boundaries, and for ethnolinguistic vitality, is whether or not a minority group has the strength to survive the predominating influences of the majority society. Landry, Allard and Théberge (1991) suggest demographic, economic, political and cultural forms of social capital can be measured to assess the ethnolinguistic vitality of an ethnic group, and each contributes to an ethnic group's position within a larger community. In different ways, these measure of social capital are used in most discussions of French Canadians in minority situations. What follows is a description of these concepts and a presentation of the literature that applies them to minority francophones outside Quebec. While all have roles in maintaining minority group boundaries of distinction, particular contexts may shift the significance of each aspect of vitality so one may have more importance than another at different times.

**DEMOGRAPHIC CAPITAL.** Demographic capital measures population, territorial concentrations and residential segregation. Quantitative assessments suggest that the higher the numbers of a minority among a majority society, the higher their ethnolinguistic vitality is likely to be and the more likely they will succeed in maintaining language and culture (Landry, Allard & Théberge, 1991; Driedger, 1979). Demographic capital is indicative of how the minority will fare when its other forms of social capital are assessed; the higher the numbers the more likely it is that a group may have economic stability or advantage, political voice and clout, and recognition of its cultural distinctiveness (Driedger, 1979). Demographic assessments are used to measure and predict the likelihood of an ethnic group being able to sustain language and culture. The difficulty for French Canadians in minority situations is that their numbers and concentration are limited so French language contacts and socialization into the francophone community become hindered by the greater number of influences offered in the dominant community.

Maxwell's (1977) study of francophones interviewed 250 people in Toronto. He applied demographic assessment to residential segregation or the lack of in more recent days, to the effects it had on attendance at the French parish, on school choice for parents who had to bus their children into a rundown neighbourhood if they wanted to go in French, on children's playmates and their language choice, and on the choice and availability of where French social opportunities is used. He argues that while maintaining French in the home is important, its use is often limited by the presence of English media and social saturation, as well as

occurrences of mixed marriages and inter-ethnic contacts (p. 107). In families where parents do try to use French consistently, Maxwell found cases where the children prefer English because it is the language of their playmates and they want to fit in (p. 103). He also found cases of francophone parents who use little or no French with their children and who do not set a strong example for maintaining the language in minority situations (p. 104). Maxwell's findings demonstrate how language may not be passed on to the younger generation because occasions for contact with other francophones or to speak French were limited. Opportunities to work in French were few; and more often these positions required bilingualism rather than French exclusively. In addition, urban sprawl and metropolitan social conditions inhibited the probability of living near other French people, so neighbourhood contacts were minimal. The French parish, once a stronghold of French culture and community, also lost influence. Only 27% of Maxwell's respondents spoke French within church groups. Compounding their relative isolation and invisibility in Toronto, when parents' contact with French friends and associates was limited, and the extended family was not close by, French children had little opportunity to see their parents' language in action and thus were more reluctant to learn and value it (p. 105).

One problem with Maxwell was in looking at what the group lacked rather than at what it had. Demographic capital permits a minority community a certain amount of economic and political sway, as well as, perhaps most importantly, in cultural contact which encourages language maintenance. The sparse concentrations of francophones outside Quebec in the different regions of Canada might discourage researchers who depended on demographic strength to bolster ethnolinguistic vitality. Other forms of social capital are more influential and indicative sources of vitality among a minority community.

**ECONOMIC CAPITAL.** Economic and institutional completeness, as well as cultural organization contribute to the survival of minority groups because they help in maintaining language and culture (Gérin-Lajoie, 1993; Heller, 1987; Maxwell, 1977; Mougeon et al., 1984; Roosens, 1989; Dreidger, 1979; Tardiff, 1993; Smith, 1990). Economic capital refers to the socio-economic status of ethnic group members and their combined strength within domains belonging to the dominant society. Economic strength allows the sponsorship and ensures the maintenance of political voice, and the formation of institutions and associations which support the development of minority ethnic identities. Landry, Allard, and Théberge (1991) suggest

economic capital permits a group to have responsibility for itself and be inclined to sustain the cultural community and maintain the minority language.

The socioeconomic status of francophones is discussed in some studies in terms of the education levels and occupations of group members. Maxwell's (1977) study discussed occupations of francophones mostly in terms of the opportunities francophones have to speak French at work. The discussion of income in Maxwell's study came up in relation to participants who could afford to move into places away from the "old neighbourhood" and who could afford to decide to bus their children to the French school or pay for them to attend a private French language school.

Lafamme and Denis (1994) investigated the academic and occupational ambitions of minority francophone adolescents in Ontario addressing intergenerational patterns between parents' status and adolescents' goals. The language correlation made focused on school and work language contacts where French might be inhibited. The economic capital shared by francophones may be insufficient to support educational and career choices that permit mostly French-speaking contacts or francophone opportunities. The central argument in Lafamme and Denis' research is reasonable, but their concern misses the opportunity to see where French language choices are made – despite contact with the dominant group. Despite the obvious influence economic capital may wield on ethno-linguistic vitality and a minority group's social position, it does not come up in discussions of language maintenance very often. Rather the focus in these discussions is on the importance of having institutions and resources for the community, and some some cultural contact in which people can come together.

**POLITICAL CAPITAL.** Political representation is important to ethnic minorities having a voice in the community, it influences the status and position of the minority group within the dominant society (Driedger, 1979). Opportunities accessible to francophones are directly related to the political influence of the community. For example, political strength and good leadership make a big difference in the kinds of facilities available (Desjarlais, 1984). Effective leadership provides direction and gives a voice to the minority community. These factors determine the success of other ethnic endeavours and provide foundations for the minority community. All kinds of formal and informal arrangements possible bring francophone or other minority groups together. Often an umbrella organization sponsors a variety of programs and groups for the

French community (Desjarlais, 1984; Driedger, 1979). Leadership can be instrumental to organizations and minority communities because they can inspire the group and use this cohesiveness of the people to influence the ethnic community's political, social and economic position within the larger society (Driedger, 1979). francophone organizations offer minority French Canadians more options for cultural activities and increased contact with the community. Youth groups, church groups, discussion groups, theatre troops and dinner-dances, sports teams, and professional association.

Since opportunities to live or work exclusively in French are few, francophone associations have emerged to preserve language and culture through the family, churches, and schools (Maxwell, 1977, pp. 164-165). The church provides an opportunity for the community to gather and celebrate in their own language. Access to French language educational systems has been an important social, political, and economic gain for francophone children and their cultural future. Smith (1990), Maxwell (1977), Desjarlais (1984), and others have suggested that the school is essential to preserving language and culture with young minority francophones. French language schools are instrumental in providing instruction to francophone students and in helping them to sustain their culture (p. 166).

The combined effect of the socio-political and community support within enclavic boundaries helps maintain ethnic identification and solidarity, and places social distance between the "in-group" and others (Driedger, 1979, p. 102). Maxwell (1977) found that social participation protects the minority community by "preserving solidarity, identity, and cultural patterns characteristic of a particular society" (p. 9). Driedger (1979) similarly demonstrated how ethnic enclaves in domestic, religious, and educational spheres can help to maintain distinctive cultural identities, even as a group changes (p. 94).

**CULTURAL CAPITAL.** Stebbins' (1996) lifestyle research on Franco-Calgarians suggests minority populations maintain first language contacts beyond the social activities that take place in the language of the dominant group. In these studies and others, it has been established that minority populations can offset the risks of assimilation into the dominant group by maintaining distinctive social and cultural boundaries. Cultural capital, as a measure of ethnolinguistic vitality, measures language choice and the availability of minority language contacts (Landry, Allard & Th  berge, 1991). Language contacts in the individual's personal social network and with an extended community are essential to a sense of ethnic identity and group vitality. Cultural

capital suggests that level of French "ambiance" that exists for members of the minority group, pointing to the likelihood of the community being a distinct cultural entity (Landry, Allard & Th  berge, 1991).

Driedger argued that maintenance of "ethnic enclaves" permits the group to participate in the dominant society, while retaining the core essences of French identification (p. 106). Ethnolinguistic identity and cultural vitality may be greater where francophone individuals have opportunities to participate with other French people and foster an ethnic community within the dominant English society as indicated in Barth's (1969) and Roosens' (1989) suggestions concerning the self and others in the development of identity. Landry, Allard and Th  berge (1991) suggested that the level of French ambiance in which a person lived, the greater the possibility he would retain his first language and be bilingual rather than assimilate into the dominant English society. Language contacts are important because they provide critical opportunities for speaking French and sharing francophone culture.

Maxwell's (1977) findings on the French ambiance in Toronto homes suggest that French language contacts are limited, particularly in families where only one spouse is francophone, and especially among the children. Older relatives and the availability of French schools were important because they provide critical contact situations within which the French language was used and developed. Desjarlais' (1983) study of the influence of social milieu on francophone students in the Ottawa-Vanier area had similar findings. He investigated the effects of an anglophone environment on the French minority and found that a good number of francophone families did not use French regularly in the home (40%). He contends that these findings are particularly significant when we consider that language at home is most important and most revealing about levels of cultural identification (or assimilation) (p. 57). Desjarlais found that English media (television and reading habits) were the preferred choice of on francophone students; and only a third of the French families surveyed attended French theatre, listened to French music or participated in French language sports and organized activities (p. 58). Indeed, Desjarlais found that francophone identity was not strong, stating that only 43% were more comfortable using French than English (p. 58). Neither Maxwell, nor Desjarlais attends to those members of the minority population who succeed in maintaining their language. They do not discuss how some minority parents manage to help their children feel comfortable in their first language. These arguments deny the minority community its voice. They deny the existence even of a community because

the concern is with the loss and not with the survival from which others might learn.

The issue of language maintenance comes to the fore as researchers realize the influence of the dominant English culture on minority francophones. Considerable attention has been given to the importance of the home, where parents teach their minority children to speak French, and the school where French children are taught their community and what they have to gain by keeping their language. Almost without exception, home language and language of instruction at school are thought to be key indicators of linguistic maintenance because they can outweigh other social influences like English media and anglophone contacts. Landry, Allard and Th  berge (1991) explained that "the school milieu and the family milieu act as counterbalancing forces to the socio-institutional milieu by providing linguistic contacts to help maintain their first language" (p. 884). The ethnolinguistic vitality of identity and community is affected by the degree of French ambience that is available to people in their linguistic contacts and their habits of communication (p. 884). School and family ambience is related to the degree to which young francophones have access to and make use of their language.

The home and family equip young French Canadians with their primary socialization. It is in the home that children first learn to communicate, and the language they use will establish their cultural identity (Allaire & Fedigan, 1993, p. 674). The family represents the first instance of an ethnic enclave in which language and culture are protected. Allaire and Fedigan (1993) note that the family is the first location of survival and assimilation. The family provides individuals with cultural traits and prepares them to be part of an ethnic community (p. 676). These authors argued that anglicization and acculturation may occur to varying degrees for different people because of the social contexts they live in. The predominance of English around francophone populations means that French needs to be maintained within the family if French Canadian minorities expect their children to feel "at home" with their parents' language and culture.

Speaking French between spouses, with parents and siblings at home is considered an important indicator of language maintenance (Allaire & Fedigan, 1993; Maxwell, 1977; Desjarlais, 1983; Stebbins, 1995, 1996). French in the home initiates francophone children into the community and provides them with a constant opportunity to use the language. The family is the first French-language social contact in a child's network, and provides links to other francophone people. Parents are also instrumental in making the

decision to ensure their children attend French language schools and have opportunities for associating with other francophone social groups. Furthermore, Maxwell (1977), Desjarlais (1983) and Smith (1992) point out that in instances where francophones have married outside the minority community, English tends to be spoken between spouses and children tend to use English more. Such facts of increased contact with the dominant language, support turning to the school for assistance with language maintenance among minority children.

Since there is much concern over evidence of anglicization among francophone youth, many studies have focused on the role of the school as an important agent in the socialization of French Canadian children in the minority milieu, one that offers a French milieu and fosters a French lifestyle. French language schools are vitally important to francophone children because they provide a social context, beyond the home, in which French is used and the culture learned (Smith, 1992). Educators in Ontario have responded to the concerns articulated by researchers such as Maxwell and Desjarlais. Smith (1992) explains that some French Canadian children originate in families already absorbed into the dominant culture or from mixed marriages where the other language and culture are dominant, so that "the school often becomes a primary advocate and key resource for cultural preservation" (p. 8). In the school, the French language is a vehicle for communication and immersion in the culture. It shows minority children that they are part of a vital community, that there is reason to want to participate and appreciate their cultural distinctiveness, and the school can show French Canadian youth how, they are members of a larger social group. French language schools encourage young people to use their language and learn about the world through it. The school exposes adolescents to their cultural heritage, and they can begin to realize how their differences are significant from the dominant community (Smith, 1992; Gérin-Lajoie, 1996). Mougeon, Heller, Beniak and Canale (1984) conducted a meta-analysis of the existing research on language acquisition and the instruction of French minority children. Their findings indicate that French language instruction from the beginning of elementary to the end of high school could slow assimilation (p. 315). They explain that the Franco-Ontarian community counts on schools to arrest the assimilation of its younger members into the English majority (p. 316).

Smith (1992) traces the implementation of the Ontario Ministry of Education efforts on "refrancisation" in a French language elementary school in Thunder Bay (p. 27). "Refrancisation" is a process aiming to



nurture and ensure cultural and linguistic growth, thereby facilitating freedom of oral/cultural expression in the majority anglophone milieu and designed to alter assimilation trends (p. 5). She notes that the school is an integral part of maintaining French language and culture in minority situations and suggests that greater attention needs to be given to links between the culture and environment of the school, as well as to its ties to the greater francophone community. She concludes that there is a need to define and focus on the requirements of francophone students, and contends that researchers must be provided with opportunities to address the cultural reality of minority French Canadian youth (p. 50).

Desjarlais (1983) found that francophone parents sent their children to French language schools for the following reasons: (a) to assure the growth of their language and culture, and (b) so that they become bilingual (p. 58). He suggests that this second reason implies that if children did not go to French schools, they would become English unilingual. He found that many consider the Franco-Ontario school an essential condition for maintenance of French as the language of communication at home (p. 59). Desjarlais found that in the school, students find a micro-society that is a "carrier of application and cultural and linguistic values that are becoming less and less available in the milieu," meeting the needs of clientele that is as French as possible within their general social circumstance (p. 59). He proposes that school boards must know whom they are dealing with to set objectives based on fact rather than illusion (p. 60). This point refers to Desjarlais' earlier research (1980) where he found that students in French language sections (whether French or mixed schools) had dramatic differences in their knowledge of and abilities in French, such that Anglo-dominant students had a negative effect on the language habits of other students as well as the quality of instruction that was possible for teachers (p. 39). Nowhere in his work, however, does it become clear what might be done in various situations, and his argument, about the negative impact, implies that students who speak "too much" English should be removed.

Tardiff (1993) addresses the role of the school in minority contexts in transmitting of French beliefs and cultural values, as well as preserving language and reinforcing the cultural identity of the student (p. 787). Tardiff examined the cultural identity of minority francophone schools by delving into the beliefs and perceptions of twelve French language teachers and two administrators in an urban Alberta school. She found that French schools were distinguishable from immersion programs in that French was spoken all of

the time and a higher level of French was used (p. 789). Teachers noted that the cultural identity of the school is located within the fact that they use French all of the time and are learning to live French lives. Language was seen as the cornerstone of cultural understanding and teachers indicated that the school was an important vehicle for passing on the values of parents and for bringing the community together (p. 791). Tardiff concludes that the school reinforces cultural identity and legitimizes speaking French among francophone children (p. 792). She found that it plays a promotional role teachers motivate minority students to identify with the culture and serve as models of the language (p. 793). Tardiff argues that it is critically important that teachers understand the minority context so they can share with students the implications of their social position and show them how they fit in the Canadian mosaic (p. 794).

Gérin-Lajoie (1993) contends that induction programs for teachers of minority francophone students help to prepare beginning teachers for the social situation they are entering. She argues that teachers in minority situations need to be prepared for the contexts in which they are working, such as the mix among students in terms of linguistic ability and preferences influenced by the dominant society (p. 800). She notes that programs must be geared to the needs and realities of the minority francophone milieu (p. 801). Because students are not a homogeneous group, feelings of francophone belonging vary among them; teachers need to be conscious of that as they try to fulfil the school mandate to preserve language and culture (p. 805). The differing backgrounds of students within a school creates a complex situation for students and teachers alike. Gérin-Lajoie indicates that in a minority milieu the learning environment can be frustrated by the mix in classroom interests and aptitudes. Offering quality education that is culturally enriched to maintain language and ethnicity, depends on teachers who are prepared for the social circumstances and adjusted to the system (p. 809). She concludes that when French education in Ontario can provide students with a secure environment administered by concerned professionals prepared to support families in their social development, the francophone culture and language may be assured in minority situations.

McMahon (1996) also addresses the issue of training minority language teachers to understand their role as transmitters of language and culture. He argues that future teachers must become agents of enculturation for francophone youth (p. 79): the task is to make students conscious, to enable them to (re)discover history and self so that they know their origins. He suggests that teachers must be able to import

knowledge that is more personal than scientific about the francophone milieu; they must also invite students to study themselves and the life external to their community. He argues that students need to know both, so they can live the experience rather than be outside it, so they can evolve (p. 81). He explains that cultural identity evolves out of social experience, but it needs to be reinforced; teachers must know their own standpoint and be prepared to assist students to make those discoveries in the minority milieu (pp. 82-83). McMahon suggests that such a program would allow a cultural praxis that is true to the community, founded in Canadian history and not beside it (p. 87). This kind of knowledge makes the francophone minority a concrete reality for students, one that is anchored in everyday experience, as well as in historical origins.

This section has described the elements of social capital that influence ethno-linguistic vitality. Demographic, economic and political capital shape a minority group's position in the larger community and give them support for cultural institutions and community contacts. Cultural capital is most important to ethnic minorities because it encompasses linguistic contacts, cultural events and community vitality. The home and school have been identified as central to the continuance of the French language among minority francophone children. An issue in that discussion is the negative impact the dominant society may have on language acquisition and language choice. Towards a resolution of that concern, in the next section, the review is of literature that pertains to contact between minority and majority groups, and the effects of crossing language boundaries.

### **Crossing Boundaries: interaction and Bilingualism**

The homogeneity of society requires that people from different ethnic groups in Canada use English in most social situations (Maxwell, 1977; Driedger, 1979). Many studies of minority francophone populations have focused on maintaining the French language and the preservation of its cultural heritage. They conclude that French minorities are at risk of assimilating into the dominant society and are in danger of losing their language and culture (Maxwell, 1977; Smith, 1992). It has been suggested that as generations of French Canadians become more integrated with English society they begin using the French mother tongue, or first language, less and less. While French adults may maintain some linguistic contacts and social ties, there is concern that subsequent generations may grow up fully submersed in English society and be assimilated in the process (Maxwell, 1977; Smith, 1992). Ethnicity is shaped by the boundaries that exist between groups,

as well as by individual participation in a minority cultural community and the dominant society. Where a group has positive ethnolinguistic vitality, interaction between groups can contribute significantly to the ethnic awareness of members and the distinctiveness of their ethnicity as recognized by others.

Gilbert (1996) argues that demographic concentration varies by community. Historical settlement of areas by certain groups has enabled some concentrations of francophones, however, contemporary conditions make that less possible more and more often. Where in some cases the group will be isolated from the influence of the majority population (Driedger, 1979, p. 95); other patterns of urban settlement will scatter the French population and may decrease their contact with one another so that they experience isolation within the dominant society (Maxwell, 1977, p. 10). Gilbert recognizes how communities and contexts differ. She suggests ways for investigating minority populations' language use, which consider particular situations and patterns of participation. She suggests looking at each minority milieu on its own, to describe how minority populations understand a linguistic space and use one language or the other.

Gilbert's (1996) concern is that all the services that exist, and contacts at work or school, with friends or relatives, or in media and entertainment that do utilize the minority language are minimized by assimilation arguments. The socio-institutional structures that influence the availability of services and resources, contact with one another, and perceptions of self and others must be included in the equation. She is critical of research studies that argue the assimilation of groups in contact in Canada. As a cultural geographer, Gilbert instead considers the role of the milieu in structuring language practices among anglophone and francophone minority groups (p. 54). She draws ideas from sociological studies of individual and community ethnicity, as well as structuralization theories from geography to describe ethnocultural spaces in the minority environment. She argues that comparisons of different milieu that do not resemble one another should not be used to compare language shift or similarities that will reflect poorly on one. Her study of minority populations in Ontario and Quebec, looked at population stability and its effects on language practices. She distinguished between French and mixed milieu, and parts of francophone life. She found links between stability and structures of language practices, group effectiveness, regional differences, and community dynamics (p. 65).

Stebbins' (1995, 1996) research suggests that minority francophone populations maintain francophone lifestyles within spheres of their daily activity. Participation in the ethnic community provides

people with a sense of social belonging. The salience of ethnicity and ethnic boundaries becomes more significant when people use their language and have a greater awareness of their cultural heritage (Allaire & Fedigan, 1993; Driedger, 1979; Maxwell, 1977). Allaire and Fedigan (1993) explain that the dominating presence of English society can be undermined (and assimilation slowed) when the minority francophone population has access to a French cultural community (p. 673). Increasingly, researchers are beginning to recognize how it is possible for minority francophones to maintain ethnolinguistic culture in some areas of everyday experience, while also interacting in the majority community using the dominant language.

### **Interaction**

Hamers and Leblanc (1989) among others have addressed how the concept of diglossia applies to situations in which different languages (or styles of speech) co-exist for some people in society with distinct social functions and statuses (p. 174). These authors cite Fishman's (1967) discussion that "distinguishes between diglossia and bilingualism, the former referring to social function distribution, the latter to an individual's ability to use more than one code" (p. 174). They explain that "in stable diglossia a multilingual community maintains its different languages by preserving each of them for certain domains, roles and functions with little encroachment of one language upon the other" (p. 175). Stable relations between the two language communities ensure linguistic maintenance; but changes in these relations can result in language shift and possible assimilation of the minority group into the dominant majority (p. 176).

When the group gives up its mother tongue, the process of language shift is complete (p. 176). Bilingual diglossia is a relatively stable phenomenon in which a speech community maintains its different languages functionally separate; when diglossia breaks down speakers of subordinate languages shift to the dominant language and ultimately give up their mother tongue (p. 179).

The process of shift can be slowed by relative ethnicity in the form of maintenance of language, ethnic ties and identification with the in group, and close links to ethnic social networks.

Hamers and Leblanc (1989) also discuss the importance of social interaction and the linguistic environment within which bilingual children are socialized (p. 38). They suggest that a child's social representation of language is associated with the members of his or her social network. The social network transmits values to the child, so when two or more languages are present the child will develop "a shared representation which relativizes the different languages" (p. 76). They explain that:

As a result of power relations between social groups, a multilingual society confers different status

upon language by valorizing them to varying extents for socially desirable activities, by institutionalizing them as such and by conveying attitudes about them. The dominant group will legitimize its language and impose it as the norm on subordinate groups, who will either accept it or try to challenge it. (p. 76)

Depending on the social position and the status of the language of a particular group, the first language may or may not be valued and the development of proficiency in a second language may or may not be considered worthwhile or necessary (p. 77). In the case of subordinate language groups, like minority French Canadians, maintenance of the mother tongue and acquisition of the dominant language are related to the valued functions of each language (p. 77). Hamers and Leblanc argue that "the more parents valorized their language and the school valorized the mother tongue, the more likely a child would have a positive perception of the first language and therefore, acquire the second language in an additive way" (p. 77).

The boundaries of identity may intensify or diminish depending on the relationship between minority and majority populations, and the social capital held by the minority group by which it can maintain or promote itself. Hornby (1977) discusses the varying purposes and practices of language in diglossia situations, such that "one language is used for some social functions, while a distinctly different variety of language may be used for the remaining social functions" (p. 6). Hornby cited Fishman (1967) noting that:

...societies in which widespread bilingualism exists will tend to move toward diglossia, and in almost all diglossic societies there will be some individuals who for economic, political, geographic or other reasons will form a link between the two speech communities and hence, will have to be bilingual. Since bilingualism always occurs within some particular social setting, the potential effects that it will have on the individual may vary widely depending on the particular social significance and function of the two languages. (p. 7)

The ethnolinguistic vitality of the minority group and their ability to bridge the distance between languages depends on the relations between them. Taylor (1977) maintains that the issues of ability and motivation to interact centre on the dynamics of intergroup relations (p. 68). The major thrust of Taylor's argument is that "in some situations, second language learning and use must be understood within the context of intergroup relations" (p. 70). Taylor cites three motivational factors in his discussion of bilingualism and intergroup relations: (1) how bilingualism affects relations with own (ethnic) identity, particularly for less powerful groups; (2) how attitudes may change toward second language learning; and (3) how choice of language can be used to express cooperation or hostility in intergroup relations" (p. 68). He contends that where two or more ethnolinguistic groups "exist in an unequal relationship, second language learning will have

important implications for ethnic identity" (p. 68). He found that where contact between groups was high, "personal contact was associated with fluency and bilingualism, and feeling one's identity threatened served as a deterrent to bilingualism..." (p. 70). None the less, Taylor states: "When the contact of French Canadians with English Canadians was high, there was little fear of identity loss in general, and certainly no special concern about the effect of learning English on one's ethnic identity" (p. 70).

Hébert (1996) examined the friendship patterns of francophone children in a grade 7 class. She proposed that in the minority milieu choice of friends is bilingual and bicultural. She asked participants to identify their friendship networks with a focus on the linguistic origins of friends. Although there were differences in the kind of friendships and activities favoured by boys or girls, Hébert found that rather than choose between minority and majority language networks, participants rejected a forced choice in favour of a double-belonging, bilingual and bicultural. Adolescence is a process of discovery about self and others, and Hébert found that adolescents will choose friends who reinforce their sense of self. As they interpret who they are and what they want, their choices are continually being rethought. Adolescents may lean toward one language or the other at different times; Hébert found that generally the participants in her study had friends who were bilingual, whether of francophone or anglophone origin.

Some authors have found that there are three types of students attending French language schools: French dominant, bilingual, and English dominant (Mougeon, Heller, Beniak & Canale, 1984, p. 316; Desjarlais, 1980, p. 47). Mougeon et al found that bilingual students were in the majority at French language schools, while French and English dominants were a weak minority (p. 318). However, bilingual students are often observed to have varying competence levels so that they will learn toward one language more than the other (p. 331). Whether a matter of preference or ability, language facility is related to the degree of French used at home and in situations outside school such that those students who have a more French environment are more likely to speak French consistently well (pp. 320-325). These researchers point out that even if French is the language used by teachers and students for scholarly activities, when the teachers are not present, it is English that is used between students, and when students are given the choice, it is English that they will use (p. 319). The findings illustrate the impact of the English influences on the community milieu (p. 319). Unfortunately, they do not illuminate the dynamics of the situation or explain the "whys."

## **Adaptation**

Research studies indicate that it is indeed possible for minority francophones to adapt to the constraints of their situations, and be active in both the French and English communities, to develop a dual membership that enables them to maintain their francophone identity, as well as adapt to their local cultural conditions (Roosens, 1989; Barth, 1969; Stebbins, 1995). These studies support my position that it is possible for French Canadians in English environments to adapt themselves to the minority context without that necessarily implying assimilation into the dominant society of Western Canadians. Landry, Allard and Th  berge (1991) studied French first language high school students in different contexts to see how environmental language contacts were supportive bilingualism, or if they could frustrate attempts at first language maintenance and/or second language learning. These researchers distinguished between subtractive and additive-type bilingualism (p. 879). *Additive bilingualism* refers to the learning of a second language with no negative impact on the maintenance of the mother tongue (p. 880). *Subtractive bilingualism* refers to the learning of a second language at the expense of the first; this might include incomplete understanding or incorrect use of the mother tongue or only partial mastery of each language (p. 880).

Giles and Byrne (1982) advocate an intergroup approach for second language learning. They point out that "motivation is central to any understanding of L<sub>2</sub> (second language) proficiency" (p. 34), and identify five conditions that promote motivation to learn the L<sub>2</sub>:

- 1) in group identification is weak and/or L<sub>1</sub> is not a salient dimension of ethnic group membership;
- 2) quiescent inter-ethnic comparisons exist (no awareness of cognitive alternatives to inferiority);
- 3) perceived in group vitality is low;
- 4) in group boundaries are soft and open; and
- 5) strong identification exists with many other social categories, each of which provides adequate group identities and satisfactory in group status.

By contrast, they propose that:

Subordinate group members will most likely not achieve native-like proficiency in the dominant group's language when:

- 1) in group identity is strong and language is a salient dimension of ethnic-group membership;
- 2) insecure inter-ethnic comparisons exist;
- 3) in group vitality is high;



- 4) in group boundaries are hard and closed; and
- 5) weak identification exists with few other social categories. (pp. 34-35)

In this case, would-be learners' "fear of assimilation would be stronger the closer the linguistic boundaries were felt to be; in these circumstances, positive group differentiation is being threatened most severely" (p. 36). The combination of these factors affect bilingualism and assimilation rates. An implication is the importance of discussing local situations and experiences in maintaining the vitality of the first language.

Desjarlais (1980) explains that teachers and principals in the French language schools he studied were interested in helping young people to gain linguistic competence comparable to anglophones in English, as well as an allegiance to the concept of French Canadian and Franco-Ontarian culture (p. 40). Desjarlais (1980) suggests there are two points to consider in measuring the cultural maintenance of minority francophones: the linguistic group with which a student identifies, and the language the student prefers to use at home and with friends (p. 54). He explains that it takes two for communication and that if one party has no motivation to speak French, it is English that will be spoken, regardless of the French preference of the other (p. 63). In schools where there is a 35 to 40% presence of Anglo-dominant students, French becomes simply the language of instruction (p. 69). Such situations constitute "a violation against the nature of the school where French is supposed to be not just the language of instruction, but is equally the medium of communication for all activities inside the institution that must protect French language and culture" (p. 69, trans.). Desjarlais quotes teachers who say that loss of language is not really appreciated by students,

Nos élèves ne sont pas conscients qu'ils sont anglicisés ou assimilés, car cet état s'avère normal pour eux. Ils croient qu'en parlant français (boîteusement) de temps à autre, cela suffit pour se dire bilingue.

Les anglophones qui apprennent le français dans nos écoles viennent parfois à bout de parler mieux que nos francophones qui sont tirillés par les effets de l'anglicisation, les effets du "joual" (que les anglophones ne connaissent pas), les effets d'un sentiment d'infériorité face à leur langue, etc... (p. 72)

Desjarlais (1980) found that in some cases where the population was not concentrated enough to warrant a totally French language school, students were attending French language programs within English schools (p. 40). He expressed the concern that the presence of the dominant English population impinges on the French instruction. The proximity of English students creates an anglicizing element that encourages movement toward the dominant group which results in a range of language proficiency among students in both

French and English. He found that even in completely French language schools there is an anglicizing element among French students who have already made their language choices (p. 66). The range of French competence levels and the presence of anglicizing elements was a concern for teachers who identified lost time and the lowering of standards in efforts to meet the needs and abilities of all the students (p. 53). Indeed, Desjarlais found that even students who came from strong French regions unconsciously feel the need to anglicize (p. 68). Unfortunately, Desjarlais did not elaborate on how resistance to assimilation and language loss takes place or how that could affect francophone social identity.

### **Minority francophone Ethnolinguistic Vitality**

Landry and Allard (1990) note that whether an individual belongs to a minority or majority group, he/she is part of a linguistic community that is marked by a relative level of ethnolinguistic vitality (p. 531). They point to the influence of the home and school on minority language speakers, suggesting that these should not be neglected in the process of second language learning (p. 535). They suggest that using the mother tongue in the school and home has no negative effect on second language learning. With L<sub>1</sub> social contacts of interpersonal contact networks, and use of L<sub>2</sub> media, second language courses offered in the educational setting allow the conceptual transfer of L<sub>1</sub> to L<sub>2</sub> (p. 535). These authors argue that in minority communities, the home and school milieu counterbalance the socio-institutional milieu so that second language acquisition is built upon the foundations of the first language. They describe several different types of bilingualism and explain that fluency in the second language, without detriment to the first, is a factor of ethnolinguistic vitality and individual's range of social networks (pp. 537-538).

Lambert (1978) studied people who had a dual heritage and found that such individuals can develop allegiance to both aspects of their identity (p. 542). He suggests that "in bilingual communities where differential prestige is accorded to the languages and to the ethnolinguistic groups involved, attention should be placed by both linguistic groups on the development of skills in the language more likely to be overlooked" (p. 545). In this way, minority French Canadian children "will begin to reflect pride in being French, and a realization that their language is as important a medium for education as English" (p. 546). Again social relations are a factor in the way bilingualism does or does not come about, positive relations foster a support environment, negative relations discourage interaction and dual experience by forcing a choice.

Carey's (1991) analysis of French education in Ontario addresses the conditions of minority experience and culture continuation. He argues that minority language speakers "frequently experience a restricted social range of opportunities for communication and information processing... minority children must find avenues to maximize their communication in their first language in order to enrich their prior knowledge, socialization, reading comprehension, and academic achievement" (p. 967). He suggests that minority maternal language schools "can maximize the early communication, socialization and learning for minority language children and that this will lead to higher subsequent academic achievement" (p. 968). The school, then, builds on the contribution of minority language used in the home to give children a more enriched environment (p. 968). Within this environment, minority language children can develop and maintain their mother tongue, even as they develop second language proficiency (p. 971). Carey suggests that denying the minority the opportunity to a rich and diversified education is a possibility when restrictive ideas govern education. It is his view that the advancement and success of English-dominant minority students in francophone or immersion programs depends "in part on how they perceive the value of speaking French" (p. 972).

Landry, Allard and Th  berge (1991) found that the level and degree of bilingualism for francophone students was related to the level of vitality in their community and the extent of French ambience that could compensate for the dominance of the second language in the socio-institutional milieu (p. 885). Membership in a high versus a low ethnolinguistic vitality group encourages more contact with French language and culture (p. 886). The findings indicated that bilingualism for minority group students would be less subtractive if the family and school milieu act as counter-balancing forces to the dominance of the second language (p. 908). The authors suggested that the school and family need to be much more active in their role of strengthening the French language if they wish to promote additive bilingualism among younger francophones who tend to be English dominant (p. 908).

Landry, Allard and Th  berge (1991) conclude that both the school and family milieu need to be much more active in their role of strengthening the French language than they have been if these institutions wish to promote additive bilingualism for their children (p. 908). They found that school and family were significant influences in developing and maintaining linguistic competence, personal beliefs, ethnolinguistic identity and

the reported language variety spoken (p. 909). The critical factor is how these milieu can strengthen francophone identity rather than in weakening feelings of belonging to the anglophone group (p. 900). This is important in the context of the western francophone situation which is characterized by high rates of linguistic assimilation. Where youth have more French language contacts and opportunities to use their first language, they will have a higher ethnolinguistic identity and be more likely to have additive-type bilingualism. The authors argue that francophone educators need to focus not only on teaching the language, but must also develop specific and highly dynamic programs that foster strong personal beliefs in the value of the French language and a strong ethnolinguistic identity (p. 909).

The issue of francophone survival or assimilation concerns researchers of French Canadians in minority situations. For some researchers, the integrity of French communities and francophone identity is at risk within predominantly English milieu (Desjarlais, 1984; Allaire & Fedigan, 1993; Maxwell, 1977; Smith, 1990). This concern has produced a body of literature that is critical of anglophone influences on French Canadians who live in the provinces beyond Quebec. The problem in multi-ethnic urban centres, researchers believe, is that "local conditions or circumstances which encourage members of the minority to participate in the social structures of the majority, in preference to their own, weaken cultural boundaries and are a potential threat to the cultural survival of the ethnic minority" (Maxwell, 1977, p. 10).

However, consciousness of difference can strengthen group boundaries and social identity. Social boundaries help minority groups maintain their sense of self, even as they participate in the larger community. Participation in the French community, maintenance of language and culture, and sustained ethnic identification are crucial elements for ensuring the ethnolinguistic vitality of minority francophones. This research builds on the notion of social participation, focusing on the boundaries which contribute to the minority's cultural maintenance, as well as to their social identity and ethnolinguistic vitality as a group within a larger social system.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

This study describes the lived experience of French Canadian adolescents in a predominantly English community. Focusing on how francophone identities are maintained or changed as members of the group participate in their environment, the inquiry is concerned with describing and understanding how minority French Canadians make sense of their situation while adapting to the minority milieu. Social boundaries, ethnolinguistic vitality, and social identity were key constructs in this study. The research design was non-emergent but flexible so that the method and questions could be adjusted as critical issues were illuminated. This chapter discusses the theoretical framework within which this research was conducted, as well as the research design, and the methods and processes.

### **Theoretical Foundations**

#### **Qualitative Research**

Qualitative inquiry makes the researcher central to the process of exploring and understanding what is significant about things within a particular social situation; interpretation requires an openness about how and where the research may progress (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Markut & Morehouse, 1994; Patton, 1990). According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), qualitative research is a multi method form that "studies things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p. 2). Glesne and Peshkin (1992) note that qualitative research has the "task of coming to understand and interpret how the various participants in a social setting construct the world around them" (p. 6). Bogdan and Biklen (1992) explain that ethnography seeks to describe culture, which includes understanding the ways in which behaviour is guided by the practical knowledge of people within the socio-cultural parameters of their community. The process is emergent since the design follows the researcher's discoveries by enabling her to probe new directions throughout the collection of data (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 1990).

Glesne and Peshkin (1992) stress the researcher's personal involvement, and partiality, as well as "her emphatic understanding" (p. 12). She must find what matters to participants and what it means; she must give herself to seeing what they see or may miss something vital to their point of view. The purpose is

"contextualization, interpretation, and understanding the actors' perspectives" (p. 12). The researcher is continually watching for patterns to emerge and leads to follow. The more she discovers, the more she can reflect and interpret and refocus her questions.

Patton (1990) explains that "one of the cardinal principles of qualitative methods is the importance of background and context to the processes of understanding and interpreting data" (p. 9). He describes qualitative research as the collection of "raw data from the empirical world. Data are collected without being fit into pre-decided categories and analysis is on-going" (p. 22). In qualitative research, information is collected thoughtfully and is considered reflectively as more contact leads to an understanding of the subjects' experiences. The themes and explanations that come out of data collection develop as key words, phrases, ideas, and concepts become significant sensitizers. Fieldwork, ethnographic descriptions, interviews, observation, case studies, as well as life histories, are used in qualitative research to gather data which will evolve into a meaningful account of experience.

Spradley (1979) explains that an alternative to testing formal theories, and a way to combat ethnocentrism, "is to develop theories grounded in empirical data of cultural description" (concept of grounded theory from Glaser & Strauss, 1968, cited in Spradley, 1979, p. 11). He suggests that ethnography "offers an excellent strategy for discovering grounded theory" (p. 11), that theories can be informed by discovering the folk theories of people in a particular research context (p. 12). Ethnography allows the researcher to discover meaning about behaviour; the way people define their behaviour or explain it raises definitions that are influenced by culturally specific backgrounds (p. 12). Spradley explains that ethnography is good for "understanding the human species, but also for serving the needs of humankind" (p. 16).

Qualitative inquiry is an umbrella term referring to a variety of research methods applied in natural settings that use interpretive approaches to understand the insider's point of view (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 9). It assumes the social construction of reality, the complexity of variables in a setting, and the primacy of the subject matter (p. 7). Qualitative inquiry is concerned with context and interpretation, and uses inductive reasoning to proceed from questions to a search for patterns that ends with hypotheses and grounded theory (p. 7). The researcher in qualitative inquiries becomes closely involved in the research process and is instrumental in exploring the range of the complexities influencing behaviour and interaction.

Methods of qualitative inquiry locate the researcher close to the subject(s) and place emphasis on descriptive accounts of data.

These qualities are central to my inquiry into the lives of French-Canadian adolescents in Thunder Bay. The qualitative methods used in this study are discussed below. Qualitative investigation was important to this research because it allowed discussion of the social circumstances and issues that influence minority francophone experience.

### **Research Questions**

1. What opportunities exist for linguistic and cultural maintenance in a minority milieu?
2. What is the lived experience of minority francophone Canadian adolescents within a dominant English culture?
3. How do social contacts contribute to or change francophone identity and ethnolinguistic vitality?
- 4.1 When do francophone minority students use English or French?
- 4.2 In what contexts do they use French?
- 4.3 In what contexts do they use English?
5. In what ways does the dominant (English) culture influence the language use of francophone minority adolescents?
6. How do community demographics, social organizations, and individual standpoints affect experience in the community?

### **Design**

The intent of this research inquiry was to describe the lived experiences of French Canadian adolescents in a minority milieu. The design was emergent and allowed the researcher to focus on themes, issues, and concerns which emerged during the data collection phase of the study (Patton, 1990). Data collection involved selection of 22 francophone adolescents through a snowball sampling technique (Markut & Morehouse, 1994; Li, 1981). Respondents participated in interviews in which open-ended questions were used to invite them to describe their experiences. An interview guide was developed to focus the inquiry and was reworked as certain questions failed or particular issues emerged to further the study. The data analysis

was ongoing so that ideas and hypotheses which arose could be further explored in later interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Patton, 1990).

### **Sample**

"Snowball" samples refer to a type of probability sampling that relies on participants referring the researcher to other people who might participate (Li, 1981, p. 31). Like a rolling snowball, the research sample grows as the researcher gathers more cases through referrals from participants. This method of sampling worked well because the first few participants referred me to other potential respondents. As it turned out, I knew many of the adolescents I interviewed as a result of my supply teaching in their classrooms. In one instance I interviewed a mother, whose class I had substituted a few months earlier, and her son.

The sample included 22 francophone adolescents living in Thunder Bay, Ontario who are a minority within their schools and the community. They ranged in age from 13 to 20. The interviews were conducted over the late summer and fall of 1995. Adolescent participants were contacted and meetings were set at times convenient to their schedules. Approximately half of the interviews took place at the homes of my respondents, other interviews were conducted over cokes at quiet restaurants; one took place in an office on a lunch break; and one, at the university library. I tried to ensure that interviews were done in a comfortable atmosphere so that participants could relax and speak freely.

### **Methodology**

*Process Log.* A process log was kept to record field notes and to document ongoing theoretical reflections of the substantive and methodological aspects of the study, decision processes, and references to relevant readings. It was used initially to keep track of contacts and work out my questions. Once contact was made, the log was used to record impressions and reflections about the interviews. Key ideas that emerged from the discussions were noted and occasionally compared to other interviews. Notes were also made following the completion of transcripts as finer points appeared within the interviews and I had to write to think about the implications. Also during the coding of data and analysis, the log was used to organize my ideas and guide the interpretation. (Process Log)

*Interviews.* Interviewing is the process of talking with people and getting them to tell you what they know. Interviews can be formal structured interactions or relaxed conversations. A skilled researcher asks



informed questions that encourage interviewees to go into detail with their responses. The researcher must also be attuned to the nuances within the words spoken by informants and be prepared to follow up the leads which in turn, give rise to other subtle and intriguing questions. Openness in inquiry allows an interview to take its own significant course and lets the researcher be more effective (Bogdan & Biklen, 1990; Patton, 1990; Spradley, 1979; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Open-ended questions give the research necessary space to pursue the inquiry. The use of open-ended questions permits the researcher to elicit more descriptive and detailed responses and allows respondents more options for responding. Good questions are ones that provoke thoughtful description and explanations from the respondent because these are the questions that permit patterns to emerge and be interpreted to further our understanding (Borden & Biklen, 1992, p. 200).

Interviews were conducted with 22 participants. Patton (1990) suggests that respondents' interviews be aimed at "understanding the program, learning terminology, and capturing the complexities of their experience" (p. 291). The interview guide developed for this study posed open-ended questions that encouraged respondents to explain their experiences and reveal their ethnolinguistic vitality (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 200). Adolescents were asked about their participation in social activities, their linguistic contacts, and how they maintain their francophone culture and preserve their language. The interview was structured to ask the adolescents about being francophone in Thunder Bay, a minute minority in a city that is officially uni-lingual. Questions were asked pertaining to ethnolinguistic vitality, social relations and participation in the French community, their linguistic situation, and bilingualism. These themes were central to understanding the minority experience. As I talked with respondents, I tried to draw out the issues beneath their words. I asked for clarification, more details, or more depth as the interviews progressed. I developed a rapport with my participants, listened to their stories, and became intent on finding out more.

### **Entry**

One of the setbacks I encountered in doing this research was that I was not given permission by the school board I had approached to conduct observations and interviews. In part, this was due to my original timeline which coincided with a busy time for teachers and students. On the other hand, the refusal may have partly been political in that I am an anglophone and the board might have been concerned about the nature of my intentions. I resolved the problem by waiting until the school year had ended and students were on

summer vacation. I then used the snowball sampling technique to identify respondents. The timing of the study was problematic as many of my interviews had to be scheduled around holiday plans and the students' commitments.

The participants interviewed for this research were recruited in a combination of ways. First, letters that explained the study were sent to students I had met while working as a supply teacher. When the letters failed to produce any respondents, I made follow-up telephone calls to the names on my list. It turned out that the letters had been received and often ignored because the adolescents were busy with their own lives and did not see any reason to interrupt their plans for some university researcher. The follow-up calls allowed me the chance to further explain what I was doing and gave students (those who were sent the letter) a better idea of who I was which allowed me to gain access to them on the basis of that personal connection. As well, some of the letters had been misdirected: one young man refused to participate; another female had an answering machine and did not return my call. Three of the original eight indicated they would be interested in talking to me. From these initial contacts and referrals from a couple of immersion teachers I have worked for, I used the snowball sampling method.

Rapport with respondents was sometimes established on the grounds of participants' interest in talking about their experience as francophones. Being recognized as a supply teacher was helpful in that it established my credibility as an interested person. In a majority of cases, especially with older adolescents, potential respondents had been in classes I had taught and were willing to participate once they knew who I was.

The first interview was successful and the respondent gave me two more names. The two names led to more messages and another interview. Time was slipping by, everyone was working or on holidays, and I worried about getting my data collected before summer was over. The second interview led to more names, as did the third. This process continued until I had spoken with 22 participants in the course of 15 interviews over the summer and fall of 1995.

### **Process**

I generally began the interviews by asking participants to describe their community to me as an outsider. Taking my direction from their responses, I would proceed with questions from each area of

concern. Questions were rearranged to fit the course of our discussions and were adjusted to fit the situation. When I first started, I fumbled until I found the best ways to understand all they were telling me. I gradually grew more adept and could pick up on more of the subtle things respondents said. The format of the interview also depended on the participants' rapport with me when we talked. Some were rather chatty and needed little prompting to talk about the way they saw their experience. With others who were shy or less descriptive, I had to be more precise with my questions. The interviews lasted for varying amounts of time, between forty minutes and two hours.

Several times as I transcribed interviews I wished I had had more skills as a researcher so that I might have caught subtle nuances within participant responses and been able to follow-up with more specific questions. I would have liked to go back and interview my participants more as I did the analysis, but time constraints made that impossible and I knew I had to stop somewhere. However, the interview questions were revised in the first several interviews to make them more effective and to elicit more detailed responses from participants.

Vitality questions invited adolescents to describe the francophone community, their perceptions of their membership in it, the importance of language and how identity develops and how their culture is maintained.

Questions about participation in the community focused on the role of social contacts in developing and maintaining a francophone sense of self. These questions considered how social relations influence association with the ethnocultural group.

Situational questions sought to elicit descriptions of the francophone community within a predominantly English-speaking city. The ideas pursued here dealt with the adolescents' contact with the dominant society, their ideas about it, and the adjustments they make to facilitate their experiences with people in the city. This part of the interview invited adolescents to describe how they balance the linguistic requirements of their social participation, and their understanding of assimilation in the minority context.

Finally, participants were asked about their ideas on bilingualism and their experiences with it.

In all but four interviews, the participants and I spoke French. The four English interviews were initiated in French and the participants indicated a preference for continuing in English because of greater

comfort and flexibility. In each of these cases the participants had lived in the Thunder Bay region their whole life and had a parent from each official language group. Three of the four are fluent in French but see English as offering more descriptive options. The fourth was a boy who understood French, but who had difficulty mastering the colloquial language spoken by his mother and the standard register used by his teachers.

The list of questions below made up the interview guide. Sometimes fewer or more questions were necessary to find out what participants had to say.

### **I Subjective vitality of francophone community**

- Qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire pour se sentir membre de la communauté française?
- Qu'est-ce qu'on remarque quand on est francophone en Thunder Bay? Qu'est-ce qui est significatif dans l'expérience?
- Qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire pour développer l'identité-française, et comment peut-on maintenir la langue et la culture en situation minoritaire? Qu'est-ce que vous faites pour garder cette identité?
- Pourquoi est-ce que la langue est importante?

### **II Social relations and participation in the francophone community**

- Vu qu'on a besoin de participer pour nourrir ce côté de l'identité, comment est-ce que les contacts sociaux sont importants?
- Quels contacts sociaux sont importants pour garder la langue et la fierté des francophones?
- Quel est le rôle de la famille? Comment est-ce que votre famille est responsable de se que vous êtes? Qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire si on habite loin de la famille?
- Comment est-ce que l'école contribue au développement d'une identité française?

### **III Objective Vitality: Linguistic Situation**

- Décrire comment vos amis partagent votre identité francophone?
- Comment est-ce que l'expérience des francophones à Thunder Bay est différente en comparaison avec d'autres groupes de la communauté? Comment est-ce qu'on pourra être plus visible?
- Quel sont les difficultés de vivre en situation minoritaire?

- Comment est-ce qu'on s'adapte à la situation?
- Quel est l'influence de la communauté anglaise sur les francophones?
- Comment est-ce que la langue est un obstacle pour faire des choses à Thunder Bay?
- Y a-t-il un tiraillement entre les deux communautés linguistiques pour les jeunes francophones?
- Est-ce qu'on est poussé à s'intégrer?
- Quels sont les dangers d'assimilation? Est-ce un danger?

#### **IV Bilingualism**

- Quelles sont vos idées sur le bilinguisme? Pourquoi est-ce que c'est important et comment est-ce que ça fait partie de votre identité? Ça veut dire quoi dans votre expérience?
- Comment est-ce que c'est nécessaire pour les francophones dans une situation minoritaire?
- Comment est-ce que les jeunes francophones utilisent le bilinguisme?
- Pourquoi est-ce que des jeunes francophones choisissent souvent de parler en anglais?
- Entre amis, comment peut-on inviter d'autres jeunes à parler français?

**Transcripts.** Each interview was taped and transcribed as data for the analysis immediately following the interview. Originals were put on file with consent forms. Participants were assigned pseudonyms, and copies were made for data analysis.

**Triangulation.** Triangulation is a form of internal validity in qualitative research because it assures the quality of the data being used and the understanding gained (Patton, 1990). This is an ongoing process that constantly informs the researcher, and allows her to check her ideas as she analyzes data (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, pp. 23-24). Each interview informed subsequent interviews with questions that invited new participants to expand on what others had noted.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations are critical to research. Respondents might be reluctant to participate if they fear exposure or some kind of harm. They need to know that they can trust the researcher to respect them and their ideas. The researcher must ensure that all possible measures are taken to fairly describe a social setting, without overstepping boundaries or imposing judgment (see Glesne and Peshkin, 1992; Kirby &

McKenna, 1989). Appendix 1 contains the letter of consent I asked participants to sign. I asked parents for consent of those respondents aged 16 or younger.

### **Confidentiality**

Participants were assured of confidentiality in this research. Names of participants have been changed on transcripts and in the report. The individual interviewees were given pseudonyms so that my descriptions of them do not lose the sense that these are real individuals experiencing a minority existence. The data was analyzed and recorded using a code-system. I numbered transcript pages as pages in series rather than interview by interview to protect participants who knew others who took part in the study.

### **Informed Consent**

Participants and (if under 16) their parents were given a consent form (Appendix 1) which described the research and its purpose. It explained that:

- they were volunteers and could withdraw at any time;
- confidentiality was assured and no names would be used in reporting the findings;
- there were no risks involved.
- benefits might include a better understanding of minority francophones experience, as well as providing direction for maintaining language and culture in predominantly English communities.

The study was explained to each respondent when I invited for their participation, and prior to beginning each interview.

### **Risks and Benefits**

There were not foreseeable risks to the participants or the researcher in the course of this study or as a result of it. Rather, it is hoped that with full disclosure, informed consent, and the promised confidentiality, the research findings can serve to enlighten views about minority experiences and will contribute to our current understanding of how language and identity are maintained or changed as people come into contact with a dominant majority who is culturally different.

### **Storage of Data**

Raw data will be kept by the researcher for five years and will then be destroyed.

### **Access to Report**

The participants will have access to the thesis in the library at Lakehead University. They were also told that a summary of the research would be forwarded upon completion of the analysis to verify my interpretation and to give them a chance to make additional remarks. In retrospect, this promise delayed the publication of the study. A copy of this summary is included in Appendix 3.

### **Analysis and Interpretation**

Data analysis was on-going throughout the study and the constant comparative method was used to identify "key themes and patterns and to develop category systems to understand the social experience of respondents" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 72). Constant comparison of data and interpretations allows the researcher to make confirmations or pursue new directions (Patton, 1990). The constant comparison method helps to keep the research on task and refines the focus of inductive inquiries. Interpretation involved finding relationships, concerns and causes and consequences. I made inferences about the significance of the data, explained it and considered it in terms of rival explanations (Patton, 1990). The data was reported through quotations and descriptions, balanced with interpretations (Patton, 1990, p. 428). Reflections enabled me to make connections to the theories and work of other research. The process of data analysis is described below.

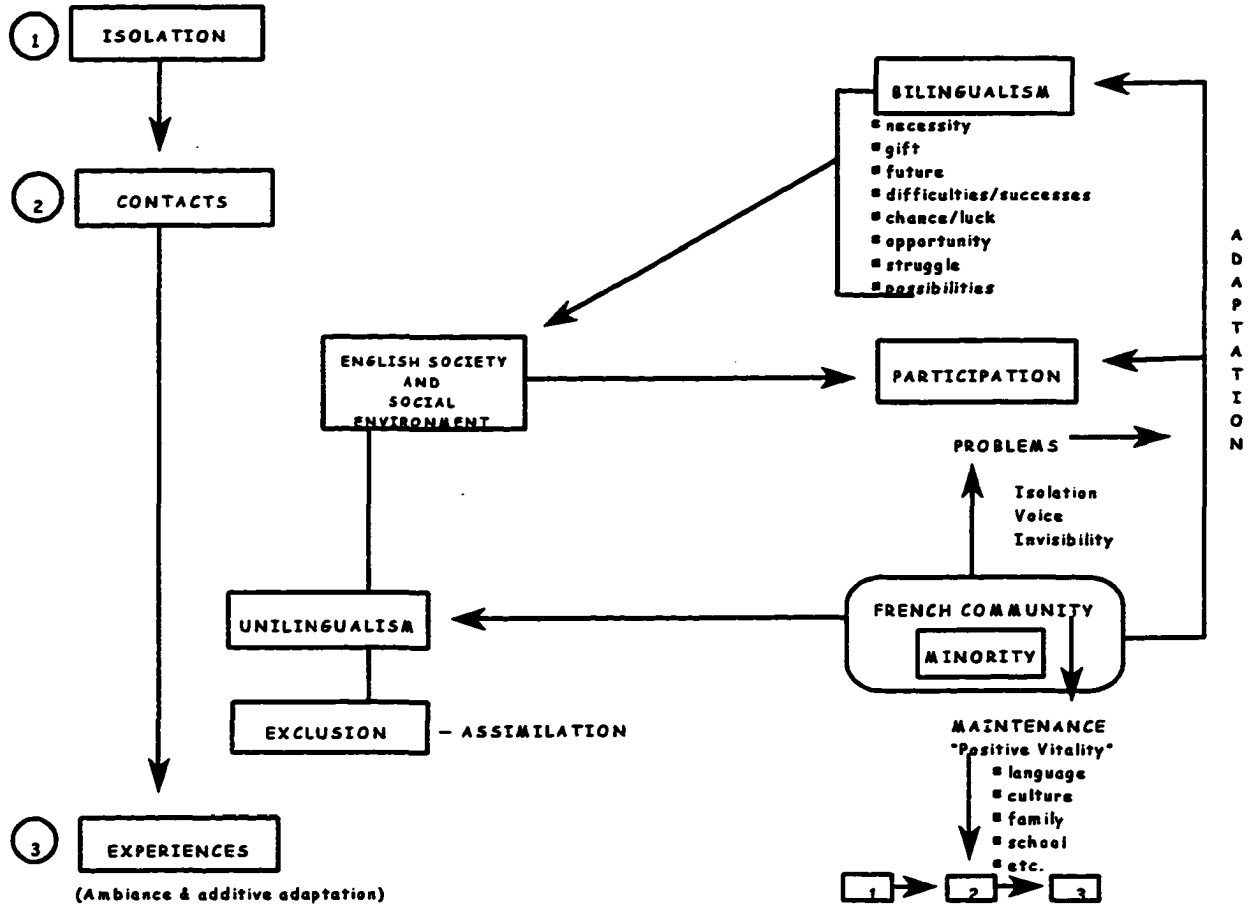
### **Categories and Codes**

Transcripts were numbered from page 1 to page 126. The process log was numbered to page 140, it includes reflections on specific interviews and general comments about my research progress. The transcripts from participant interviews were analyzed in stages. First, I assigned codes to organize the data into areas of activity that helped illuminate francophone experience. The coded data was then grouped into thematic categories within which descriptions of the minority situation became visible.

*Coding.* The coding process involved reviewing transcripts and looking for similar ideas within the interviews. The codes used are listed in Appendix 2.

The following chart was developed from the codes and served as an organizing tool in recognizing the themes that are important to understanding minority experiences in Thunder Bay.

**ETHNOLINGUISTIC VITALITY**



**Themes and Categories of Analysis**

The codes were organized in a thematic arrangement that was central to the analysis and interpretation of the data. The thematic categories are briefly discussed below:

First, the **English environment** in Thunder Bay was an important theme in minority experience because it influences francophone participation, perceptions, and strategies for living in this city. Included in this thematic category were descriptions of the city, the difficulties and isolation encountered; as well as the experience of living between two social groups. Pressure to speak English is constant, so a significant part



of minority experience involves adapting to the situation without losing the francophone identity that prevents assimilation.

The second thematic category described the **maintenance process** and refers to the combined influences of the family, the school, as well as other contacts that are important to keeping language and culture alive for adolescents living in the minority situation.

The third important theme was **bilingualism**. This was a significant theme because bilingualism is characteristic of minority francophones and greatly influences their experience. Another aspect of bilingualism that emerged was its supposed role in Canadian society and the contradiction of that to the realities of Thunder Bay.

The fourth theme was the **ethnolinguistic vitality** of participants. Within this category, attention is given to the strength of francophone identity in face of the minority situation, the awareness respondents had of themselves within the larger community, and also their persistence in combatting the conditions that put their ethnocultural community at risk.

Finally, the fifth theme clusters data related to the **futures** of the francophone adolescents who participated in this research. It included: the experiences of participants, their perceptions of their future plans for further education, ambitions, intention to raise their own children as francophones, and the cultural life of the French Canadian community outside Quebec.

This chapter has explained the questions, research method, and research process, participants, and focus of this study. The next chapter presents the regional context, an historic overview of the francophone presence in Ontario, and participant profiles which serve to give a context to the study and attends to the particulars in the experiences of the people I am talking about.

## **CHAPTER 4: FRENCH NORTH AND WEST TOWARDS THUNDER BAY: HISTORICAL, GEOGRAPHICAL, AND SOCIAL OVERVIEW**

This chapter locates the research study within the particular historical, economic and social context of francophones in Northwestern Ontario. Although the population in the Thunder Bay region is sparse, Franco-Ontarians have a long history here. Their presence in Ontario has always reflected the influx of Quebecers and the migration of Franco-Ontarians. Although some regions have lost percentages of the francophone population, others have grown or remain at least constant and stable (Bernard, 1988). The participants in this research are but a small sample of francophone adolescents living in Thunder Bay. Efforts to keep their language and culture, even as French seems disused, demonstrate their commitment to their community, their identity as French Canadians, and also their success as Franco-Ontarians who have tackled and tamed the difficulties of their social environment to adapt to it.

The sections which follow describe the historic and socio-economic contributions of French Canadians to Ontario and the francophone population in Thunder Bay. The participants of this study are profiled in the last section.

### **Socio-historical Presence**

While seeking alternative transportation routes that might rival Montreal, explorers discovered resources for European trade and commerce. In 1701, Fort Pontchartrain, near Detroit, became the site of the first village settlement in Upper Canada. In 1783, Fort William was established as a trading post and wintering spot for fur traders and company men from the Northwest Company. The flourishing fur trade in the 16th and 17th centuries brought hunters, trappers and traders, voyageurs, coureurs-de bois and merchants and trading posts grew to become forts under the surveillance of militia men and the guidance of Jesuit missionaries.

francophones have been in Ontario since the earliest explorer came from France, and the first French came west from Quebec in the 1600s (Jaenen, 1993; Bernard, 1988). French settlements were first established and through the 18th century villages grew in Prescott, Russell, Glengarry, as well as in the Ottawa to Cornwall regions (Bernard, 1988, p. 41). Across the territory, francophones worked the land for its

natural bounty. French farmers, missionaries and militia men settled land for agriculture and built communities in the process. Welch (1993) suggests that the families who chose to settle westward in what is now Ontario were able to survive and prosper because rather than subdivide family lands, the French seigneurs expanded their territory (pp. 52-53). Industrialization in the 1800s meant that fewer people were needed to man farms and young sons set off in search of work (Welch, 1993). Many looked north-west in search of opportunity and ventured forth towards the future. Up North, they were hunting, trapping, trading, exploring, building slowly and preparing distant regions for development.

Forest exploitation surpassed the fur trade in the 1800s. Railway construction after the 1850s made distinct regions accessible to resource exploitation. French people came to work in the forest industry and later in mining. Northern towns emerged around industry, the same way villages had evolved from agricultural communities (p. 72). Welch (1993) suggests that Franco-Ontarians played a vital role in developing northern regions of the province for the economic potential. French Canadians came from Quebec as well as from the south and east of the province to work. Mining towns, lumber towns, and railway junction towns grew to extend to North Bay, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie and dozens of tiny places in between boomed and grew in northern Ontario.

Since the 1920s, Franco-Ontarians and Quebecois have sought opportunity in Sudbury, as well as west of Val Dor and Rouin-Noranda in French towns like Dubreuilville, Hornepayne and Hearst. Towns have grown and boomed along with the logging and railway developments. Through the 1950s, the forest industry, as well as pulp and paper production kept the francophones in little pockets throughout the region (Welch, 1993). Internal and interprovincial migration facilitated the regional dispersement of francophones, so that although they are a numerical minority in the provincial population, they represent a majority part of some local populations in the North (Bernard, 1988). Welch (1993) suggests that the economic base forestry has in the region and its role in people's lives contributes to the collective identity of Franco-Ontarians; their identity developed from the hard work done by francophone men and women to make a living and keep families going through the 1920s and 1930s (pp. 67-68). Between 1941 and 1961, migrations again occurred as French boys went to war, then returned home to find that mining could provide them with some occupational and economic prospects (pp. 70-71). Industry changes, economic shifts, and the fact that in many towns the main employer

is a faceless company with an absentee (southern metropolis based) owner, have shaped the settlement, boom, bust, and rebuilding of small northern towns. The francophone communities north of Sudbury, Cochrane, Kapuskasing and Sault Ste. Marie, along the Highway 11 corridor in Hearst, Timmins, Longlac and Geraldton have their economic base in forestry. Franco-Ontarians have been responsible for much of the development in this region, and the names of lakes, rivers, and towns from northeast to northwest remind us of their presence as explorers (Welch, 1993).

Half of the lumber and mining towns are French, and partly it is the result of francophone migrations through the territory. Those towns reflect the effects of resource extraction economics and hinterland-metropolis relations. The isolation of these towns encourages Franco-Ontarians to come together. Through their work and their recreation, they develop a sense of community and a cultural identity (Welsh, 1993). Since the 1960s, there has been less work in mining and in the bush; while there are still jobs, mechanization and technology have improved efficiency and made the work less labour intensive, so fewer men are needed (Welch, 1993). The effect on the small resource-based towns was a shortage of employment opportunities that again pushed French Canadians to migrate. Many went to the regional urban centres like Sudbury, Kapuskasing or Thunder Bay (Welch, 1993).

Bernard (1988) describes the historical and social presence of francophones in Ontario. His survey of migration and settlement illustrates how Quebecois and French Canadians came to Ontario, as well as how a Franco-Ontarian community has been established. Although few regions have francophones as a majority population, the French-speaking minority in the province has stable representation in most areas. Franco-Ontarians maintain language and culture through personal commitment, institutional support, and perseverance. Franco-Ontarians are an active community, however, quite different from the French in Quebec who have much more power and political voice (p. 104). In Ontario, the francophone population has access to French schools, churches, and some services, but also accommodates and must adjust to the conditions set by the dominant social group — that is, in most interaction the francophone minority needs to speak English. Rather than detracting from the ethnolinguistic vitality of Franco-Ontarians, using the dominant language is an advantageous requirement for the French because they become bilingual (p. 24).

Thunder Bay is the hub of the northwest. It is a regional centre that acts as a base for much of the

forest industry, as well as for mining and shipping across the great lakes. It is a thoroughfare for the highway and railways. As jobs in outlying areas dwindled, the sons and daughters of loggers and miners have moved along the Highway 11 corridor, and many have come to Thunder Bay (Bernard, 1988). The next section describes the francophone community in Thunder Bay.

### **Our Francophone Community**

French Canadians are a small but stable minority population in Thunder Bay. The vast majority of people here speak English only, 110 000 of 113 946. Just 250 speak only French, while 7790 people speak both languages (1991 Census Ethnic Origin, p. 41; 1991 Census Profile, Part A, p. 440). 2690 people claim French as their first language; 660 are English and French; and 35 individuals describe themselves as French with a non-official language (p. 440). The francophone population in Thunder Bay responded to job availability and came to work in trades within the pulp and paper industry, the grain elevators, or construction, or in other sectors of the regional economy. francophones, as much as any other group, came to find work, have settled and raised their families.

The Multicultural Association point to the cultural, social and institutional accomplishments of the francophone community. In 1983, they had had a French group, Le Club Canadien-Français de Thunder Bay for nearly 20 years (p. 27). There are now more than 10 French language associations and social clubs in the city. L'Association des francophones du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario (AFNOO) makes information, resource people and expertise available to the region or regional community (AFNOO Pamphlet, 1995). According to the Thunder Bay Multicultural Association (1993), the French are generally members of the working class with minimal schooling "often pursued entirely in English... so literacy is low" (p. 27). To counteract the 25% illiteracy rate among the region's francophones, AFNOO sponsors Alpha Thunder Bay, a group committed to assisting to people who want to brush up or learn to read, write or do simple math. There is also a French Toastmasters group that was formed in the autumn of 1996. The French language school opened in 1978 as a result of the determination and persistence of francophone parents. Since that time, the elementary school has grown and students have also acquired a place in a mixed language high school.

The francophones in Thunder Bay came for work from New Brunswick, from Quebec, from France, from elsewhere in Ontario... some speak French for a living, others just live francophone lives. They came

for the work and wait to see what the future brings or where it might take them. They are the parents of my participants. They are contractors, equipment operators, truck drivers working in the bush. They are nurses, teachers, businessmen, salesmen and managers. They are office clerks and university sessionals, support staff and homemakers. Very few work in French or have opportunities to work with other francophones.

francophones in Thunder Bay adapt to an anglophone environment and use English for most interaction. They live francophone lifestyles within the family, through the school and community groups. Their contacts facilitate the maintenance of language and culture among them even as they are a minority in the milieu. Visits to places of origin permit grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, and cousins a role as highly valued sources of kinship that provide reassurance to the developing identity to minority francophone adolescents. Vacations in French-speaking environments or trips to see relatives and family friends in different cities offer contacts that can minimize the isolation of francophones in Thunder Bay. (Constructed from background notes; conversations with 10 parents; and reflections in process log.) Table 2 summarizes where the francophone adolescents who participated in this study and their families originated:

**TABLE 2**  
**Participants' Parents' Origins**

	<b>FRENCH</b>	<b>ENGLISH</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
Maritimes	2	—	—
Quebec	13	—	1
Ontario	11	6	1

* Franco-dominant	8
Bilingual	18 (+ 1 French/Spanish)
English only	6 (+ 1 Ukranian/English)

In addition to contacts "back home," francophone adolescents also have Western contacts with French speaking family and friends living in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. Both in Thunder Bay and beyond, the minority francophone population has community and opportunities for living French Canadian lifestyles. The following participant profiles describe respondents and the influential elements of their experience.

## Participant Profiles

**Carolynne** is an 18 year old French Canadian from Quebec who came to Thunder Bay seven years ago. Her father brought the family here following work in the forest industry and her mother found work as a French language clerk. Carolynne attended the FFL program through high school and is now pursuing studies in college. She speaks French at home with her parents and keeps in touch with their extended family on a regular basis. The family frequents French clubs and socials, maintains friendships and social engagements with other French people, has both a francophone doctor and a francophone dentist, and lives as French as possible. Carolynne is bilingual and claims a dual-identity for adapting to the anglophone city, to her anglophone friends, and to all the social situations in which she needs English in order to participate. She suggested adaptation was crucial for francophones to enjoy positive experiences in Thunder Bay.

**Katherine** is 17 and has lived in Thunder Bay for 8 years since moving here from Quebec (Montreal). The move to this city was the second time her father moved the family north to pursue a business endeavour. Her mother found work as a bilingual government agent and is an active volunteer in a number of francophone community groups. Katherine is fluently bilingual and worked hard to become so, she spoke "pas un mot" of English when she came. She is a student in the FFL school program, attends the French parish (when a French priest is available), and is active in a number of francophone organizations. She spoke eloquently of her experience in Thunder Bay, describing how her family has adapted to the anglophone environment while maintaining a French Canadian lifestyle.

**Yvon** is 17. He came to Thunder Bay from Quebec ten years ago when his mother was transferred to a new accounting position. He is fluent in both French and English, but frequently speaks English because of his social activities. At home, in his grade 12 FFL classes at school, and with a few francophone friends he speaks mostly his mother-tongue. He identifies himself as francophone and is active in a French youth group. Furthermore, Yvon makes a point to speak and maintain his language. He suggested francophones sometimes hide their identity for fear of being different; however, Yvon argues that he is more afraid of assimilating into the dominant society by not speaking French.

**Michel** is also 17 and from Quebec. He moved to Thunder Bay nine years ago so his dad could have steady work operating equipment. Michel's father works in the bush for a forestry company while his mother

stays home with the children. Michel speaks French at home, and acts as his parents' interpreter in English situations. He is bilingual, but maintains a francophone lifestyle in his social relationships, as well as in his ideas about himself. Through his active involvement in local and regional youth groups that are oriented toward francophone minority populations, and attending FFL high school program, he sustains a community of French language contacts and keeps his French-Canadian identity.

**Giselle, 15, and Helène, 13,** are francophones from the eastern township region of Quebec who have lived in Thunder Bay for nine years. Their mother works as a French representative and translator, and their step-father is an independent contractor. Both girls have become bilingual since living here. They attend FFL classes and participate in a French youth group, speak French at home and with francophone friends, but they also noted that they speak English more often because of their anglophone contacts. Giselle and Helène reflected that francophones usually need to be bilingual to be practical about living in Thunder Bay "...tout se fait en anglais."

**Marina, 17,** came to Thunder Bay five years ago. Her father is a francophone teacher from Montreal working in the French-language school system. Her mother is a Spanish-speaking in origin, but is active in francophone parents groups, francophone women's clubs and francophone organizations. Marina was raised with both her parents' languages, attending the FFL program while speaking both Spanish and French at home. She is active in several francophone groups and takes part in all the French activities she can. Marina spoke absolutely no English when she came to Thunder Bay. The adjustment to the unilingual city has been frustrating and slow, but in five years she has become tri-lingual. Her friends are mostly francophone classmates who understood her initial difficulty with English and who have helped her to feel welcome in Thunder Bay.

**Diane, 20, Emilie, 15, and Alain, 13,** are the adolescent children of former "Montréalais" who gradually followed the Highway 11 route until it brought them to Thunder Bay. Their father is an independent contractor and their mother has taught French and worked as a francophone administrator in the Northwestern Ontario region. The eldest was born in Montreal and came to Ontario at the age of 5. The two younger children were born in the Northwestern Ontario region. The family came to Thunder Bay when the younger ones were just small and Diane was starting school. Their parents keep them close to and aware of



francophone culture: they speak French at home, send them to French school, and take them on trips to francophone centres. Diane attends bilingual university courses in Montreal; Emilie attends French Immersion at one of the high schools, and Alain is a student at the FFL elementary school. These three respondents remarked on their isolation as members of a minority group. Within the family, they suggested differences in their experiences and perspectives. Diane was the most self-assured about her francophone identity and bilingualism. Emilie was less certain, doubting the quality of her French although quite eager to be more bilingual and more French. Alain claimed to be more comfortable speaking French because of mistakes he makes with his English sometimes, but he too would like to be more bilingual.

**Alicia** is 16 and has lived in Thunder Bay for five years. She is Franco-Ontarian from the Southeastern region of the province. Her family came seeking stable work and a good place to raise children. Her father works for a local school board and mother is in retail sales, however, neither of her parents works in French. Alicia attends grade 12 in the French first language (FFL) program, has mainly francophone friends, and is active in a number of francophone associations and youth groups. Her family speaks French at home and remains in close contact with relatives through regular phone calls and semi-annual trips "back home" on school holidays. She is bilingual, but emphasized the limitations and isolation of francophones which she has encountered in Thunder Bay.

**Cara**, 17, and **Linda**, 18, are friends who have been in FFL classes together since elementary school. They were both born in Northern Ontario and came to Thunder Bay before they were school aged. Each has one French and one English parent who originated in the communities along the northern Highway 11 who migrated to Thunder Bay for work. Cara's parents are both professionals educated in southern Ontario. Her father works as a bilingual administrator. Linda's mother teaches French and her father is a carpenter. They usually speak English at home, although occasionally they will use French with the francophone parent. Cara participates in the French language youth group and sometimes speaks French at work. Both girls suggest the school is the critical contact for the children of the francophone community. They might be called "Anglo-dominant bilinguals" since the majority of their social contacts are anglophone and they use English more often. Nonetheless, they also consider their francophone identity important to their social selves and enjoy having two languages. Both of these participants emphasized how trips and contact with francophone

relatives permit belonging to the French Canadian community and help to sustain ethnolinguistic identity.

**Phillip, 17**, is from a French-English family. He was born in Northwestern Ontario, west of Thunder Bay. He came to the city eleven years ago when his parents divorced and his mother found nursing work in the city. He attended the FFL program through to grade 12, and is bilingual. Although his mother speaks French with him at home, he admits to feeling more comfortable in English. His preference does not deter his feeling francophone: he is French every time he uses the language and it is an identity he could not give up. Phillip is aware of francophone organizations he could belong to but noted they do not correspond to his interests, nor can he see belonging to something just because he is French.

**Julie** is 17 and was born in Thunder Bay. Her parents came here from the east coast as a young couple looking for a future. Her father has worked at the same small francophone firm for nearly twenty years. Her mother raised three good francophone kids and worked part-time. Julie has always spoken French at home, but has spoken English since she first played with neighbourhood children. She attends and is active in her FFL school program. She regularly participates in francophone youth groups, hoping to one day be a group leader. She makes a point to use her language. During our interview, she commented on how her social network has become increasingly francophone as she has grown up. She has no extended family in town and suggests that trips to her parents' hometown and visits with Quebecois relatives have taught her how she is Franco-Ontarian.

**Jacques, 15**, and **Gilles, 15**, were both born in Thunder Bay. Their mother is a francophone nurse from Northern Ontario Highway 11 corridor and their father is an English contractor from Thunder Bay. Although the boys use both languages in the home, their mother only speaks French to them. The two brothers attend French Immersion classes and participate in French youth group activities. They speak some French between themselves and with a few French friends. They have some family living in Thunder Bay and keep in touch with out-of-town relatives through telephone calls and holidays visits. It should be noted that Jacques and Gilles were interviewed with Alex whose profile is next. Only these three of seven participants from French-English mixed families chose to be interviewed in French.

**Alex, 15**, was born in Thunder Bay and is the only son of a French-English couple. He lives with his mother who is a Franco-Ontarian teacher from the northeastern part of the province. Alex attends the FFL

school, is active in French clubs, and has francophone friends. He is bilingual, but mainly speaks French at home with his mother and with his classmates. Alex has extended family contacts throughout Ontario and Quebec who contribute to his feeling of belonging to the francophone community.

**Jean, 15, and Janine, 13,** are siblings who were born and raised in Thunder Bay. More than any of the other participants, these two have a francophone social network in the city. Both are active at their FFL schools, as well as in youth and discussion groups. They have a francophone network of social contacts, have extended family in Thunder Bay and they speak French at home, as well as keeping French speaking friends. They spoke concisely and emphatically of francophone isolation and of the need to be active in the cultural community. They want and appreciate access of French language services. They value their bilingualism, but prefer French and are assertive about francophone identity.

**Louis, 13,** was born in Thunder Bay. His mother is a francophone who was raised in a town on the Highway 11 corridor and his father is an eastern European who immigrated to the city as a child. His mother is a French teacher and his dad is a tradesman employed by a national company. The language at home has always been English because that was the language common to his parents. Louis began school in French Immersion, but encountered difficulties with the difference in his teacher's standardized French and his mother's colloquial style. He switched to an English school in grade 5. Louis understands French when his mother uses it with him, however, he does not like speaking it himself because he feels his French is not as good as his mother's.

**Breanne** is 17 and was born in Thunder Bay. Her father is a Franco-Ontarian from Northeastern Ontario who works as a retail manager, and her mother is an anglophone administrative assistant from Thunder Bay. Breanne has grown up speaking English at home and French at school. She has both anglophone and francophone friends. She has one job where she speaks English and another where she speaks French. She is bilingual and bicultural. She participates in a few French youth organizations and celebrates her francophone heritage. She is proud of her dual identity and maintains social links to both language groups.

The following chart summarizes the participant profiles and illustrates the differing variables in each one's experience:

NAME	AGE	Bilingual	Yrs in Th-Bay			Home Language			School Program			
			Born here	≥5 yrs	<5 yrs	French w/both	French w/one	English/French	FFL	Fr Imm	Univ/College	Eng/ Core Fr
Alicia	16	•		•		•			•			
Carolynne	18	•			•	•					•E	
Diane	20	•			•	•					•F	
Emilie	15	⊙			•	•				•		
Alain	13	•			•	•			•			
Giselle	15	•			•	•			•			
Helène	13	•			•	•			•			
Katherine	18	•			•	•			•			
Jean	15	+/-	•			•			•			
Janine	13	+/-	•			•			•			
Julie	17	•	•			•			•			
Yvon	17	•			•	•			•			
Michel	17	•			•	•			•			
Breanne	17	•	•					•	•			
Gilles	15	•	•				•			•		
Jacques	15	•	•				•			•		
Alex	15	•	•				•		•			
Linda	18	•	•					•			•E	
Cara	17	•			•			•	•			
Philip *	17	•	•				•	P	•			
Marina **	17	T+/-		•			•		•			
Louis ***	13	X	•					•				•

**PARTICIPANT PROFILES**

- ⊙ Lacks confidence in French
- +/- Lacks confidence in English
- \* "P" where preference differs
- \*\* Trilingual (two languages in home + English)
- \*\*\* Understand some French

## Different Influences

Length of time in Thunder Bay, home language, interaction within the school, community participation, language facility and preference, and individual social networks vary among respondents. The differences between participants influence their perception and attitudes, their beliefs and expectations, as well as their interpretations and behaviour. Differences result in a range of experience, even though respondents belong to a "homogeneous" group. Personal history and lifestyle influence how the minority experience is (has been) lived in Thunder Bay. This section describes the different influences that have affected the experiences of adolescents who participated in this study.

**TIME.** The length of time a participant had lived in Thunder Bay is the first variable of the minority experience. Half of the respondents in this study were born in Thunder Bay or came here at a very young age. These participants were raised and socialized to use French or English as a matter of context — mostly English, French when it is amenable to the situation. Other respondents came to Thunder Bay in middle childhood (between the ages of 7 and 10, or between grade 2 and grade 5). They were similar to the first group in that they learned at a fairly young age to adapt their language behaviour appropriately. Both of these groups have spent their lives making language adjustments. Most learned English quickly after they first ventured into the neighbourhood and discovered that the majority of their playmates spoke the dominant language, not French:

- There's no French kids in the neighbourhood to go and say hi to in French. (Breanne, 18, p. 18)
- De vivre à Thunder Bay, pis d'être francophone t'as pas vraiment le choix. C'est pas qu'y te pousse, c'est que tu veux être intègre toi-même. ... il y en a j'imagine qui sont poussés, pis ces pas mal ces personnes là qui refusent d'apprendre l'anglais... Mais, notre famille, on voulait s'intégrer pour être capable de fonctionner. Pis c'est plus facile si t'intégrés de faire savoir ton point de vue aux anglophones. Fait-que de s'intégrer est à notre avantage. (Katherine, 18, pp. 56-57)

francophones become accustomed to the milieu, the duality of their experience, and they find they must adapt the "inconveniences" of minority group membership.

- Okay... c'est difficile de faire des choses qui t'intéressent en français à cause qu'on vit dans une ville anglophone. Mais il faut que tu t'adaptes, si tu veux pas t'adapter tu vas être malheureux, parce que tout est en anglais ici. Qu'est-ce que tu peux vivre en français tu vis en français, et tu fais les autres affaires en anglais. (Carolynne, p. 7)

Length of time in the anglophone environment yields different perspectives. It affects language development, sense of community, as well as lifestyle in a variety of ways. Participants who came to Thunder

Bay more recently, within the last five years, had more difficulty communicating and participating because their late learning of the dominant language and their adolescent self-consciousness of their ability in English limited their opportunities for interaction. These adolescents seemed much more aware of their minority status and the language situation in Thunder Bay.

- Ici j'étais toute seule quand je suis arrivée. Comme j'ai dit, icitte... je trouve que c'est une ville unilingue, pas bilingue. Parce que partout où tu sors tu vois ça... qu'y a personne qui parle français. Personne qui veut supporter, y a personne qui veut t'aider en français. T'as juste quelques centres francophone, comme AFNOO t'sais. Mais la plupart des endroits où tu vas ne sont pas francophones, fait-que je trouve que c'est pas bilingue. (Marina, pp. 36, 38)

The length of time spent in the dominant language influenced how these minority francophone adolescents described their experience. In this study, respondents suggest it shapes their awareness of the situation and their attitudes about adapting.

**BILINGUALISM.** Another variable influencing ethnolinguistic vitality, identity, and social experience was the bilingualism of the participants. While most of the respondents would be considered functionally bilingual, there were differences in the way they became bilingual, as well as in the ways they think about bilingualism. Most considered their bilingualism a fact of necessity. Some had struggled more than others to acquire it, frustrated that their first language would not lend itself to participation in the dominant community or that their language would suffer in the proximity of the dominant one. Only one participant in this research was not bilingual; he had difficulty balancing his mother's French against that of his anglophone French immersion teacher. Besides that one exception, the respondents' range of bilingualism toward Franco-dominance and Anglo-dominance was a matter of self ascribed preference or choice.

**LANGUAGE OF THE HOME.** Speaking French at home with parents and siblings also influenced participants' experience. Where adolescents' parents were both francophone, French was used most of the time. In some of these cases, the parents spoke only French and their bilingual offspring would act as social mediators in situations requiring English (Process Log, #14, 21). Adolescents with just one French parent had variable language behaviour depending on the circumstances. The participating adolescents from mixed families suggested that English predominated most of the time since the non-francophone parent often cannot speak French. Interestingly, in cases of adolescents whose parents had divorced, the francophone parent seemed to have custody of their children and used French more often than English. There were, however,

two respondents, Breanne and Phillip, who admitted a preference for speaking English and a habit of using it even with the French parent (both these participants chose to be interviewed in English). Finally, there were two cases of homes with one francophone parent and one parent whose language was neither English nor French. Louis' parents spoke English since each had a different first language and did not speak the other's language. By contrast, in Marina's case, her parents use French and Spanish leaving her and her siblings to learn English as their third language while allowing them to acquire the richness of their dual heritage in the home.

Speaking French at home and with family is important. The respondents suggested it gave them support and encouragement to maintain their language. Parents are very influential in initiating the francophone spirit and mother-tongue fluency. The home provides a secure environment and access to a community, it also initiates a francophone lifestyle. Those who did not speak French at home very often had different ideas about their heritage and identity than those who consistently had contact with a francophone way of living. Participants suggest that parents provided them with their language and made a place for it in the minority milieu. Even those who do not usually speak French at home say that parents make the initial choice about language maintenance in terms of family contacts and choice of school.

**SCHOOL.** The language used for instruction at school and the program being attended, also influenced participant experiences. The majority of participants were students in the French first language program (FFL), either at the French elementary school, or in grade 10 or grade 12/OAC in the FFL program of a dual track, English and French, secondary school. Three participants attended grade 10 in a French immersion program. Only one participant, in grade 8, did not attend French language school and made do with just the 40 minutes a day given to second language education that is required by law. The three remaining participants had already graduated from high school and were enrolled at the local college (two from FFL) or university (one from immersion).

Participant experiences demonstrate what role the school can play for an adolescent and the difference it can make for them. First, speaking French in school helps to maintain the language. It also provides a chance to see the language in action, as an important tool of communication and knowledge. In addition, the school provides access for students to others who value it. Finally, the language spoken at

school and the type of program make a difference to the cultural support received by participants. The focus in core French is as different from that of immersion as that is from the French first language program. Participants in different programs are exposed to very distinct environments which, in turn, affect their ethnolinguistic vitality and sense of self.

- School is first because that's where we go for our education. My education has been in French and most of my contacts have been in school. (Breanne, p. 13)

The effect of the school is substantial in all cases, but the program differences among the participants influenced the way they see their language and its place among "les autres, les anglais." School programs make a difference in the experiences of minority francophone adolescents because they spend a lot of their time in school so the language contacts they maintain there contribute greatly to their francophone identity and their ethnolinguistic vitality. The different programs result in different experiences because of the French ambiance that exists to support francophone development in each setting.

**FRANCOPHONE CONTACT.** Another factor of difference affecting ethnolinguistic vitality, identity and experience was in the French language contacts participants have beyond the home and school. Occasions to interact using the first language are important to maintaining a sense of self and community. Those who enjoy divergent links to both the French community in Thunder Bay, as well as to the dominant English society, seem to more easily maintain their ethnicity in the minority milieu. By contrast, adolescents who have fewer ties to the francophone community lack that contact, are more isolated and miss out on the diversity of the local French population. Those who have fewer French language ties are also more likely to struggle to maintain their language and not lose their cultural heritage. Holiday trips and phone calls to relatives keep close ties that counteract the isolation of francophones in Thunder Bay. Participants suggest the importance of keeping French language contacts for feeling a part of the community:

- Toutes les choses qu'on peut avoir en français il faut les prendre. Faut tout prendre de qu'est-ce qu'on a. Tout ce qu'on peut prendre qui est bon pour notre langue et notre francophone, il faut le prendre.. le docteur, le dentiste, les clubs.
- Ta famille. Si ta famille te parle la langue, je pense que tu vas la garder souvent à la maison. L'école, les professeurs. Les amis, si t'as des amis francophones, ça va t'aider beaucoup parce que la plupart des jeunes passent leur vie avec leurs amis, c'est comme ben important pour eux. Fait que si t'as des amis, au moins quelqu'uns, ça va t'aider beaucoup à garder la langue francophone pis plusieurs contacts francophones. L'entourage qui t'amène à parler français. (Marina, p. 35)

**AGE.** Finally, age made a difference to the experiences and perspectives of the participants. Younger



respondents were less concerned with "language" and "culture," than they were with social interaction. With few exceptions, younger participants were less conscious of the "hazards" of speaking English than they were of standing out, being harassed, or being misunderstood for speaking French.

- ...ceux qui ont entre douze et quatorze ans, c'est quasiment un point de pas en tout. C'est juste "Je parle anglais avec mes amis, pis il faut que je parle français le plupart du temps, mais c'est pas d'importance pour moi." Mon frère est comme ça, il est quatorze ans à ce moment, pis vraiment ça ne lui dérange pas. (Katherine, p. 64)

Older participants had much more to say about their minority status, seemed to better appreciate the difficulties of the situation, and were concerned about preserving their language and sharing their culture.

- Moi j'ai plus d'amies françaises mais c'est parce que j'adore le français. Je prends l'opportunité, mais je connais beaucoup de monde dont leurs amis sont tous anglais. Comme dans l'endroit où je vis, il n'y a personne de mon âge. So, quand j'étais petite, j'avais beaucoup d'amis anglais. Dès que j'ai veilli, je vais plus en direction de la langue française. Je fais partie d'une organisation française, des affaires de même... parce que plus que tu veillis tu réalises ce que tu veux, tes valeurs dans vie. Le plus que j'âge, mon français devient plus vital. (Julie, p.75)

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS.** There was some difference among participants in terms of socio-economic status, in particular among their parents' income and occupations and education levels which varied from minimum wage to high paid and respected, and from below secondary to graduate level studies. However, socio-economic status made no difference to the findings or the participants' point of view. Rather, perhaps because of their proximity and closeness within the FFL school, most of these respondents had similar ideas. What makes the difference to them are their French language contacts, their sense of community, and their ability to adapt constantly to personal networks and to the constraints of an officially English unilingual city. Literature regarding the effects of age, income, and educational levels is available in the *Revue du Nouvel-Ontario* or in works from the "Institut franco-ontarien," however, these resources were not available to the researcher when she was writing and therefore have not been considered in this study.

## **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS**

This chapter presents the research findings. The analysis of transcripts made from the interviews generated several thematic categories that describe the minority francophone experience in Thunder Bay: the anglophone environment; lifestyle and maintenance; and, ethno-linguistic vitality. The research findings describe francophone adolescent experience in Thunder Bay. The first section addresses what Thunder Bay is like for francophones, and how francophones are influenced by the English socio-cultural environment. In the second section, findings related to lifestyle and cultural maintenance are described. This section addresses how identity, language, and culture are maintained and developed in the minority milieu. A part of that is bilingualism which was found to be a necessity, both in terms of how it is lived by francophones and what it means to them. Third, the ethno-linguistic vitality of francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay is articulated along with their hopes, their plans for the future and the future in the minority community.

### **Environment and Social Location**

Living in a city that is predominantly English requires adaptation on the part of the minority group members if they are to participate fully in society. francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay encounter difficulties and isolation within the parameters of the French-speaking community. This section describes how the participants in this study see francophones in Thunder Bay, how they see their relations with the dominant anglophone population, and their ways of adapting to the social environment. The first part describes how francophone adolescents live with the language of the other. The second part outlines the language choices that the participants saw as being available to the francophone minority in Thunder Bay. Finally, the last part of this section presents an account of the participants' bilingualism, as well as the ways in which it is advantageous to their experiences in Thunder Bay and for their future endeavours. The social location of the minority francophone adolescent population within the larger milieu of Thunder Bay entails a struggle for them to gain a place for the French-speaking community and their accommodation to the situation.

### **Language of the Other**

What does the predominance of English in Thunder Bay mean to francophone adolescents? Participants emphasized the necessity of adapting to the anglophone environment in which they live, play, and

work. They suggested they need to have some fluency in English to be able to participate in every day activities since most social situations demand that francophones speak English when interacting with people who are not French. Carolynne explained that there is usually no way to avoid using English. Adapting may be difficult at first, but it is necessary if francophones want to participate in the local community. Extensively Carolynne spoke of adapting to the anglophone environment in which her francophone family choose to live. French has to be reserved for occasions in which it is appropriate.

- *Souvent c'est difficile. On peut pas parler en français avec des amis qui parlent pas français. Peut pas partager ce côté là. Si tu vas aux centres d'achats, la personne qui va t'aider, elle ne parle pas français, elle parle anglais. C'est comme un rejet aussi parce que tu peux pas demander tes besoins dans ta langue. C'est tout en anglais, et là t'es conscient que tu peux pas vraiment... faut tout faire dans la langue des autres. (Carolynne, p. 8)*

That most of the participants are capable of adapting to their surroundings and can speak English makes the difference in their experience. Without English they are isolated and excluded from the surrounding community.

- *Well, you don't really see lots of French... We're always around English people, it's hard to talk French around them. There's French around, but it's not known by lots of people. So someone coming here from Quebec or even from a French town, not knowing any English, it's got to be really, really hard for them. (Breanne, pp. 11, 13, 17)*
- *Des fois c'est difficile pour les français... c'est un petit groupe et les français doivent s'habituer à l'anglais. (Marina, p. 30)*
- *Peut-être parce que je suis habituée, p'is je parle anglais. Quand on est des francophones assemblés il y a aussi des anglophones qui parlent pas le français. On va plutôt parler en anglais pour que tout le monde se comprennent, pour que personne se sente rejeté. (Carolynne, p. 8)*
- *Parce qu'on a les deux langues c'est pas un obstacle... (Janine, p. 42)*

Participants reported that francophones are isolated and marginalized by the social climate of Thunder Bay. They receive a cold reception. And since many accommodate the situation by using the dominant language, francophones in Thunder Bay are often isolated from one another.

*Qu'est-ce que le climat sociale pour les francophones de Thunder Bay?*

- *FROID. (Carolynne, p. 5)*
- *On est une minorité. Tu vois ça partout. (Jean, p. 67)*
- *A lot of negative vibes from English students in school. Kids in the hallway can be rude, because they don't understand... kind of pushing us aside and saying we're not as important. You don't see it very often, but you do see it sometimes and it bothers me... (Cara, p. 46)*

- **Personne va te dire, mais on ne peut pas vivre ici sans l'anglais... Il faut l'anglais. Avec le français seulement, on est limité. Avec les deux langues on n'a pas mal d'avantage. (Gilles, p. 30)**
- **C'est assez dur de tout s'exprimer en français. C'est pas facile, parce que... des fois, comme un anglais m'entend parler français, il va me dire... il va t'insulter. Ça m'arrivais autrefois, quand j'étais jeune. Pis si t'as des amis anglophones, tu ne peux pas leur parler en français, il faut que tu parles anglais, so... (Michel, p. 94)**

**ANGLOPHONES WITH FRENCH.** Participants described anglophone interest in French as exceptional.

Giselle said that most anglophones do not understand French, but most of the francophones she knows can function in English:

- **Les anglais ne comprennent pas le français, mais la plupart des français que je connais sont capable de se débrouiller en anglais. (Giselle, p. 44)**

Michel remarked how more francophones speak English than anglophones do French. He reasoned that either French is harder to learn or anglophones just do not need to learn French because they are already part of the dominant group. He suggested that bilingualism is a good thing as long as the second language is not acquired at the expense of the first.

- **Je trouve que c'est une bonne affaire le bilinguisme. Mais il faut que tu essaies de pas perdre une des deux langues, comme... Une autre affaire que je trouve c'est qu'il y a plus de français qui apprennent l'anglais que d'anglais qui apprennent le français. Ça je peux pas dire pourquoi... peut-être bien que c'est plus dur à apprendre le français, ça je ne sais pas, mais comme je dis... Nous autres, je pense qu'on n'a pas le choix, comme c'est une affaire qu'il faut apprendre... Et les anglais, eux autres, ils n'ont pas vraiment besoin. (Michel, p. 98)**

Julie considered the language environment and said it may have been easier for her to become bilingual because there was English all around to support her development; anglophones in Thunder Bay would not have the same opportunity with a French community.

- **C'est pas difficile d'apprendre l'anglais. J'ai commencé, j'étais française, tout le monde disait. C'est comme il fallait que t'apprennes la langue. Mais t'es autour de tous les anglais. La langue elle vient comme ça. Moi je suis rendue au point que je connais vraiment la langue anglaise, je peux étudier comme un anglais. Je peux rentrer à une université, me rendre à un collège anglais. Mais pour eux autres c'est comme leur français, même les French immersion ne peuvent pas s'inscrire à une école française. Pis je trouve que c'est vraiment injuste... I don't know, je sais pas pourquoi ils peuvent pas. I don't know, peut-être la peur, c'est comme les politiques, des affaires de même... (Julie, p. 82)**

The consensus was that even when anglophones would like to speak French, they often find it difficult, become discouraged and give up. Participants realized more about themselves and their advantage through their friends' reactions to French. Some friends want to hear them speaking French, want to learn how to speak the language, and have the opportunities it brings the francophones. Participants suggested

anglophone peers seem envious and are impressed with their bilingualism. Interest and effort in using French among anglophones is mixed, so interaction speaks of the social relations between the two language groups.

- Tu sais, ça serait le fun que si eux autres essaient d'apprendre notre langage, comme nous autres on a appris la leur. (Katherine, p. 56)
- Oh yeah, for sure. Lots of them love that we talk French. They find us... they wish their parents had put them in French when they were younger, just because they see all the doors that it opens for us and all the opportunities that we get. (Breanne, p. 14)
- Uh... mais comme il y en a une couple d'amis qui aiment ça, t'sais. Ils aimeraient ça parler français comme moi. Quand ils savent que je parle français à maison, ils sont comme "wow, j'aimerais faire ça." Je vois avec eux autres, comme moi je suis fière, j'aime ça parler en français. Surtout quand je suis autour des anglophones, ils aiment ça que je parle français. (Emilie, pp. 20-21)
- Pourtant, c'est pas mal dur. Ici, c'est comme presque personne parle les deux langues... fait que c'est pour ça que, pour eux autres, pour ceux qui peuvent, c'est dix fois mieux. (Marina, p. 35)

Julie suggested the type of French anglophones are taught, French which is different from Canadian French, does them no good, so they get discouraged:

- Parce que j'ai beaucoup d'amis qui sont en train d'apprendre le français Parisien, p'is ils peuvent pas nous parler, parce que... leur façon de phraser leur phrases c'est différent. Ils trouvent que le français c'est dumb, you know? Parce qu'ils savent pas le bon français... Parce qu'on est dans l'Ontario, p'is le français c'est Franco-Ontarien. S'ils veulent aller au Québec, ou veulent même aller à Hearst. S'ils vont parler le français parisien, they ain't gonna go nowhere, t'sais? Ça les mélange, c'est injuste. C'est comme ils veulent pas vraiment donner une chance à la langue, premièrement, s'ils peuvent pas la comprendre et l'apprendre.

A l'école je trouve que... ils sont pas préjugés, ou rien, ils sont comme jaloux. Ils savent qu'on a l'avantage. Je trouve qu'eux autres, ils ne sont pas enseignés le français comme il faut. Pis ils le trouvent vraiment difficile, alors ils... give up. (Julie, p. 77)

**NEGATIVE ATTITUDES AND DIFFICULT LIMITATIONS.** francophone adolescents sometimes encounter negative reactions from anglophone peers. They avoid this difficulty and accommodate situations by using English and adapting to their environment. They remain aware of the separation between the two communities in which they live, often sensing a rejection of their language and culture by the dominant social group. Rejection through negative attitudes falls into two main areas: personal prejudices against them for speaking French, and the more political language prejudices that brought the City of Thunder Bay to its official status as unilingual. These adolescents contend with frustration, isolation, and rejection. Compounding these difficulties, Franco-dominant participants reported feeling "small" when people stared at them for speaking French, when they stumbled in English, or when they had trouble getting heard in countless social exchanges because of their language limitation.

Marina, the participant who speaks two languages other than English at home and in her daily life, spoke of how being French in Thunder Bay can be discouraging because some of the dominant anglophone community, particularly at school, discourage francophone participation, often belittling or outright rejecting French people:

- Um, ils essaient de limiter les choses qu'on peut faire, ils essaient de dire que t'es pas capable. Toujours ils ignorent toutes les affaires que tu essaies de faire. Ils t'insultent dans les endroits publics — tu parles en français p'is ils te traitent d'animal p'is des choses de même. Ils te regardent avec des grosses faces. Ils te font sentir vraiment pas bon. Ils essaient de te faire changer la vie. On se promène dans les magasins, p'is on parle fort p'is on se sent fou. (Marina, p. 34)

She pointed to constraints placed on francophones in this unilingual city:

- On ne connaît pas une ville bilingue, on connaît une ville unilingue. Fait-que c'est souvent ça... les jeunes anglophones, ils essaient surtout de t'influencer p'is de te faire changer la vie, p'is te faire parler leur langue... les adultes aussi. Si on sait parler juste français y a pas beaucoup de services — t'as besoin de la langue en d'autres mots. Tous les travaux sont en anglais. On se fait niaiser, on se fait écoeurer partout où qu'on va... par rapport de not' langue p'is qu'est-ce qu'on fait icitte. Et à l'école, tu sais, on passe la moitié de not' journée là, la moitié de not' vie là. Comme c'est pas mal dur de vivre dans un environnement où tu te fais diminuer, p'is tu te fais toujours écoeurer, achaler, p'is insulter. Il y a beaucoup de monde qui peut pas se tenir dans ça, p'is endurer tout ça. Il y a beaucoup de jeunes qui changent la vie, tout en tout. A l'école on a nos cours en français mais dès que tu sorts pour le lunch, c'est d'habitude toujours l'anglais parce que t'es avec du monde anglophone. (p. 38)

Jean, who is in grade 10, describes the pressure to speak the dominant language at his school but suggests it may occur because the English speaking students cannot speak French:

- Entre une minorité, les anglophones à mon high school, il y en a une bonne partie qui trouve pas qu'on a le droit de parler français quand ils sont à l'entour. S'ils sont, nous autres on parle l'anglais. Eux autres ne comprennent pas la langue française, et c'est comme si... moi, je pense qu'ils feel moins éduqué que nous autres, parce qu'ils ne comprennent pas. (Jean, p. 69)

Participants, especially the older ones, explained that the negative attitude of the dominant anglophone community seems to stem from a reaction to the political voice of Quebec and a rejection of that province's power. Diane tried to explain the situation and how it has affected her:

- Je pense que la communauté francophone est, pas étouffée mais ne peut pas vraiment s'exprimer... Par exemple la loi qui a passé à Thunder Bay il y a quelques années. La communauté francophone est trop petite pour avoir de l'importance. C'était vraiment un acte agressif. C'est vraiment ignorant de vouloir rejeter les minorités, c'est vraiment un rejet. En fait c'était une réaction à ce qui se passait au Québec, "b'en vous autres les francophones, allez-vous en au Québec." C'est pas b'en juste. (Diane, pp. 20-21)

Katherine reiterated the problem explaining how the difficulties between language groups are associated with a political reaction to Quebec:

- C'est pas vraiment contre les francophones... Le Québec veut se séparer. Du moment que Québec fait quelque chose comme ça, on voit les anglophones qui commencent à parler, p'is dire "Okay, les français devraient se brancher, et devraient faire quelque chose." Mais c'est pas vraiment dirigé vers nous autres, c'est plus dirigé vers le Québec. (Katherine, p. 58)

Marina was acutely aware of the isolation of her community by anglophones and does not see much evidence of them accommodating the francophone presence in the city. Accepting of their presence or not, anglophones do not provide much to accommodate or help the francophone minority.

- Il y a pas beaucoup de monde qui nous apprécie. On pourra dire qu'il y en a qui nous apprécient, tu sais. S'il y en a qui sont intelligents, on pourra dire qu'ils comprennent p'is ils acceptent ça. Pis c'est pas ça qui compte... il y en a d'autres choses. Comme quand tu parles en français, p'is tu vas a des endroits ils disent "ici il y a de l'aide francophone, on parle français" et tu arrives là, p'is il n'y a rien. C'est b'en rare... il va te vendre la salade. (Marina, p. 32)

### **Isolation, Struggle and Adaptation**

Participants who had given more time to reflect about the community and adapting to the environment made comments that demonstrate their struggle to gain acceptance. Marina's entry into the anglophone community has been a long process of pressure and resistance. She has been made to feel as if she must give up the francophone parts of herself in order to be accepted. It is a sacrifice she is unwilling to make, one she resents because she has tried her best to adapt to the situation while maintaining her sense of self:

- Je pense pour être sympathique, pour être part du groupe, parler la même langue c'est une grosse atout. Comme si tu parles pas la même langue tu te fais toujours insulter, p'is toute. Ils te font sentir vraiment petit, sentir comme extra-terrestre, comme anormale. Fait que, je pense pour s'intégrer à la gang, se sentir cool, se sentir bien dans sa peau, se sentir meilleur que les autres. Parce que la majorité ici sont anglophones. Fait que pour eux autres ils sentissent mieux que les francophones. Ils disent... pourquoi qu'ils veulent juste parler français? Tandis que parler anglais c'est se débrouiller et tout ça... c'est la langue principale, la première langue. Avec ça tu peux tout faire. Pis le monde, le meilleur monde y parle anglais... fait que... Quand tu viens ici, t'essaies de te débrouiller et tu essaies de parler. Tout de suite ils te mettent en bas ou ils te font sentir vraiment ridicule parce que personne parle le français. C'est pas mal dur.

Jusqu'à maintenant je me sens pas assimilée, p'is je me sens pas diminuée par ça. Mais eux autres, ça fait pas mal longtemps qu'elles sont icitte. ...fait qu'y regardent p'is c'est comme "ahh," p'is y commencent à parler anglais, p'is pas se faire achaler. Je commence à les comprendre parce-ils veulent que t'es vraiment des sévères... t'es en-train de te faire écoeurer p'is tout, "Pourquoi tu dois vivre ça?" Pendant que tu peux faire autre chose p'is pas te faire écoeurer de tout? Fait que pourquoi? Je commence à comprendre eux autres. Mais pareil, moi ça ne me dérange pas. Tout le monde me connaît. (Marina, pp. 31, 35, 37)

**STRUGGLE WITH ISOLATION.** Alicia, too, recognized how francophones have to struggle to be heard and accepted. The excerpts from her transcript illustrate how francophone efforts to share their culture have been futile and how it does not help them to be too persistent. She explained that francophones must do what

they can, going along with whatever happens because it "beats giving up."

- C'est vraiment dur, comme il faut toujours se débattre, comme si on veut juste une petite chose il faut tout le temps se débattre. Comme juste à mon école on essaie souvent de les enseigner sentimes et ils vont les enlever... Oh, c'est les francophones. C'est tout le temps un débat, il faut toujours se débattre. Il y a beaucoup de monde qui vont aux batailles, ou qui se battent même plus.

Ben, pas tout le temps être sur la défensive, pas tout le temps pour ses droits français. Pis, t'acceptes ce que t'as, tu demandes pour les choses que tu veux, mais si tu 'es pas, comme faites pas une grosse affaire. Parce que si le monde remarque que tu fais tout le temps des cries et que tu demandes toujours des choses français ils vont remarquer les choses que tu fais et ils vont pas aimer ça, les anglais. Et ça va devenir un débat. Il faut que tu commences de peu à peu, p'is t'en va pas à la défensive, t'en va avec... (Alicia, p. 13)

Carolynne suggested that the "unknown" francophone raises suspicions, once a francophone is personally known, she can be accepted and can integrate with the anglophones.

- C'est pas personnel, c'est plutôt les français, les francophones. C'est pas vraiment toi particulièrement. Au début c'est dur à se faire accepter parce que t'as une réputation en tant que francophone. Mais, quand la personne a le temps de te connaître toi-même, b'en là t'es accepté et c'est facile à s'intégrer. (Carolynne, p. 9)

Marina's view on the situation and her interpretation may be more representative of how and why adolescent francophones adapt so quickly and so well to their surroundings.

- Les jeunes et l'influence anglophone. Ils essaient de t'assimiler, parce qu'ils disent là tu seras meilleur, lavage de cerveau en d'autres mots. C'est qu'il y a trop d'anglophones, p'is y a trop de "pression" comme on dit, sur nous autres. Pis tout le monde veut qu'on fasse le meilleur de nous autres, p'is tout. Fait qu'icitte lavage au cerveau du meilleur monde c'est de parler anglais. Faut que tu vis anglophone, faut que tu vis dans une culture anglophone, parce que tu vis dans une ville unilingue. (Marina, pp. 34, 37)

The abundance of English in the environment pushes francophone adolescents to be more aware of the isolation around the minority population. Phillip described the limitations in his French community.

- I use my French at work to help people. And I have a couple of close buddies who almost always use French so I'll use it with them sometimes, especially if we're joking around with people, like to talk about them or make jokes. But there's not much French here. You hear people talking, but they always stand out like odd balls. (Phillip, p. 84)

Diane and Emilie have lived in Thunder Bay for more than ten years. Although their parents are francophone and they speak French in the home, they have had little contact with the local francophone community.

- D Les francophones, il y a pas un sort d'unis, on est partout, séparés. C'est rare. On dirait qu'on est tout seul. On peut pas choisir.
- E Parce que le monde ici... tu peux pas. C'est drôle quand on est sorties p'is on entend le français... c'est une surprise parce qu'il n'y en a pas beaucoup de français à Thunder Bay. On est fière. (Emilie & Diane, pp. 26-27)



The isolation is even more apparent when comparisons are made between Thunder Bay and cities that have higher concentrations of francophones, cities that have more opportunities to speak French.

- Franco-Ontariens, c'est vraiment une identité qui... surtout à Thunder Bay, c'est pas comme Longlac ou Geraldton ou Hearst ou Sudbury, ici c'est vraiment... c'est beaucoup plus isolé; on est beaucoup plus à l'ouest. Ce n'est pas la même expérience. On n'a pas le système de support. Comme à Sudbury il y a toutes sortes de services en français: des groupes de communauté, des camps d'été pour les enfants en français. On n'a pas le système le support qu'on a besoin. (Diane, p. 21)

**ADAPTING.** Adapting to the linguistic situation is not a matter of choice for francophone adolescents, it is a necessity for gaining acceptance:

- Ben, quand on est arrivé icitte, la ville était déclarée unilingue. Alors, à ce temps là, il y avait beaucoup de personnes qui étaient contre les francophones. Le message c'était qu'on n'était pas acceptés ici. Mais depuis ce temps là, surtout si on apprend à s'intégrer, sans perdre notre culture, il n'y en a pas beaucoup qui vont être contre nous. (Katherine, pp. 63-64)

Carolynne emphasized the need to accommodate the situation:

- Parce qu'on se sent rejeté. C'est une ville anglophone. Si tu veux aller au théâtre, faire des sorties, ou aller jouer aux quilles, des choses comme ça c'est tout en anglais. Fait-que, faut tu vives en anglais. C'est comme avoir une double identité, fait qu'en étant francophone, t'est aussi anglophone. C'est comme tu te divises en deux, il faut que tu vives la moitié francophone et la moitié anglophone.

S'intégrer. Il faut pas mettre des préjugés non plus, okay. On est en ville anglophone, il faut s'adapter. Faut pas dire "oh, je suis francophone, je vais juste vivre en français et tant p'is pour les anglais, je ne veux rien faire avec eux autres," non. Faut s'adapter et il faut s'intégrer aussi, c'est super important de s'intégrer. On a choisi de rester dans une ville anglophone. Il faut qu'on essaye par eux, il faut s'adapter. Pas essayer de changer le monde parce que nous on veut changer. Faut pas essayer de changer la ville parce qu'elle était de même quand on est arrivé. Faut juste s'habituer et s'intégrer. Vu qu'on est dans une ville anglophone, il faut vivre en... comme j'ai dit en moitié-moitié, moitié francophone moitié anglophone. Ce que tu peux vivre en français, tu prends. Mais ce que tu peux pas, il faut que tu le fasses en anglais. Parce que si tu ne veux pas, bien là, tu vas être tout seul et tu vas être tant p'is et tu vas être malheureux. (Carolynne, pp. 5, 6, 9)

Aspects of being a minority include accepting one's social situation, having to adapt to the dominant society, and accommodating the circumstances. Being francophone is an important part of one's self, but it cannot always satisfy the conditions of activity and interaction within the social arena of Thunder Bay. Carolynne explained sometimes francophones must live and act as anglophones do; to refuse to do so would entail a lonely, isolated existence. The difficulties of coming to an English city when one speaks French mean having to adapt to the situation, learning the dominant language. Upon reflection, participants believed that being French, knowing English, and being bilingual will prove to their advantage. They actively participate in the community and anglophone events in Thunder Bay, and consider their bilingualism in terms of future options and opportunities.

- Ce ne sont pas des obstacles qui sont pas insurmontables. Mais c'est pas pire à Thunder Bay; il y a plusieurs années quand on ne parlait pas anglais quand c'était difficile, quand il y avait une barrière... Mais, j'en parlais pas un mot, p'is c'était difficile ma première année. On connaissait personne en dehors de l'école, on ne pouvait pas faire d'amis parce qu'on ne parlait pas leur langue. Fait-que c'était très difficile. Mais du moment qu'on a appris la langue, la plupart des obstacles ont disparu.

Pis si tu connais la langue, c'est sûrement un avantage d'être un francophone, surtout dans le monde du travail. Connaître le français, t'as une meilleur chance d'être engagé. Il y a beaucoup d'obstacles qui sont maintenant des avantages pour nous. Il y a une phrase b'en populaire, "le français ça s'apprend, l'anglais ça s'attrape;" ça a seulement pris un an. Très facile. (Katherine, p. 58)

- C'est important de vouloir s'intégrer parce que si t'es pas avec d'autres, b'en tu vas être malheureux parce que tu vas être tout seul, p'is tu vas être désolé. C'est important de vouloir s'assimiler. Quand je dis assimiler je veux pas dire de vivre en anglais, mais faire les deux. Vives en français quand tu peux, p'is quand tu peux pas, b'en, faites des choses en anglais. Mais quand tu peux, tu prends les chances que tu peux pour vivre en français et pour faire des choses francophones. (Carolynne, p. 5)

Adapting and integrating oneself are pertinent for a positive experience. Participants suggest that it is necessary to adapt to the social environment. How francophone adolescents in the minority milieu are influenced by their situation affects their experiences and impacts on the vitality of their community.

### **Language Contexts and Language Shift**

A number of participants suggest that situational circumstances contribute to the increasing use of English among them. Katherine said that it is easy to speak English more often, since it is the language more commonly understood and can be carried over to most settings. She said speaking French is more of a choice made out of preference or by conscious effort to keep the mother tongue.

- C'est pas comme t'as besoin de parler en français. La seule raison que tu parlerais le français c'est si tu préfères cette langue là ou si vraiment tu fais un effort pour garder ta culture, dis "il faut que je parle en français, sinon je vais le perdre." C'est tellement facile de parler en anglais quand y te fais comprendre. (Katherine, p. 60)

The four respondents who chose to be interviewed in English might be considered Anglo-dominant because, in spite of their ability in French, they appeared to be more comfortable in English. It is important to note that each of these participants originates from a mixed English-French household. Cara and Linda discussed the shift that occurs as francophone adolescents leave the French only elementary school and move into the mixed environment of their high school where English predominates. Their remarks reflect the shift in adolescent social networks as they develop their own interests and pursue their own friends, as opposed to remaining "the French kids."

- C More and more every year. It comes out naturally, like your tongue likes English, English comes to your head.
- L I don't know what happened. But like she said, in high school, you're meeting so many people and... not only that, there are English classes. It's all in English so you kind of...
- C You find different friends. Trust me, I was with the same friends for eight, ten years... and you meet all these different people and you just want to be with all these different people, it's different, it's new... So you just make new friends and then you settle in with different groups.
- L It isn't thought about, a combination of brain being in the English mode and laziness about making the effort to use French. (Cara & Linda, pp. 45-46, 54)

Breanne said that she had not really ever considered the amount of English she spoke in comparison to the French. It just happens:

- I wish it didn't happen that way, I wish in school I'd just be able to focus on French, speak French in my French classes and that's it. But it's just so hard, because I guess if we're not working we'll start kind of talking. It's just, the fact that you're with English people over the weekend... (Breanne, p. 18)

Julie said that speaking English or French really depended on who she was with:

- Comme, for sure, je parle en anglais avec mes amis, mais ça dépend avec qui je suis... (Julie, p. 77)

**AGE AND ASSOCIATES.** It is possible that at around fourteen years of age francophone adolescents are confronted by choices and their decisions are tempered by social acceptance among their peers. So speaking English is a matter of assimilation or life stage. No one wants to be different, and they may not think about what their choices may mean. Katherine suggested that younger adolescents do not give much thought to the significance of their actions. She does not believe that speaking English results from anglophone prejudices or conformity to the situation so much as it is a choice made for various reasons. Age sometimes makes the choice of English.

- J'en rencontre pas souvent ça. La plupart c'est les personnes de quatorze ans qui disent, "entre nous autres on va juste parler en anglais." Le restant ils acceptent vraiment la situation. C'est même pas un besoin d'accepter, c'est juste qu'on est tous de même, p'is on vit au Canada et c'est un pays bilingue. T'as un problème avec les jeunes de quatorze ans, ça les dérange pas. C'est là qui vient à s'assimiler, comme mon frère parle en anglais tout le temps. ...il est bête quand tu lui parles en français... C'est dur de penser en français, même, si tu commences à penser en anglais. Alors c'est de cet âge là, l'âge qui font un transfert, p'is ils disent, "Ça me dérange pas, je parle juste à mes amis, p'is je pense juste à ma vie sociale." Ce qui arrive, c'est qu'ils commencent à parler en anglais, à cause que la vie sociale est en anglais. Pis ils oublient leur français, p'is quand ils réalisent, ils ont dix-sept ans, dix-huit ans, et c'est souvent trop tard. (Katherine, pp. 62-63)

Diane, Emilie, and Alain speak French with their parents, but are more removed from the local francophone community than are some of the other participants. The two girls have attended French

immersion, while their brother attends the FFL elementary school. Diane has very few local contacts that are French, but travelled for three months on a French language exchange while still in high school and now attends university in Montreal. Her younger siblings value their francophone identity, but are more frustrated in ensuring its maintenance. Both Emilie and Alain would like more opportunities to speak French; however, they find that even their francophone friends prefer speaking English:

- E Quand je suis avec les francophones, ils aiment parler l'anglais... moi, je veux parler en français mais eux autres veulent parler en anglais et ça va jamais aller.
- D Mais je peux dire avec elle, p'is aussi Alain, quand les enfants francophones sont ensemble, c'est cool de parler en anglais, c'est ça qui est exotique. Mais c'est pas juste d'éviter de parler le français, il y en a qui parlent français à maison. Comme quand t'es parmi les francophones parler l'anglais c'est exotique, et quand t'es parmi les anglophones parler français, c'est différent p'is c'est cool. Fait que tous veulent être différent, c'est vouloir être "non-conformiste."
- E Moi là, j'ai des amis qui sortent de la porte et ils parlent anglais. La plupart du temps je parle anglais avec mes amis francophones.
- A Juste avoir des amis qui ne disent pas "parle moi en anglais"... au lieu de toujours parler anglais, parler français ça me donne un challenge. Eux autres ils parlent en anglais, moi je parle en français parce que je fais des fautes avec mon anglais... (Emilie, Diane, Alain, pp. 20, 26, 28)

Emilie and Alain have different reasons for wanting to speak French. He is more comfortable in French and would prefer that his friends speak French with him because of his weaknesses in English. Emilie, who is in French immersion with anglophone classmates, really values opportunities to practice her French and is dismayed by francophone friends who choose to communicate in English.

### **Assimilation vs Language Shift**

Participants' reactions and interpretation of the assimilation that occurs among minority francophones is an informative element of their ethno-linguistic vitality. The social conditions and linguistic environment in Thunder Bay foster the attitude that they need English, so they have the choice of speaking the majority language and adapting so they might preserve their cultural heritage, or to just neglect their own language. When the respondents spoke of assimilation they tended to refer to it as a risk, but perceived it as something they had witnessed which did not apply to themselves. While most realized the risk, even Anglo-dominant participants did not see that assimilation applied to them. This is important because it suggests that their ethno-linguistic vitality is still quite strong.

Participants suggested assimilation was a choice, made by parents for their children or by adolescents

for themselves. The means and ways for maintaining the French language in the minority milieu become apparent as young people describe assimilation and its effects.

- Comme la plupart de mes amis sont... anglais. Les enfants il faut qu'ils s'adaptent pour préserver leur langue. (Emilie, p. 29)

Julie met a former classmate who had gone over to the English school system in grade 1 in cooperative education course on the English side of her mixed high school (no French cooperative class because there are not enough students). She shook her head telling me how he has lost his first language:

Mais je connais beaucoup de monde... Dans ma classe de co-op, il y a un jeune que je connais qui était dans ma classe en prématernelle, p'is maternelle. Pis on était tous français. ...à cette heure, il est complètement assimilé. Il comprend la langue, il ne peut pas vraiment la parler. Ses deux parents sont français, mais il a honte. Ça fait mal de voir un de mes... qui ne peut pas comprendre. (Julie, pp. 75-76)

Breanne chose to do the interview in English and uses English more often than French. She suggests it is a matter of growing up in a house where English was usually used. It is significant, however she would certainly argue it is not a matter of assimilation because in addition to attending the French school, Breanne maintains francophone contacts with friends, her father's family, and at her work. These contacts sustain her French Canadian identity. It is a valuable part of who she is and she carries it with her. Assimilated is more a matter of not being able to speak French or not wanting to.

- I don't think that it [assimilation] is a big concern. I know for me personally there's not. Because I'm French and I love speaking French in school and all that. But, other people might be more... because the rest of the school and the rest of the city is English, they might be more pulled towards speaking English all the time. Even I shouldn't say that, I'm like that too. I guess just being around lots of people who are English, you're pulled to speak English around them. But I don't think it would make me want to give up my French. It would never. (Breanne, p. 14)

Louis was the only participant who might be labelled "assimilated." He was in French immersion until he encountered some difficulty. He understands enough now to enjoy doing well in core French at school. Although he takes pride in his French background, he doesn't like speaking French and thinks he can't compare to how well his mother, her family, and her friends speak it. He doesn't have the many francophone contacts in the home because his parents use English. His francophone relatives are bilingual and several anglophones have married in, so it is a kind of courtesy to accommodate the stranger in the crowd by speaking English (Process Log, #5, pp. 109-110).

Carolynne suggested assimilation was a choice. She understood making the switch to English

because of the environment, but could not justify why people would give their French up when there is more gain in keeping it.

- Moi je pense que... b'en, c'est un choix, c'est leur choix. On peut pas vraiment les blamer ou rien. Mais, pourquoi quand t'as la chance à savoir... le français c'est une belle langue, quand t'as la chance de parler en français, pourquoi la rejeter? Pourquoi la jeter à poubelle? Pourquoi pas la garder et la partager avec des autres? (Carolynne, p. 9)

**NEED TO BE BILINGUAL.** To participate in social activities in Thunder Bay, francophone adolescents need to be able to speak English. Learning to speak English leads to bilingualism. It is necessary as a way to gain access to the dominant social group, to overcome isolation and "to belong" in the community. Michel said bilingualism is necessary in Thunder Bay because French is not offered everywhere (Interview Transcript, p. 97). Bilingualism is also useful for scholastic endeavours like taking the courses offered at school.

- D'une façon c'est nécessaire parce que c'est pas offert partout, le français. Pour que tu te débrouilles, il faut que tu saches l'anglais. Tu peux aussi utiliser le bilinguisme comme outil scolaire, à l'école, c'est important. (Michel, p. 98)

Katherine, who came to Thunder Bay at age 10 from Quebec, did not speak any English when she moved here with her family. She said she did not want to learn English; what she really wanted to do was go back to Quebec. For all the advantages bilingualism brings, becoming bilingual was a "scary" process.

- C'est vraiment un gros avantage. D'autres vont regarder le bilinguisme comme un problème... Comme nous autres quand on est arrivé à Thunder Bay, on ne voulait pas apprendre l'anglais. Non, oh non, ...on avait vraiment peur... surtout parce qu'on était isolé, parce qu'on n'avait pas d'autre famille ici, p'is on connaissait personne en dehors de l'école. Alors on ne voulait pas apprendre l'anglais, on voulait s'en retourner au Québec. Mais... (Katherine, p. 62)

Phillip, who grew up with both English and French in the home, felt francophones are limited if they cannot speak English. Being bilingual means being able to take part. He contended that francophones have to adapt, because without English it is difficult to get the things they want. Becoming bilingual means they can do (take part in) anything that interests them.

- If you're bilingual or just French French? If you're French French, then you're pretty much screwed... (laughs). You kind of have to adapt yourself. But if you're bilingual, it's normal, they have everything, out there, you can do anything you want to do... (Phillip, p. 87)

Janine accepts the necessity of bilingualism since it allows her to gain entry but regrets that Thunder Bay is not more French, which would be "fun." . This goes back to the issue of isolation. francophones have to put aside the French part of themselves when they interact with the dominant groups. She suggests there is little space for the francophones who live in Thunder Bay and are unable to adapt to speaking English:

- Si t'es pas bilingue t'as pas vraiment une chance, il faut que t'apprennes l'anglais... Comme la ville de Thunder Bay, si tu peux pas parler l'anglais, b'en tu peux pas faire grand chose parce que toutes les activités vont être en anglais. Pis ça c'est plat. Moi, je trouve que ça serait le fun si Thunder Bay pouvait être plus francophone. (Janine, p. 74)

The interview with Alicia was my first and this was the first time I wished that I had known how to question further about this inequality. "A tone of sadness or disappointment, permeated our discussion, hurt and rejection emerge as the consequences of being a minority francophone, particularly, for one who is not bilingual" (Process Log, #1-7).

- ...Ça sera vraiment beau de voir que le français pourra être accepté plus à Thunder Bay. Comme le monde est tout le temps en train de nous achaler, tout le temps de nous agacer. Pis comme s'il y avait plus en français... Les affiches, les lettres, tout ça devrait être en deux langues. C'est triste. Parce que ça enlève la chance à tellement de jeunes d'être bilingue. C'est vraiment injuste de leur part de nous faire ça. Au Canada, c'est supposé d'être bilingue fait que... (Alicia, p. 3)

**LANGUAGE HABIT.** Since many participants do not see themselves as assimilated, but speak English quite regularly, the question of the pull, or "tiraillement," towards the dominant language needed to be considered. Adapting to the environment and conforming to social situations is different from assimilation. Compounding that, as they adapt themselves, they adopt the habit of using English so that it spills over sometimes in the environments that could be French. Julie knows of several francophones who go to French school but otherwise speak English. She believes they may lack the connection they need to maintain their first language, because so many more of their contacts are English and they choose it over French:

- B'en, beaucoup sont des "followers." Je trouve, ils peuvent pas faire de décisions pour eux-mêmes, p'is ils ont peur de dire qu'ils sont français, to stand out. Comme c'est un groupe de personnes qui parlent en anglais à la maison, tous leurs amis sont anglais, mais ils font leurs études en français. Pour eux-autres c'est pas vraiment les mêmes valeurs. (Julie, pp, 75, 81)

Julie's boyfriend prefers English but is bilingual. Although his mother is French and he goes to French school with his francophone friends, Julie believes he has not really given much thought to what it means that he mainly speaks English:

- Comme lui est plus anglais. Sa mère est française, il parle français, il a fait toutes ses études en français, p'is il peut se débrouiller en français facilement. Mais, quand j'y parle, je vais lui parler en français, mais, peut-être il va me répondre en anglais. C'est la manière qu'il est. ...comme il n'a jamais été vraiment poussé, et il parle tout le temps anglais. (Julie, p. 82)

Michel considers the practice of speaking English a habit. He suggests that younger francophones do not realize the opportunity they are giving up when they could speak French, but choose not to.

- On a tendance à pas grasper notre langue française, à cause qu'il y a beaucoup d'anglais. C'est pas

tout le temps que t'es avec ta famille ou des amis francophones. C'est des habitudes... la plupart du temps, t'as l'habitude de parler en anglais. Pis quand ils savent qu'ils ont l'opportunité de parler en français, ils ne le réalisent pas... (Michel, pp. 97-98)

Speaking English carries over into francophone settings unnoticed. It happens because francophone adolescents are often with anglophones in situations where they must speak English, a matter of the circumstances and conditioning:

- Parce qu'on est plus habitué. Il faut parler l'anglais quand t'es sortie. (Giselle, p. 43)
- Mais l'habitude de parler en anglais continue en classe, c'est ça qu'on fait parce qu'on est souvent avec des anglais. (Yvon, p. 93)
- But even when I'm with my friends, I never ever talk in French because we're always with English people too. In grade 9 it was just a big herd of French people travelling around the school together, but as we grow up there's only a few of us left.

I think it's just habit. We're constantly... someone will ask a question in English and someone else will answer in French, the next person will continue in French, the next uses English. I think it's honestly just force of habit, because if we go out we talk English because we're with English people, and when you get to school you're still with the same people even though the English people aren't there, you're used to speaking English. (Breanne, pp. 13, 18)

Katherine also suggested that habit resulted in the carry over of English into francophone settings.

- C'est tellement plus facile. Tu vas travailler, p'is tu parles en anglais; tu vas à l'école, t'as plus en plus à faire avec des anglophones, alors, tu parles en anglais; avec des amis qui ne parlent pas français, tu parles en anglais, tu arrives à maison, p'is tu parles en anglais. La plupart parlent français et anglais. Fait-que c'est pas une question de y en a qui parlent une langue, il y en a qui parlent l'autre langue. Tout le monde parle anglais. Alors, comme, c'est tellement plus facile si tu passes la journée en anglais, d'arriver à maison, tu parles en anglais. C'est vraiment pas une bonne chose. Je sais qu'à travers les années, j'ai perdu beaucoup de mon français, pas autant que ceux qui n'ont jamais été au Québec, mais j'en ai perdu quand-même pas mal. (Katherine, pp. 59, 61, 63)

Jean went further, saying that using English spreads among the francophone adolescents.

- C'est weird parce que c'est comme un rhûme: ça s'attrappe, là, de personne à personne. Une personne commence à parler et un autre continue. Si t'es habitué à communiquer en anglais, faut que tu parles en anglais. C'est contagieux on peut dire. (Jean, p. 72)

Marina believes francophone adolescents choose to speak English because it is easier to. She is concerned that some seem to think of French as a lesser language and that there is something intellectually wrong with those who continue speaking French when they could be speaking English. Marina noted it may be more difficult in homes where there is only one French parent and English is used to accommodate the other parent.

- Il y en a pas mal qui se sont fait assimiler beaucoup parce tout le monde nous parle en anglais, p'is tout est en anglais. Fait qu'on voit que c'est plus facile de parler en anglais. Pourquoi se casser la tête et parler plusieurs langues?



Je trouve que le monde qui s'assimile, comme dans ma classe on les voit déjà, ils n'ont pas la tête sur les épaules, p'is ils pensent pas deux fois avant qu'ils ne font. Ils vont le regretter plus tard que maintenant. Ils commencent toujours à parler anglais, même des vrai francophones; des vrais franco-anglos ont de la misère. La classe de français surtout,... ils commencent à parler toujours en anglais, fait que c'est quoi le point de rester en classe française? Fait qu'ils font beaucoup de travail seul, p'is ils ont juste des amis anglais, p'is ils sentent mieux, meilleurs... Les élèves sont, divisés moitié-moitié... si tu parles pas l'anglais, c'est comme si tu étais en arrière ou quelque chose.

Il y en a quelqu'un qui essaient de te supporter, p'is t'aider, p'is te parler en français, mais... des fois t'es entre amis, p'is ils vont parler, p'is y arrête si du monde s'approche. Ça ferme, ils veulent pas qu'ils les entendent. C'est ça l'affaire, toujours ils ont une affaire de peur.

Moi j'ai jamais eu peur. Ça aide que j'ai habité à Montréal, p'is tout le monde parlait en français. Il y en a du monde qui a juste un parent, p'is le parent ne force pas, fait qu'ils parlent juste l'anglais parce que c'est plus facile, c'est plus simple. Pis l'autre parent comprend fait que pourquoi pas juste parler ça? (Marina, pp. 31, 34, 37-38)

Speaking French where possible and English everywhere else, participants described their potential to become bilingual and live as bicultural citizens. With the exception of one participant, the respondents in this study are bilingual and can function in either English or French, one also speaks a third language. Participant differences exist in language preference and consciousness of personal facility with each language. Some respondents were raised bilingual, others acquired their bilingualism quite easily in the process of adapting to the environment, and some have really struggled to gain it and acceptance into the larger community. All but one of the participants live biculturally between the minority group and the dominant society. Their experiences influence their interpretations and their identity as francophones in a minority milieu because the more their culture is limited and their language isolated by their proximity to the anglophone society, the more minority adolescents can appreciate the duality of living as a minority French-Canadian in Thunder Bay. It bolsters cultural awareness and contributes to ethnolinguistic vitality.

### **Lifestyle and Language Maintenance**

The anglophone environment constrains the francophone minority so they adopt the dominant language in many situations. Participants spoke extensively about how they must adapt to their surroundings. However, they also know they can offset assimilation by maintaining contacts and association that reinforce their francophone identity. When asked about how to maintain a sense of being French when, as a minority, they are so submersed in English culture, participants emphasized the importance of maintaining contact and living "as French as it possible."

- Okay... c'est ta langue, vivre en français. Comme partager les choses en français, faire des activités

en français, en majorité vivre en français et dans une harmonie francophone. Il faut faire des activités. Se mélanger avec d'autres francophones, okay, il faut s'intégrer dans des, dans les activités francophones qu'il y a, comme jouer aux quilles, les danses, les soupers, les jeux aussi il y a les jeux qu'on peut... um, s'intégrer avec les autres, comme essayer de vivre le plus qu'on peut en français. (Carolyne, p. 5)

The home and family, the school, clubs and associations they might join offer some measure of francophone lifestyle. Wherever possible, adolescents foster language contacts that permit them to be francophone, speak French, and feel a part of a community. As much as possible, they maintain and develop francophone identity:

- Il faut qu'on le garde dans la famille, parler le français tout le temps. Comme quand les parents ne vont pas pousser que leurs enfants parlent français et, dans ce cas là, les jeunes vont perdre leur identité française parce qu'à maison leurs traditions, puis leur langue elle-même n'ont pas été gardées.

Il faut faire partie de toutes les organisations possibles. De garder ta langue et de ne pas être gêné de parler quand t'es en public. Juste pour n'avoir pas peur de ta langue, d'être fière de ta langue, puis d'en faire le plus qu'il y a là plus de cent pour cent. Comme, il faut garder leur langue. Chez eux, même seule, il faut faire sûr pour avoir leurs livres, faire sûr pour avoir leur musique française... même si c'est caché. (Alicia, pp: 1-2)

- Il faut que tu t'intègres avec les personnes, qui sont comme nous autres, des françaises. Faut que tu essaies de trouver où est-ce qu'ils sont dans ta communauté, p'is tout ça. C'est pas mal l'école, ça c'est une place. Pis à ma maison, je parle tout le temps français. Pis ça c'est où j'ai appris mon français, c'est où j'ai eu mon français. Pis il y a aussi des camps, comme des groupes, l'AFNOO (Association des francophones de Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario), les gros groupes de l'Ontario francophone. (Michel, pp. 94-95)
- Ça c'est facile. Premièrement, garder la langue à la maison, parler français à la maison c'est très facile. Deuxièmement, c'est toujours d'aller à l'école en français et à l'église en français. Pis se rencontrer et parler en français dans notre groupe. Ça ne se fait pas toujours. Mais c'est la priorité de parler en français. Pis, um, de garder notre culture, comme la St. Jean Baptiste. Pis se rencontrer de temps en temps pour s'isoler, de rester avec les autres francophones, de pouvoir passer du temps ensemble, parce qu'on est différent. Passer du temps qu'est francophone, qui vient de nos coutumes françaises, si on peut faire ça ensemble ça aide plus à garder la langue. Il faut que tu trouves ton groupe, si tu ne trouves pas le groupe de personnes qui ont les mêmes caractères que toi, disons comme les francophones, tu vas te retrouver seule et c'est difficile. À Thunder Bay ce n'est pas pire: des livres français à la bibliothèque; l'école secondaire, le côté français. Ça aide beaucoup. (Katherine, pp. 55-56, 58)

Marina was very specific about how to maintain language and culture in the minority milieu. In addition to French language contacts, adolescents need to maintain an "assertive" sense of self to withstand the pressures eroding francophone identity:

- Peut-être en essayant de donner des informations que le français c'est bon, p'is donner des raisons pourquoi. Faire plus de choses en français, de parler plus le français, surtout en public à tout le monde qui est français. Je pense qu'on devrait faire plus d'activités en français, de plus se réunir ensemble, d'essayer de s'aider au lieu de juste, se battre, tous s' hair. Um, essayer moins d'assimiler

parce qu'il y en a beaucoup qui trouvent que c'est plus facile comme il y a du monde p'is y a pas de temps à perdre, fait qu'ils décident de parler anglais p'is c'est tout.

Essaie de garder not' langue, surtout à maison. Parle la partout où qu'on va, soit pas gêné. On peut se sentir gêné, on peut se sentir aliéné par tout le monde. Se sentir fière de nous autres. Parce que c'est vrai qu'on est des personnes importantes. De jamais se sentir ridiculisé par leur langue, ou diminué par leur langue. De sentir aussi bien que les autres, autant de sécurité, avoir autant de confiance qu'eux autres. De sentir leur grandeur en tant qu'anglophone, nous on avait à sentir en tant que francophone à l'entour d'eux autres. (pp. 31, 32, 33, 35)

Jean said that individuals make the choice and must not hesitate to speak French or to ask anglophones to help them in French. Every person who does that makes the francophone community more visible and that helps him.

- Il faut aussi ne pas avoir peur d'aller demander d'aide. Il faut demander aux anglais, si on ne demande jamais, si tu fais jamais ça, il ne vont pas trouver que c'est important et ils ne vont jamais rien faire. Mais, c'est important parce que la première personne qui le fait m'aide par ça. Un individu, ça fait encore une différence. (Jean, p. 70)

### **“La famille française”**

Maintenance of language and culture in the minority milieu depends on contact between francophones and their community. Adolescent francophones must be given the incentive and opportunity to maintain and develop their membership in the minority community. The family and the home environment are the first sources of contact for minority youth. Katherine referred to family as the cradle of identity, an important social location in which we first learn about who we are:

- Parce que c'est le... si la famille est toute française, c'est le... le berceau de notre identité, c'est de là qu'on vient, c'est là qu'on a appris notre langue, p'is c'est là qu'on va la continuer, at home. C'est tout sur la famille. La maison c'est la place, l'endroit où tu passes le plus de ton temps, alors naturellement tu vas apprendre ce que tu parles en famille. Tu vas la parler la plupart du temps. Alors, ça sort surtout de la famille, ça vient surtout du milieu. (Katherine, pp. 56, 61)

Diane suggested that in addition to having contacts, minority francophone adolescents can reinforce their identity by knowing more about their history, where they have come from, and who they are:

- Je pense il faut connaître l'histoire canadienne. Il faut montrer qu'est-ce qui est différent... il me semble que si les gens étaient mieux informés de leurs racines, ils seraient plus fières et ils auraient plus de buts. J'ai appris des histoires de la culture orale des Canadiens-français à l'école, qui ont été inventées par des grands-mères et des grands-pères, p'is qui ont été dites et changées pendant des générations. (Diane, p. 24)

Jean emphasized the role of the family:

- Moi, je trouve que la langue est importante pour toute notre famille. La famille de ma mère, et la famille de mon père, on est tous des francophones, c'est notre culture. Je trouve que beaucoup se passe à la maison, si tu parles français, t'as une grosse chance à le maintenir. Je sais que si tu ne

parles pas français dans la maison il y a des grosses chances que... c'est bien important que tu parles français. La famille nous montre des exemples. Contact. Si d'autre monde le fait, toi aussi tu vas le faire. Pis si c'est rien que toi, tu vas arrêter de parler français. Mais, tu peux pas être le seul. (Jean, pp. 67-68)

Even in mixed families where the home language is mostly English, participants explained that the parent's francophone family is a key source of the sense of being French:

- Well, part of my identity... mostly with my family and stuff. We would go on trips, and we would go to see my father's family, and it was always French. That's kind of how I consider myself being French, because my family is French, my grandparents are French. My grandfather doesn't speak any English, and it's the same with some of my uncles and my great uncles. Most of my dad's uncles and cousins are most strictly French. That's where most of my French identity comes in, with my family. And then, also, with my friends, my French friends. But I'd have to say it was mostly with my father and his family. (Breanne, p. 15)
- My father and his parents, especially, they taught me the values and they taught me the culture, basically. Now it's my decision in passing it along to my family and my children. (Cara, p. 53)

Carolynne tried to specify the importance of the family speaking French in the home:

- En la pratiquant, à la maison surtout. Parler français à ceux qui le comprennent et qui le parlent. C'est important de parler notre langue, entre parents et enfants, et c'est important aussi de vivre en français en famille. Comme de... quand il y a des sorties qu'on pourrait faire en français, de les prendre et de sortir avec nos parents p'is nos enfants. (Carolynne, p. 7)

Marina, who has had a more difficult time than some in adapting to the minority situation, credits her father for supporting and encouraging her, for making her feel secure and giving her the confidence to believe in herself:

- Ça me rend sécurisée, comme je sais que c'est pas méchant de parler français. Pis je suis toujours en train de parler français fait que mes parents sont fiers de moi, p'is c'est important pour moi. Les parents sont responsables de toi et ton futur. Pis surtout à cause de mon père, il est professeur, il me renseigne sur beaucoup d'affaires, que je vais aller loin dans la vie en parlant ces langues là... fait que je trouve qu'il joue un grand rôle, p'is ça m'aide beaucoup, ça me donne de la confiance et de la sécurité. (Marina, pp. 34-35)

Emilie and Diane were raised to appreciate their francophone heritage. After our interview their mother told me how, living in the minority, she is concerned about maintaining the language, and how she endeavours to impress upon her children and their francophone friends the dangers they face. She noted that francophone parents must teach their children the language and ensure they use it (Interview Notes, p. 29). Emilie and Diane worried that their French would suffer if they lacked francophone contacts and reinforcement in the home:

- E Là c'est plus dur parce qu'ici on perdait notre français parce qu'on n'avait pas de contact avec du monde qui...

- D Nos parents ils ont ça en tête. Ici il faut voyager autant que possible, comme ça ils vont pouvoir évoluer en tant que francophones. Pis d'être active, de vouloir être francophone. Je pense qu'une affaire pour les jeunes francophones... il me semble que les parents insistent que c'est important, ça fait la différence. Pis si on a les parents comme les nôtres qui voient que c'est difficile de préserver la langue et qui font le choix de diriger qu'on parle français, ça fait une différence. On perdrait un peu la langue, mais, c'est moins grave. (Emilie & Diane, p. 28)

Many participants suggested that their French language contacts outside the home are so limited they would surely lose their language if they did not speak French at home. The family helps them to counteract the anglophone influences in the rest of their social networks and gives them a chance to develop their language.

**LONG DISTANCE CONTACT.** Visits to and from family relations provide another source of contact that is essential for linguistic and cultural maintenance. On holidays from school the participants all make regular trips to see grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, or siblings. Phone calls and letters keep people in close contact, but all of the participants felt that visits "home" were a substantial source of the kindred spirit that brings them into the francophone family and gives them reason to maintain their language and culture in the isolation of being a French minority in Thunder Bay:

- I just have my father here. But he comes from a family of seven so I have lots of aunts and uncles, and we often visit them. That keeps up my French. Even like talking on the phone, whenever we call it's always in French, never in English. See we made a point. Like we would go visit my dad's family three times a year. We'd go there every Easter and every Thanksgiving. And usually sometime during the summer break, we would go visit someone, whether they lived in Saskatchewan or Alberta, like I have family all over. So we were always visiting, visiting. (Breanne, pp. 13, 15)
- J'ai juste ma famille ici, c'est tout. Je suis né au Québec. Ça va faire neuf ans, je pense. On peut leur téléphoner, p'is leur écrire et tout ça. Et pendant les fêtes, tu peux aller les voir. C'est surtout pour les grosses fêtes, comme le maximum c'est peut-être deux fois par année, pendant Noël, ou l'été, ça c'est quand on prend les vacances. (Michel, p. 95)
- Les contacts sociaux sont importants. Les chances pour parler avec la famille au loin et de leur rendre visite pendant les vacances, aussi souvent que possible. (Jacques, p. 30)

Visits to family and the telephone contacts help to overcome the isolation of francophones in Thunder Bay.

Distances can be overcome to some extent, but it is lonely sometimes:

- Hmmm... moi, c'est la famille. Ça me dérange beaucoup vu que... on a aucune famille ici, p'is choses comme ça. Comme les Noëls... on est isolé, I guess. (Julie, p. 75)
- Décourageant. La grosse affaire c'est qu'on manque notre famille. Ça c'est une grande chose pour nous autres parce que not' famille est b'en importante. Comme quand quelque chose va mal... (Katherine, p. 64)

### **French Education and Community Contacts**

The usual significance of school in an adolescent's life is intensified for francophones in the minority milieu. In addition to being a major centre of adolescent social activity, the school contributes to the socialization of minority francophones and helps them to develop their language and culture. Diane said schooling and education taught her who she was and that solidified her identity:

- Quand l'identité s'est fermenté c'est quand j'ai appris l'histoire. (p. 23)

Of the four participants who did not go to "French school," three were in immersion and one used to be in immersion but transferred to English. In addition, of those who had graduated from high school, two from FFL went on to the local (English) college and the third went from French immersion to a bilingual university in Quebec. Emilie, Jacques and Gilles are all in grade 10 in French immersion. Diane was in French immersion until she finished high school. The three younger participants did not say very much about how the school contributes to their francophone identity. Emilie said that going to school in the French immersion program gave her the chance to be special among her classmates, they admire her fluency and sometimes ask for her help. On the other hand, she noted that sometimes being the only French person was frustrating, for example, when English students make prejudicial remarks or call the French students names. She perceived that her anglophone friends do not feel quite the same rejection she feels as a francophone (Process Log, #4, 12). Diane said she was proud of being francophone when she was in French immersion, but added that her identity as a francophone really developed as she got older when she went to university and learned about francophone cultural history, as well as when she travelled in Quebec and Europe where she could really see she was Franco-Ontarian in addition to being a French Canadian.

Linda and Carolynne, the two adolescents attending the local college recently graduated from the FFL program. Neither chose to continue their studies at a French college, so they were preparing to work extra hard to succeed with their all-English course schedules. They suggested that their new contact with anglophones makes them more conscious of being francophone and having gone to school in French.

Louis, who was in immersion until grade 4, switched to English school after a difficult year. One of the problems Louis had was in making sense of the differences in the French spoken by his mother and her family in comparison to the French being taught at school by his anglophone teacher. She tried sending him to immersion because she feels the French school isolates francophone children too much from the

anglophone community and he may not have had enough opportunity to learn English (Mme L. Louis' mother). His mother, a French immersion teacher herself, tries to speak French with him, but he will not answer except in English because he did not feel his French is good enough. Louis wishes he spoke French like his mother and her relatives but says cannot. He speaks only English. That he can understand French well enough makes him proud at school; it impresses his teacher and classmates (Process Log, #3, 17).

**THE FRENCH LANGUAGE PROGRAM.** The French First Language students, represented by most of the participants in this study, attend an all French school until the end of grade 8. The change is dramatic and abrupt when they enter grade 9 to attend the francophone section within a mixed high school. They must adjust to the new environment and acquire the habit of speaking English more often. Still, the FFL program at the secondary level offers francophone adolescents a vital source of contact with their ethnolinguistic community. The school helps francophone adolescents to appreciate and develop their language, culture and identity within the minority milieu. The participants who originate from homes where English predominates have a special advantage in attending the French school because it gives them opportunities for learning and contact with the language they might otherwise lack. The French school, the teachers and classmates, are a French community. It makes participants feel French:

- C I mean at school there's classes. That's my French community, my classes and my teachers, but that's about as close as I can get.
- L Same here... especially now that I'm out of the French section at school, I'm no longer using my French except with my mother. I think if I went to an English school, my attitude would have been different towards French communities and French. I mean, growing up in French school, it made you feel French. (Cara & Linda, pp. 48-49)

Jean said that school is a place for francophones to come together and speak their language:

- C'est tout français encore... on n'entend pas d'anglais, il y a tout un groupe de francophones. So... c'est vraiment différent des autres. (Jean, p. 68)

Participants noted that the French school community consists of the francophone students, supportive administration, and concerned teachers. The FFL section expands the usual secondary curriculum so that adolescents also understand the significance their position as a minority group, their isolation is minimized, and so they have their identity validated and vitalized.

- Les professeurs nous aident beaucoup... les amis... B'en, parce qu'eux autres nous montrent que toujours c'est... Comme on sait que c'est difficile, mais eux autres nous inspirent toujours. Dans l'école on est entouré des anglais, ça paraît plus que dans une ville anglaise. Pis les professeurs

disent, "Regarde, t'es chanceux, t'as deux langues, t'es bilingue." Ils nous font voir que dans le futur c'est nous autres qui vont avoir l'edge. Pis qu'on est mieux que ces anglais là parce qu'on a les deux langues, alors on peut parler d'autres choses... (Julie, pp. 74-75)

One teacher in particular, Mme B, is credited by many for getting them to see themselves, to appreciate their position, their advantage and the work they still have to do. Besides being a caring person and a conscientious teacher, Mme B is recognized for having immigrated to Canada, learning both official languages, and knowing the history of French Canada and Franco-Ontarians. Her concern about her students is evident and they learn from her.

- Je sais qu'à l'école, Mme B... Tout le temps, elle parle des francophones en Ontario. C'est probablement le seul professeur qui nous fait penser. Elle fait pas juste nous dire "Parlez en français, parlez en français," c'est "Pourquoi vous ne parlez pas français?" Alors elle en discute beaucoup avec ses élèves, pour ceux qui prennent la peine de l'écouter. Ça aide beaucoup. Elle en a beaucoup à dire! C'est pour nous autres. Elle n'est pas française, non plus; elle est d'une différente nationalité. (Katherine, pp. 61-62)
- Elle nous y fait penser. Aujourd'hui, on a lu un poème sur l'assimilation... ça disait qu'un par un on est poigné... ça te fait réaliser. (Yvon, p. 93)

*Curriculum and Culture.* The respondents appreciated how the FFL section benefits them with its small class sizes. Knowing teachers and classmates, being familiar with expectations and having the time for individualized attention is a terrific learning environment. They have access to their community, as well as opportunities to mix with the wider population of the school when they take courses in the English section (Process Log 1-3; 2-5; 4-2, 3; 11-5, 7, 8; 12-1, 2, 6).

- The French section is probably better for us... greater focus on students, advantage of small classes and knowing teachers, greater flexibility. (Cara, p. 54)

Katherine noted that the situation is rather unrealistic in comparison to what most people get. The francophone students have an advantage in high school, but she wondered how they will fare in the large classes and work environments they will undoubtedly encounter later in life. The move to high school from French elementary school was a big change; moving beyond the secondary school into the real world will prove an even bigger challenge. Nonetheless, the classroom situation at the high school proves to give them a learning advantage. (I have worked with their teachers enough to know that they are fair, but not really different from other teachers in their standards and expectations. If anything, they are a bit tougher because they are probably always open to scrutiny as the minority program in this time of cutbacks and restraint.) Teachers are conscientious about students and can provide specialized attention, and the closeness of the



classroom community gives students a certain sense of security.

- Il y a des problèmes avec. Pour commencer à l'école française, tout le monde connaît tout le monde. On s'entend tous, on connaît tous les professeurs, c'est vraiment plus une famille qu'une école. Quand on arrive au secondaire, il y a juste une classe par niveau. C'est difficile parce que quand t'es seulement six élèves dans la classe, p'is tu connais tes professeurs, p'is ça fait cinq ans avec les mêmes professeurs, ils tendent à te donner plus de libertés. L'attention du professeur est divisée entre toi et ton amie, et tu peux attendre parce que t'es capable de travailler ensemble. L'esprit s'ouvre plus, le temps d'avoir les discussions, le temps de parler p'is tout. C'est la meilleure que tu peux avoir franchement à Thunder Bay.

Ça c'est qu'on se connaît tous, ça fait des années qu'on est ensemble, et on a appris à travailler ensemble, on connaît tous, p'is on se sent pas mal plus sécurisée d'avoir son propre groupe à toi que tu reviens toujours... Fait que c'est b'en plus facile de développer des instructions spécifiques par étudiant, c'est plus facile à développer des idées parce que t'as pas peur de parler en avant de groupe parce qu'on se connaît tous. (Katherine, pp. 57, 65)

*School Microcosm of Isolation.* The French section, with all its benefits to the francophone students, is a microcosm of the situation for francophones in Thunder Bay. Adolescents encounter many of the same difficulties such as isolation, invisibility, and adapting to an environment in which they are outsiders when they first attempt to gain entry to it. Breannie said that the school tries to do well by them, but the efforts are invisible to the English community. Julie remembered the differences she found between the small French elementary school and the huge mixed, predominantly English high school. Even when adolescents overcome the shock and start getting to know anglophones in the school, they remain separate to a degree and still kind of invisible and unknown.

- Je suis française, je vais à une école où je suis un cours de français. French immersion c'est pas ça. Pis ils veulent pas comprendre que pour nous autres... ils voient pas de différence entre French immersion p'is français. Parce qu'une grosse French immersion, p'is un gros anglais, p'is encore le petit français, you know. Ils sont pas contre nous autres, mais on est généralisé comme French immersion. Mais it goes so far avec les anglais, parce que ceux qui sont cool sont... beaucoup on se tient pas avec les anglais, même les anglais. So c'est comme une barrière pour certaines personnes, et ça devrait pas l'être. (Julie, pp. 79-80)

FFL students are separated from the rest of the student body to a large extent. The school tries to make the FFL experience as French as possible. The program aims to provide francophone children with Catholic values, good academic training, and the opportunity to maintain their language while developing a sense of their cultural community. The difficulty is that the school does not really attend to the disjuncture experienced by francophone students.

Katherine thought it might be better if there were a French only secondary school for francophones to attend: it would avoid the displacement caused by the abrupt change in environment, and fewer of the

elementary level francophones would choose to switch to immersion. As well, francophone adolescents would not have to defend themselves to envious anglophones who see them as being privileged.

- Parce c'est juste six élèves dans la classe, tandis qu'eux autres c'est des classes de trente personnes. Fait-que certaines ont de la misère avec ça, de comprendre. Mais, c'est probablement la plus grosse source de... racisme contre nous autres, de la part des étudiants anglophones, à cause qu'ils aiment pas qu'on a tellement de libertés.

Je pense que ça aiderait beaucoup si on avait une école secondaire complètement française. Si on avait une école toute française qu'on aura pu dire "Okay, t'as pas de choix, pour continuer ton éducation, faut que t'aïlles à l'école francophone." L'assimilation va être un plus grand danger pour lui qui ne continue pas en français. Fait-que ça aidera beaucoup à ce niveau là. (Katherine, pp. 55, 59, 65)

The section has its own office to run things and keep in touch with parents, its own teachers and takes care of its own. Participants said that the school tries to "do" for the FFL students, but could do more to make anglophone students aware of the francophone students and for the French students to take time for themselves.

- L'école aide beaucoup. Des fois ils font les annonces en français, ils envoient des lettres à maison en français... aussi on pourra avoir des posters pour avertir les anglais de notre présence et aussi pour qu'on pense à notre situation. (Yvon, p. 93)
- There are lots of things that our school tries to do, like they try to do masses and things, try to do the bilingual thing. We get, one week out of the year for French prayers in the morning. I think we should honestly get more than that. I was also thinking... in our room 600 everything is French. But none of the other students are allowed in, that kind of prevents the rest of the school from knowing that we actually have things that encourage your French. So I was even thinking of a bulletin board of something. Just with French things on it, French sayings and things to tell people that there are French people in the school. (Breanne, pp. 11-12)

Linda said the francophones follow in with the English where the school is concerned:

- The French students all are part of the English, basically. It's kind of like the French are forgotten in stuff like that, in school things... school pride day, whatever, the French are forgotten. It has nothing to do with the French, it has to do with "our school" so language isn't considered. (Linda, p. 51)

Julie felt the francophones were separated from anglophones. Although that can help to maintain their language and identity, the protective isolation keeps them hidden, and when they mix at school-wide functions, there is little evidence of consideration for the francophones (who are expected to follow the flow).

- Ils nous séparent beaucoup je trouve. Comme je suis fière qu'on est séparé parce qu'on est français, p'is, c'est comme notre école, notre section, mais quand il y a des activités on est tout le temps avec des anglais, comme aux danses, ils vont pas jouer de la musique française. C'est pas que j'aimerais qu'ils jouent de la musique, juste considérer le fait qu'on est là. (Julie, p. 80)

The francophone adolescents at the high school are unable to get all of their courses in French

because of the size of their section and the unavailability of certain choices in some years. Physical education, arts and technical courses, as well as some of the senior electives are only offered in English. In addition, some French language courses like math or science may only be offered in alternate years (particularly senior courses where only one or two of the francophone students would be in the class, the school will wait until the following year when another class level has students who are also ready for the course). Most francophones have to take some classes in English:

- There are lots of courses that aren't offered in French, only the mandatory classes are offered. Arts aren't offered in French. All the business courses and that too, we're forced to take them in English. That's kind of good because it gives us a chance to know the rest of the school, instead of just our little group. (Breanne, p. 12)

Katherine felt that having to take classes in English was a bit of a culture shock when she started.

However, she added that it was lucky for the francophone students because they are exposed to larger classes, mix with the dominant group, and do not become dependent on either language since they are developing both.

- J'ai eu un choc monumental la première fois que j'ai rentré dans une salle de classe anglaise p'is je connaissais personne. Ça fait huit ans que je suis à Thunder Bay, p'is j'arrive là p'is je connais personne. C'était une classe de trente élèves, j'étais habituée à des classes de deux élèves, cinq élèves, p'is huit au maximum. Fait-que c'est vraiment un choc culturel, je le souhaite pas à personne. Mais, vu qu'on a les deux, parce qu'ils sont obligés de prendre les cours qui sont pas offerts en français, en anglais. On a la chance... on devient pas dépendent l'un de l'autre. (Katherine, p. 65)

Marina's experience has been quite different in that she only spoke French and Spanish when she came to Thunder Bay. She had no choice but to learn English and the process was a long and frustrating one. At the elementary school, she noted the English she was taught did not amount to much except little useless words and phrases. Marina had been so unsure of her language ability that she initially signed up for general level courses (because there would be more French options for her). It was her father who convinced her that she would be able to manage the advanced level program, even if she would need to speak more English. If he had not convinced her, her options might have been fairly limited. The decision to take the advanced level courses will allow her more options for the future.

- J'ai arrivé en septième année. Ils te montrent juste des petit mots de rien, tu sais. Fait que tu ne connais rien, mais tout de suite que t'arrives icitte ils te mettent avec une madame qui te fait montrer avec des papiers et des petit mots. Fait-que ça va pas aider encore. En changeant d'une école à l'autre école, je me suis dis toute suite, "non, je pourrais pas prendre les cours avancés parce que je ne parle pas l'anglais. Fait-que je peux pas me mettre en avancé, je me tiens en général." Pis j'ai envoyé mon affaire. Mon père a entendu ce qui ne passait, p'is c'est lui qui m'a mise sur le bon

chemin. Il m'a dit, "Pourquoi tu te mets de même, t'es capable de faire l'avancé. (Marina, p. 36)

When she entered grade 9, Marina went into the advanced course stream. The "anglais" course (compulsory second language component) was her first struggle. Although the teacher is francophone, he speaks English very well and used it exclusively in the class with his students. Many of her classmates already had some ability in English; Marina, however, found it quite difficult and found her teacher pushing her to use English more. This particular teacher had the students make oral presentations, and again, Marina had a "tough time" of it because she was uncomfortable with her weakness in comparison to her classmates. Still, she tried and continues to try since it is a good thing to be able to speak English. Marina went from hating English, to understanding that it would be beneficial for her to have it, to the point where she is now able to get by in English when she has to. These days she observed, she feels good about her efforts, confident she is doing well, knowing that she does not have to feel "diminuée" because she cannot speak English as well as she can French or that French is not as "good" as English (which she thinks may be the reason so many other francophone adolescents seem to speak English all the time). Marina is more confident now and is glad for the encouragement she received; she sees how speaking English will help her and take her further:

- Fait-qu'il m'a mise en avancé, p'is après ça je suis arrivée en classe. C'est un prof francophone, mais il est vraiment bon en anglais. Pis tout est en anglais, p'is tous les autres "ah, oui, oui, oui," parce qu'ils comprenaient tout. Moi, je comprenais rien, pas un mot. Mais maintenant, encore le prof m'engueule, p'is tout, il m'engueule mais il me parle. Tu sais, toujours il dit "speak English, speak English." Fait que là je parlais anglais, mais en ce temps là j'étais pas sûre. J'étais pas confortable, je me sens mal entre les français. Mais j'essaie de m'améliorer parce que c'est bon l'anglais, tu sais de le parler. Avant je haïssais l'anglais; mais maintenant j'arrive à me rendre compte que ça va beaucoup m'aider, ça va m'emmenner p'is tout. Fait-que j'essaie de le parler maintenant. Je commence a me débrouiller pas mal bien. Mais j'ai toujours eu peur. J'avais peur qu'ils rient de moi ou quelque chose, mais ils riaient de moi souvent parce que, surtout en neuvième, on nous faisait faire des exposés oraux dans la classe, tout en anglais. Je trouve que je l'ai fait pas mal... mais, je suis chanceuse que j'ai eu du monde qui m'ont poussée à faire le bon choix, pour m'encourager. Là je m'entends content d'en avoir ça parce que ça m'aide. Je vais aller plus loin en toute que je fais. (Marina, pp. 36-37)

When asked about their future, most participants indicated that they intend to continue their studies in French. Some will stay in Thunder Bay, others intend to leave. If they stay here, they cannot go to college or university in French, but going away is not always an option. They may not know yet where life will take them, but feel that their options are wide open with both languages. They expect that whatever course they pursue adaptation will be necessary and they intend to continue their participation.

- Après secondaire? Je vais probablement aller au Collège d'Ottawa, comme ma soeur. Mes parents

veulent déménager, ils sont tannés de Thunder Bay, ils n'aiment pas ça. (Alicia, p. 4)

- I want to go to Ottawa. But the cost is a concern right now. If not I'd like to stay here and major in French here, for sure. I don't want to give up my French at all. I've thought of Laurentien, cause we went and visited there last year when we went to Sudbury. I have hope that I'll be able to study in French even if I have to stay here. I think that's why I'm also thinking of Ottawa because there are lots of French people there. And the family I'd stay there with would be French, so I'd be talking French more often. (Breanne, p. 18)
- Ça dépend là, parce que l'argent. J'aimerais aller à l'université française ou un collège français, mais vu qu'il faut qu'on se déplace... faut que j'aille à Sudbury ou quelque chose de même... Mais je sais qu'ils nous donnent des bourses pour des choses françaises parce qu'il faut qu'on se déplace. Mais, mais, oui, j'espère parce qu'ici c'est juste en anglais, alors ça c'est le... le... downfall. Je vais aller à l'université, je vais aller au collège, mais où ça va m'emmenner, je ne sais pas. Je peux me rendre n'importe où dans le monde, je ne sais pas. C'est ça, on ne sait jamais... (Julie, pp. 76, 77)

Katherine's program of choice is not offered in Thunder Bay at all, and is only offered in French in Quebec. She said that given the choice, she would continue in French:

- J'ai l'intention d'essayer à l'université de Québec. Je vais essayer de rentrer à l'université de Québec parce que l'éducation en français serait un avantage pour moi. Mais, si non, je vais être obligée de continuer en anglais à cause que c'est la seule université qui l'offre en français. Si j'ai le choix, je vais le prendre en français. (Katherine, p. 64)

*School Social Networks.* The social networks in the high school are another area of francophone adolescents' experience which influences language maintenance use and choice. francophone adolescents attending the FFL program have been classmates "forever." They know each other extremely well, like family. One of the things I remember from supply teaching in their classes is the way the francophone students get along. To some extent they are like any other group of students in class; however, the added dimension of knowing each other for so long gives them a closeness that is akin to that of siblings in a household. Carolynne said that the francophones stuck together at first, but over time, mixed more with their anglophone peers in the school and so developed friendships with English adolescents.

- Au début t'es porté d'aller juste entre les amis francophones, mais après non, tu te fais adapter et tu adaptes les autres. A travers t'es francophone, t'as des amis anglophones et tu apprends à les connaître et ils apprennent à te connaître aussi. Parce qu'on est toujours avec les mêmes personnes, toutes mes quatre années de secondaire j'étais avec le même groupe. Mais cela est un avantage parce que t'apprends à connaître tout le monde personnellement. T'es plus porté à rester ensemble. C'est plus comme une famille au début. (Carolynne, pp. 9-10)

Alicia explained to me that she knows the other students like family, and that they are all very close at school even though they do not all "hang together" on weekends or anything. It is in this that they resemble other groups of classmates, particularly the girls. She said fewer than half her friends were French

(classmates). (Process Log, 1-12). Jean said that they are drawn together. They are not all 'best friends,' but they stick together and know each other's friends.

- Oui... le même groupe, on se tient vraiment ensemble à... on connaît les amis d'autres, on peut pas dire qu'on est tous des meilleurs amis, mais on se tient tous ensemble. T'sais, c'est le fun. (Jean, p. 69)

Cara suggested that going to high school and having more options for friendships (like with anglophones) was part of the reason why they split up more after the all-French environment of the elementary school.

- A lot of times like we were always with the same group of friends. But we went to French school, French elementary school and so we all spoke French. The ones who went to high school kind of started to separate and meet English friends, and we don't talk as much French as we did. I think it kind of started around grade 9, and we started speaking with lots and lots of friends. (Cara, p. 45)

Breanne said attending English classes was fun because there were that many more people to meet and make friends with.

- When I went to my English class, I used to love them; because there were all these people I didn't know before and it was like meeting a whole group of new people. (Breanne, p. 13)

Cara and Linda also suggested that the move to a mixed school from the all-French school widens their world and is enticing:

- C I don't know, but I loved going to French school, I'd have to say it was the best experience of my life. There were a lot of good people and the French community was really... it was really strong, I felt when I was in elementary school. But once you get to high school... you just start to... spread out and it's not the same feeling. You know, I mean you're French, but you're just little and tiny. In elementary school it's big and you're all French, we were all French... and it was just really this sense of a French community. But now it's not the same, I find...
- L Yeah. Because when we were in elementary, like we were French, all French friends... The only time we were allowed to speak English was in English class, even recess you had to speak French, everywhere you just spoke French all the time.
- C I don't know what happened. In high school, you fade because you're meeting so many people and... it's all in English so you kind of... Feel the pull, an attraction, you have to realize how much seems to be offered.
- L In school, the English side is attractive... the grass is greener in that it's bigger, has better classes and choices, more fun. (Cara & Linda, pp. 49, 54)

Alicia suggested that where people live in Thunder Bay, north or south side, might make the difference of whether or not francophone families will utilize the school system to help maintain their language. Since there is only the one French elementary school, located on the south side of town, parent may opt to send their children to immersion programs with English students to avoid long bus rides. She felt that in a school

where there are mainly anglophone classmates, francophone children would use the dominant language that much more often and would surely lose the advantage of secure mother-tongue acquisition rather than limiting that language contact in favour of overwhelming the child with the dominant language he or she would eventually learn anyway (Reflection Note 4).

- Il y en a b'en du monde qui vont se faire assimiler. Comme la seule école française, c'est à Fort William; mais il y a des gens français qui vivent à Port Arthur et là souvent ils vont aller dans les écoles d'immersion, mais là y vont être gênés de parler français. (Alicia, p. 1)

Several participants cited examples of people they know who have assimilated. Usually they suggested that contact situations determine who will or will not assimilate. Not speaking French in the home and not going to school in French were cited as reason for the assimilation of francophone adolescents. Phillip described his younger brother who first had to and then chose to go to an English school who no longer speaks French. Breanne's description of her brother's experience has similarities.

- Like with my little brother... he was in French school until we moved to the country, then he went to an English school, and he was there for grade seven and eight or grade eight. He's in high school now, he's on the English side. He might understand it [French], but he can't speak it. You know... I don't understand how he could lose it though. He doesn't... he doesn't have any French friends. (Phillip, p. 93)
- My brother used be in French. We were both put into French. My brother made it to grade five, I think. But he was having lots of difficulties so my parents pulled him out and put him into the English. And he did much better. I guess it was just the individual he was... he was more comfortable speaking English than French. He can kind of talk French, like when he talks to my grandfather and that, he can kind of spit out a few words. He understands it completely, anyone who would sit there and have a conversation in French, like at a slow pace, he'd be able to understand. I don't think he'll ever completely lose it. I guess, you know, he just didn't go as far as others. (Breanne, p. 19)

The French language school is an important contact for francophone adolescents, the school brings them together and reinforces their social network so that they value their heritage and develop their language and culture, even as they participate in things with the dominant English-speaking community. They may make friends with anglophones and have to use English to participate in many activities, but the school remains a crucial aspect of their membership in the minority community.

### **Clubs and Community**

Since maintaining contact with other francophone people is crucial for the survival of the French community, there are a number of social groups and clubs that offer minority group members the chance to get together. Participants indicated emphatically that events organized for francophones are important for

maintaining a French lifestyle. Belonging to clubs and taking part in francophone organized activities helps them to feel French, permitting them to live as francophones in the anglophone environment of Thunder Bay.

- On peut participer aux clubs francophones... Comme à l'école on peut rejoindre Acti-Jeu Franco... ils font des glissades et des danses pour les francophones... j'aime ça. C'est le fun, parce que tous les francophones sont ensemble. J'aime que tout le monde parle français et que tu t'amuses en français. C'est la chance pour que les francos s'impliquent. (Hélène, pp, 41, 43)
- Participer... moi, je participe à un groupe qui s'appelle Acti-Jeu Franco, p'is ma soeur aussi. C'est un groupe de jeunes. On fait des activités francophones... c'est les francophones qui participent, comme les membres du groupe. Il n'y a pas d'anglais. Tu peux partir sans importuner d'autres. C'est juste des francophones qui sont bienvenus. C'est le fun, on parle juste le français, alors... C'est une chance d'être ensemble. (Jean, p. 67)

Jean suggested that minority adolescents need adult help if they are to remain close to their community while adapting to the larger anglophone environment.

- Pour ça t'as besoin de l'aide des adultes qui veulent t'aider, ceux qui parlent français, comme les professeurs, les parents, les personnes qui ont des groupes de jeunes comme Acti-Jeu ou FESFO. (Jean, p. 70)

Katherine felt that belonging to francophone clubs and associations were essential for her and her family, giving them a chance to get together with other French people and helping them to not feel so isolated:

- Ils peuvent le partager parce qu'eux autres aussi sont francophones. Ils viennent du Québec ou de l'Ontario ou de n'importe où. Si on se parle en français, p'is on discute les problèmes comme la séparation au Québec, p'is on discute qu'est-ce d'être un français dans un milieu anglophone, ça m'aide toujours. Fait que c'est plus de temps en temps qu'on fait des activités qui sont organisées, on fait partie de ceux qui nous intéressent. (Katherine, pp. 56, 59)

Julie, who was born in Thunder Bay, believes many francophone adolescents and children know each other from school, and their parents know each from community groups. Associations contribute greatly to the closeness of the community, but, Julie wonders if some francophones miss out on minority unity and community when they choose not to be involved in group activities.

- B'en il y a à Thunder Bay plusieurs groupes de francophones. Pis on se tient dans la paroisse, on a l'église française, là on rencontre des français. Pis avec l'école, tu commences à connaître les parents des amis français. Alors... je fait partie d'une organisation p'is là on essaie de... faire des ateliers, p'is des fins de semaine ensemble, pour qu'on se sente comme une communauté française parce qu'il n'y a pas tant de français ici. J'espère que toujours quelque chose peut nous tirer à la langue française, comme les groupes comme Acti-Jeu Franco, c'est ça qu'on peut faire. Quand je vais avoir dix-huit ans, à FESFO je vais être comme adulte d'un groupe, fait que je pourrai organiser plus des... être plus en charge des fins de semaine, fait que je pourrai avoir plus de français dans mon école. Juste le fait qu'on essaie beaucoup de ces organisations on essaie vraiment de pousser la langue française. Mais il y a beaucoup de monde qui pense que c'est corny, tu sais, d'avoir des petits get together. Mais ils réalisent que s'ils viennent pas ils vont pas réaliser comment que c'est. Ils manquent comme une unité. Si on était tous ensemble, on pourrait faire, vraiment faire, une différence. (Julie, pp. 74, 81)



Marina values the francophone clubs for the contact opportunities they provide. She suggests, however, that there may be too many clubs because the community is so small, the additional isolation of some people belonging to one club, others to other clubs, disperses the minority community only more:

- On voit pas beaucoup de francophones, on dirait qu'ils ont tous des clubs différents, p'is ils se réunissent pas. Comme on est tellement petit, on devrait tous se réunir, p'is tout faire tous ensemble pour essayer d'améliorer la situation, p'is essayer de parler. C'est comme pourquoi pas ensemble? Pourquoi se séparer? On est tellement petit ça donne pas de chance. (Marina, p. 32)

Cara felt that FESFO, Fédération d'étudiant(e)s Franco-Ontarien(ne)s, an organization for secondary level Franco-Ontarians, does a lot for minority francophone adolescents because it builds a sense of community among adolescents from all over the province. It was at one of the FESFO weekend retreats that Cara really began to appreciate the francophone community in Thunder Bay.

- You should see... if you do put Northwestern French people together, the sense of being a strong minority is huge! If you've ever been to a FESFO. I went to one, and it was just such an experience. It's basically some kids getting together and they organize these huge conferences, it's for all of Ontario. ...all different areas, and then there's one big meeting (réunion). I went to just one of the little things, where we talked about the situation of francophones. Actually like we're doing right now. It's just getting people together and getting people moving and thinking about our culture, getting French kids together and giving them a sense of French community. It's really an amazing experience. But it's a lot of that... getting together and, it really gave us a strong sense of community. Yup, see when you put all these little... all the regions, every little region, you've got a big thing.

Like when you look at the number of students from Thunder Bay, and then the amount of students who came from Kirkland Lake and Longlac, it was like quadruple the size, it's a big difference. People say we should have our own thing, but we don't want our own thing... it makes us feel alienated, really it does. It does the opposite, instead of making us stronger, it makes us weaker and smaller, so... All the other small towns are very strong French communities, and they don't realize that we are much smaller and much weaker. They were just totally amazed that we were so tiny. They thought that because we were a bigger city, we had a bigger French community. (Cara, p. 51)

Breanne suggested that AFNOO, Association francophone du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario, was also supportive of the French community.

- AFNOO here in town. I guess that would help a lot to let people know about there being a French community. They do try, I think they do lots here for the French community. AFNOO is for the adults and they also have Acti-Jeu Franco which is for francophone students. And by doing activities it kind of lets people know. (Breanne, p. 13)

AFNOO was established in 1977 with the goal of initiating programs for the "cultural, educational, economic, and political well-being" of francophones. Its purpose is to liaise with member groups (23 in the region) and provide information, resources, and activities to people in the community in order to "affirm francophone identity in Ontario" (AFNOO Pamphlet, August, 1995). In addition to the supportive efforts of

AFNOO, the organization publishes a monthly paper *Le Relais* which reports community events and local news concerning francophones from around Northwestern Ontario. Described in the Appendix 4 are some of the groups and clubs within the Association for francophones in Northwestern Ontario.

Other participants in this research did not join French clubs. Some had not been close enough to gain access, others just chose not to. Diane said she had heard talk of the francophone association, but had never taken part. Part of the problem for her may have been that she attended French immersion, whereas the FFL program makes a point of informing students of the groups and events they might attend. In contrast to Diane, her younger brother Alain, attends the French school and does participate in Acti-jeu Franco.

- E C'est vraiment une attitude... c'est vraiment un système de ne pas s'assimiler.
- D J'ai entendu parler d'un club français; mais vraiment j'ai rien vu de ce club là et j'ai jamais été invité à faire rien de même. Tu sais?
- A Il y a un club français à mon école: Acti-Jeu Franco. Il fait des comme des activités, il fait...
- D Mais il va à l'école française...
- E Il a un club français à son école... comme ils sortent ensemble des fois, et ils font des activités avec la communauté. (Diane, Emilie, Alain, p. 22)

Some did not participate in the francophone clubs because they did not offer the options they would have liked. Phillip acknowledged the importance of the clubs among his classmates, but said it just is not for him. Although he understands that some people join to be around French people and be able to speak French, Phillip feels that the groups unnecessarily separate francophones. Perhaps the difference with him is that he has both cultures informing his identity, always has, and he does not question his minority group status.

- The girls are more involved with the French stuff... Acti-Jeu and that. I think it's dumb what they're doing. I'm not for it. J loves it, and it's good that she does it, but I don't see why we should have to have any groups, French or whatever, you know what I mean? I understand kind of what they're doing, wanting to get out with French people, and do stuff, but I wouldn't go to that. You don't see English groups going just to prove that they're English. A perk just for being different, I never understood it. (Phillip, p. 92)

francophone media and entertainment allow adolescents to enjoy their language, while developing and maintaining their francophone identity. French language books, music, and television contribute to having a more French lifestyle.

- Ma mère ordonne des livres de Québec loisirs, tous les livres qu'on a à la maison sont en français. (Alicia, p. 2)

- L'autre niveau, parce qu'il y a seulement une section de la bibliothèque de livres français, s'il y avait plus de services offerts. Surtout les livres... comme j'ai dit, moi j'ai appris l'anglais des livres. Mais s'il y avait plus de livres en français, j'aurais probablement pas perdu autant de mon français que j'ai. (Katherine, p. 59)

Television and music for francophones in Thunder Bay is fairly limited. But these are valued resources for francophone adolescents.

- E Moi, je sais, je sais que je dois l'améliorer, comme je veux lire en français. ...je veux être meilleure, je veux améliorer mon français, je veux vraiment que ça soit comme elle...
- D Je pense qu'avec la télévision... c'est beaucoup plus attirant, ça va aider parce que les gens les voient parler un français parlé plus haut que le français familial. C'est une bonne solution... Moi je regarde la télévision française chaque matin et j'écoute la radio chaque matin.
- E Ici, il n'y a pas de programmes en français, excepté le 14 et le 3. Pas vraiment... on regarde quelque programmes en français mais... moi je pense que... il n'y a pas assez de, de stars... Même si on habite dans un endroit anglophone, moi j'aimerais ça de voir des chanteurs français... (Diane & Emilie, p. 25)

Contact with other francophones and the opportunity to speak French make the difference for minority adolescents. Some contacts are familiar, some organized, others are accidental, but the issue is the opportunity to speak French which permits francophone adolescents "une style de vie française."

- Il y a toujours le milieu social, p'is familial aussi, garder la langue à maison, parler le français à maison. A l'église aussi. Ça aura aider aussi, même si c'est juste une fois par semaine. (Katherine, p. 59)
- Non... mais il me semble qu'on peut avoir plus d'intérêts en français; plus de services... On va dire, oui, "Parle le français." Moi, je leur demande tout le temps de parler français. Souvent je parle en français avec mes parents, p'is quand je vais acheter du linge, je vais avec eux-autres. Alors je parle en français, et là le gars va dire "ah, tu parles français"... Ca c'est une grosse affaire. Pis là t'es content. (Jean, p. 73)

This section of the chapter has described the maintenance factors that are important to a francophone lifestyle and the survival of language and culture in the minority milieu. These "maintenance factors" are the French language contacts that support the ethnolinguistic vitality of francophone adolescents they include speaking French in the home, going to French school, having access to other francophones and French language services, as well as a sense of self informed by "us and them" awareness. francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay need encouragement and cultural reinforcement to be able to develop their language within this anglophone environment. The first critical component is the family whose role it is to provide an example to minority francophone children so they will know their heritage and speak their language. Parents need to show their offspring how the French language and culture are part of them, their link to kin and community.

Whether French immersion or French first language, the school is another element in the development of francophones in the minority milieu; it furthers the linguistic ability of minority children and familiarizes them with their community. Although adolescents tend to downplay their differences from one another, mixed schools in Thunder Bay help minority adolescents appreciate their distinctiveness and want to share it with those in the dominant group. In school, francophone adolescents come to know other members of the minority population and can work together to become visible to the dominant social group. Contact with other francophones beyond the home and school brings minority francophones adolescents closer to their community. Participation in clubs and francophone associations provides the opportunity to speak French and have fun at the same time. Some of these groups provide minority group members the chance to talk about their situation, giving them greater self-awareness and a social voice. Finally, access to French language television, music, and books which permit minority francophone adolescents to better know French Canadian culture.

### **Ethnolinguistic Vitality**

This section of the chapter describes the ethnolinguistic vitality of the francophone adolescents living in Thunder Bay. The vitality of their identity and community is built upon the combined influences of the first language group and their interaction in the dominant society. Ethnolinguistic vitality is evidenced in minority adolescent francophone understanding of themselves as a group among others in Thunder Bay. They see themselves as distinct, and understand how others perceive them. Inter-ethnic awareness forms the basis of their assertion of themselves as a unique ethnocultural and linguistic community. They are proud of their heritage and who they are; they appreciate being recognized and are ready to share their special qualities with other Canadians. They know their social situation and make conscious efforts to maintain their language and culture in the minority milieu.

#### **Self and Others**

Minority francophone adolescents suggest that they are different from other people by virtue of their language, spirit, and values. The participants in this study said that francophones in Thunder Bay and in Canada are recognized as distinct, but lack the voice they need to be heard. Having more of a voice would mean more respect and greater balance, without misunderstandings about who is who and who wants what

(Process Log: pp. 13, 38, 44, 63, 87, 96, 115). Some participants asserted that francophones are a small group that is separated from the dominant society by their language. The resentment and anger people feel about Quebec separatists evokes negative reactions to all francophones; and in Thunder Bay, some people lack respect for French Canadians. However, things are different here so people should realize it:

- C'est différent parce que, je pense que le groupe de francophones est beaucoup plus petit que les autres groupes. Pis, la langue aussi, ça fait une grosse différence. De nos jours là, le racisme c'est plus vraiment comme les couleurs, parce que le monde, y respecte le monde pour leur couleur. Mais les langues, je trouve que c'est moins respecté. Yeah, b'en c'est... on a des différences qui sont marquables. La façon qu'on réagit, ou b'en des affaires de même. Les habitudes... les français on a nos habitudes, p'is les anglais aimeraient qu'on les perde ces habitudes, qu'on devienne plus comme eux autres. (Michel, pp. 97-98)
- You know, French should be... heard of. Because it's the whole country. It's not just Quebec... it shouldn't be just Quebec that we're dealing with. It's just like in town, all across there's a lot of French. All across the whole country, especially little towns. They have a lot of socials and things like that, we have organizations, like AFNOO, Feminin Pluriel, and stuff like that, eh. (Phillip, pp. 90-91)

Katherine compared francophones to anglophones and other ethnic groups in Canada. francophones are recognized as different, she said, but are accepted. francophones have an advantage over other minority groups in that their language has been given official recognition rights and protection. This enables francophones to maintain their language and culture, whereas, other groups do not have the same ability or resources to protect themselves from the dominant social forces and assimilation. She feels it is a shame that not all anglophones are willing to give French a chance.

- Les francophones, on est plus ouvert, p'is on aime faire les contacts avec le restant de la société. Je pense qu'on est reconnu comme étant différent, mais on est accepté pareil. Probablement parce que le Canada c'est bilingue: c'est francophone, p'is anglophone — fait que c'est plus facile à accepter ça que de le dire que quelqu'un qui vient d'un autre pays. Pis aussi, les francophones n'ont pas beaucoup de misère à apprendre l'anglais, ils sont plus ouverts. Tandis que les autres vraiment s'accrochent à leur culture. C'est peut-être pas bon pour les francophones à cause qu'on a tendance à, c'est pas envahir, mais à éviter la culture anglophone dans la maison; tandis qu'eux autres n'ont pas la même facilité.

Mais, j'aimerais ça qu'ils fassent l'effort, les anglophones, qu'ils fassent l'effort d'apprendre le français. Surtout les anglophones au niveau secondaire n'aiment pas apprendre le français. Je trouve que c'est dommage. (Katherine, pp. 57, 59-60)

Julie has lived in Thunder Bay her entire life. Both of her parents are francophone and she grew up immersed within the local French community — friends, school, church, clubs, and more. She laments the intrusion of the English society on francophone language and culture, a slow but persistent erosion of tradition and heritage:

- Pis... les amis... juste la culture, les valeurs. Là qu'on est tous ensemble comme un groupe on voit que la culture française est toute rangée chez les anglais, on a tout le temps un voleur des traditions, des choses de même. (Julie p. 75)

In spite of some of the negative "them and us" in general interaction, francophone adolescents are invigorated to an extent in their self-defense. francophones have trouble making their voice heard among the dominant society and sometimes lack support networks, but they remain close to their cultural community and are able to draw strength from it:

- C I think it takes a lot of people wanting to make something happen, and it can't just be one little person. I mean, I guess if everyone, every little person, sat down and did something, then it would be something. I think it's something that everyone has to do together, and I don't think that's going to happen.
- L Thunder Bay is so big and so English, there's not many French people to... I think it would be kind of tough to try that... I don't know.
- C English social communities, like Americans, are so huge that are they not close (knit). But the French share strong family values and are taught their culture, and that makes them more proud. (Cara & Linda, pp. 48, 54)

These remarks raise the issue of how the francophone minority can become more visible in, and accepted by, the dominant community. Sharing French with the English reinforces the francophone position in society and also strengthens francophone cultural awareness of how they are different. Two participants said francophones need to make an impression upon anglophones, need to show them what they have to offer and show them how difference is acceptable:

- En parlant de notre culture, en essayant de leur convaincre qu'en parlant français ça va beaucoup l'aider. C'est un atout, c'est un des avantages. Pour leur faire sentir que nous autres on n'est pas moins bons qu'eux autres, p'is on est aussi bon, p'is on est aussi fort, p'is on peut se battre aussi bien, tu sais, pour notre culture. En montrant des affaires. (Marina, pp. 35-36)
- En leur parlant de ce que c'est, comment différent que c'est d'être français dans un milieu anglais. Parce qu'y ont, ils ne connaissent pas l'expérience ceux qui ne parlent pas français. Alors on essaie de leur expliquer que... on est différent, mais on peut quand-même s'entendre, c'est pas un problème. (Katherine, p. 56)

francophone adolescents' interaction with the dominant social group reinforces their self-awareness and strengthens their ethnolinguistic identity:

- Being around English people... It kind of makes me more proud to be French than anything. It's a great opportunity and none of them really have that chance to know both languages. Seeing them envious of us knowing French, it kind of makes you more proud that you are French, it makes me want to go out and speak French. Often, even now, people will say "say something in French, say something in French" and that's kind of neat. They're jealous that I'm French and they're not. (Breanne, pp. 14-15)

### Interaction with anglophones

Adolescents who participated like being able to share an important part of themselves without having to temper it for mixed crowd:

- Avec beaucoup de mes amis, de partager et faire des farces à propos d'eux, comme ils savent qu'on est français, p'is ils respectent le fait qu'on est français aussi. (Michel, p. 96)
- Les anglais, mes amis, essaient d'apprendre le français, ils me demandent des mots et ils ne sont pas insultés si on parle français. Quand j'étais en huitième année, je suis allé à l'immersion française il y avait plusieurs francophones dans la classe. Les anglais essaient, ils se forçaient à parler français. (Yvon, p. 93)
- Ils sont comme "parle français," ils aiment ça. Ça fait du bien, c'est le fun. (Hélène, p. 42)

Katherine said that French language contacts provide necessary reinforcement for maintaining language and culture. anglophone friends help too, because they remind francophones of how they are different and it gives them a reason for being proud of their differences.

- Les professeurs, la famille c'est important, les amis francophones aussi. Même les amis anglophones, ça nous aide à nous rappeler qu'on est différent, parce que c'est une autre idée. Fait que nos amis, francophones ou anglophones. (Katherine, p. 55)

Carolynne talked about French music and how she likes being able to share it with her anglophone friends.

English predominates, but it is encouraging when French is permitted a forum:

- Ils vendent de la musique française ici à Thunder Bay. Tu n'as pas un grand grand choix de variété, mais si tu veux te faire commander, tu vas l'avoir. C'est le fun pareil parce que si tu veux écouter de la musique en français tu peux l'avoir. Quand on va au Québec c'est ça qu'on va acheter, la musique française.

Quand je sors avec mes amis francophones oui, mais quand avec mes amis anglophones c'est plutôt non, non, ils veulent de la musique anglophone qu'ils vont comprendre en anglais. Mais, c'est drôle et c'est le fun, j'ai beaucoup d'amis qui sont intéressés à la musique francophone, et ils sont intéressés aussi, ils essaient de parler en français, le petit peu qu'ils peuvent. C'est comme un jeu... C'est encourageant quand on rencontre des anglais qui veulent essayer... Pis aussi ils aiment écouter de la musique en français. C'est plutôt une nouvelle expérience pour eux, la musique en français, ils n'entendent pas ça souvent. Alors c'est fun pour eux autres. (Carolynne, p. 8)

**LANGUAGE AND THE OTHER.** francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay are often required to speak English. Rather than detracting from their identity as francophones, it more often reminds them of their minority status in the community and strengthens their resolve to maintain their ethnolinguistic identity so it will not be lost. Maintenance of language is a critical aspect of cultural survival among minority groups. The adolescents who participated in this research value opportunities to speak French and often make conscious efforts to use it when they can. This section discusses francophone adolescents speaking French and how

they manage to keep it while balancing the minority identity within the majority dominated milieu. Speaking English is something that they have to do, whereas speaking French is something they choose to do:

- B'en l'anglais est tout alentour et il faut l'apprendre. Mon identité c'est tout français, je veux pas être anglais, l'anglais fait rien à mon identité, c'est rien qu'un... c'est rien qu'ajouter comme. C'est important, mais c'est pas mon identité. Mon identité c'est Canadien français. Je sais pas pourquoi, mais... comme moi, j'aime mieux parler en français. Je suis plus confortable en français. (Jean, pp. 71-72)
- J'essai de parler tout le français que je peux. Comme si ça va être avec mes amis, bien sur ça va être des mots en anglais, mais j'essaie aussitôt de parler en français. Les temps que je vais parler anglais c'est à mon travail ou avec des amis qui ne parlent pas français. Il y en a des gens qui ne comprennent pas ma langue. (Alicia, p. 1)
- Ici, il faut connaître l'anglais. T'en as besoin pour te débrouiller. Je me force à parler en français... de sais qu'on va le perdre si on ne l'utilise pas. Mais j'essaie de parler plus en français avec quelques amis de mes classes. C'est difficile parce qu'on fait tant de chose en anglais. (Yvon, p. 93)
- J'ai la vigueur, j'ai le goût de parler en français encore; mais ça ne me dérange pas bien gros de parler en anglais. Dans ce milieu c'est toujours ça. On est français, on est francophone, mais on vit dans une ville anglophone. Alors on parle français dans la maison, dans des petits groupes comme dans nos classes avec nos amis francophones; mais le restant du temps c'est en anglais.

On a deux identités. Le français canadien n'est pas le même qu'autre part au monde, alors c'est important de garder ça. Mais surtout l'anglais est devenu le langage international. C'est un avantage de connaître l'anglais pour pouvoir se trouver de l'ouvrage, d'être capable de rentrer au village global. De pouvoir être international, c'est important de connaître l'anglais. Alors garder notre religion, notre culture, puis notre langue, mais il faut vraiment aussi être capable de communiquer avec le monde entier. (Katherine, p. 60)

As they speak English, francophone adolescents remain aware of their first language. Speaking English is a matter of necessity. Minority francophone adolescents value their language and intend to keep it even as they learn English for the advantages that gives them. They realize risks to their culture, but try to protect it from any negative influence of the dominant group.

Jean described how he and his friend, who only spoke French, maintained conversations in French even as everyone around them spoke English. He felt that the more francophone adolescents become accustomed to the social circumstances and into themselves, the less they are influenced by the presence of anglophones and the less they "have to speak English."

- Bon, b'en mon meilleur ami, il venait du Québec... On se tenait toujours ensemble au high school. Même si tout le monde parlait anglais, moi puis lui c'était tout le temps en français. Tout le monde autour de lui parlait français. Parce que lui y parlait tout le temps français, tout le groupe, des anglophones n'aimaient pas ça. Nous autres ça nous dérangeait pas. Ils nous influencent pu b'en, b'en. De moins en moins. (Jean, p. 72)

***Francophones speaking French.*** Julie, as a francophone child who spoke only French, found it



was hard to participate in things if she wanted to speak French. She had to learn English to play with the anglophones in her neighbourhood, to join gymnastics, for modelling classes, and to find work as she got older. She does not encounter the same problems now because she is bilingual. Balancing the two language groups is no longer a difficulty, she does what she has to do and chooses more often in favour of her own language:

- C'est difficile. Comme quand j'étais plus jeune je trouvais ça vraiment difficile. Comme je dis, je suis française, p'is il fallait que j'acte comme une anglaise. J'allais chez des amies, c'était toutes des amies anglaises. So, il me fallait... pas vraiment m'assimiler, mais il fallait que je m'habitue à ce style de vie. De tout en tout, quand je grandissais mes parents m'ont vraiment aidée. Ils ont expliqué qu'il faut garder notre langue française, pour ça je les remercie beaucoup. Mais, à cette heure que j'ai l'âge de décider ce que je veux faire, je trouve que c'est pu vraiment une difficulté pour moi... parce que le monde que je me tiens avec c'est du monde français. (Julie, p. 77)

Emilie's choice is similar, but her experience is different. She finds her francophone friends want to speak English:

- Moi je suis très fière d'être francophone. Moi, je pense que c'est vraiment un... C'est un cadeau qui m'a été donné. Fait-que c'est comme toujours... quand je suis avec des francophones ils veulent parler anglais avec moi, mais moi je veux parler français. (Emilie, p. 22)

These comments raise questions about Francophones speaking French (or not) amidst the anglophone community. While Emilie and Diane said it is hard to maintain their language in Thunder Bay with few francophone friends, when they can and do use French they are proud of themselves:

- D C'est vraiment un fait... dans la cadre de l'immersion français les Canadiens-français peuvent montrer leurs compétence. Tu sais, parce que souvent c'est des bouchers les français et du monde de même, p'is ils pensent qu'on est tous des paysans ou des travailleurs, p'is dans le cadre de French immersion c'est entre des anglophones, et les francophones sont supérieurs. Fait que ça change. Vraiment, il faut toujours forcer à parler français dans la maison. Ma mère nous a toujours forcés de parler français à la maison, et si on disait un mot anglais on se faisait punir. Mais là je me sens vraiment spéciale parce qu'on est tellement isolé et il y a tellement peu en français que je me sens fière qu'on a préservé quelque chose.
- E Elle nous faisait parler en français. Elle voulait que je parle en français avec elle. Pis elle me disait tout le temps "je suis vraiment fière d'être francophone, je suis contente qu'on est différent des autres"... Il faut apprendre l'anglais, mais fais-toi des amis francophones et parle leur en français. (Emilie & Diane, pp. 21, 23, 27)

Participants suggested that using one language or the other has to do with the people francophones are associating with, whether they are English or French or if the crowd is mixed.

- ...like I've always been with French people, I hang around with the guys in class... and we're buddies, we talk French sometimes. But a friend who used to be in our crowd now has all English friends and he hardly speaks French anymore. 'Cause of the change of crowd, pretty much, eh. (Phillip, p. 86)

- Les amis que je connais, je trouve que si tu sors avec eux autres tu parles français. Mais la plupart se réunissent à l'école p'is ils commencent à parler anglais parce qu'ils veulent pas se faire insulter, veulent pas se faire achaler. (Marina, p. 35)
- Ce sera plutôt de... faut tout adapter, c'est comme un cirque. Avec les amis anglophones c'est plus que tu vis en anglais, et avec tes amis francophones tu vis en français. C'est comme il faut que tu t'adaptes aux autres. Tu peux pas infliger tes intérêts, non plus. Faut juste que tu vis les intérêts que vous avez en commun ensemble. (Carolynne, p. 7)

A definite range exists in the linguistic behaviour of adolescent francophones in Thunder Bay. Speaking one language or the other is a matter of choice and accommodation to the situation. For some their status as a minority group is difficult to overcome; and they resent having to speak English. Others unquestionably speak one language or the other depending on what they are doing and who they're with.

Linda explained that despite constraints, being French is a part of you. English is used a lot, but even if the language is not always used, French always has a place, it is still there in the reservoir of identity:

- You do three-quarters of your school life in French.. It will always, I think it will always be there. Especially with family and friends... they'll always be there so you'll always have it. So you might not, speak it as much, or use it, but... That doesn't mean anything, it'll always be there. It's more a matter of belonging. When you need it, you've got it. And that's a bonus.

I know a lot of people, French people, that really know that they're so small and minute. I don't know, I can't really speak on their behalf and I can't really say what they're doing, but I think, perhaps, a lot of them... speak French because that's what they've spoken all their lives. They don't really see it as a necessity to speak any other language unless they have to, like if they go out. They have French friends, they have French husbands, French kids, they don't need to speak English. (Linda, pp. 50, 53)

Julie said that a friend of her's usually speaks English, but he makes the effort to speak French with her because he knows that she prefers it. It is a matter of compromise: their preference differs, but she feels that by accommodating her, he is also bringing himself closer to his francophone identity.

- Pour lui c'est plus difficile que pour moi. A cette heure, il est plus dans sa langue, t'sais, il est plus, parce que moi j'aime vraiment ça. So, c'est plus... qu'on parle en français or whatever. Vu qu'il me voit comme une personne importante de sa vie, il va considérer mes valeurs. Alors ça lui fait réaliser que c'est d'autre chose. On prend chaque instant et on continue. (pp. 82-83)

Breanne said that contact with anglophone peers invigorates her, offering a change from the faces of classmates she has known for years. Contact with the dominant reminds her of how there is a difference.

- The English influence, I don't really know if there is an influence. Because we basically have our own mindset, we know what we want, just like anyone else. But I know I love my English classes because of all the other people and it kind of gives me the chance to get to know them and stuff, instead of always being with the same people over and over because it gets a little boring. The English people, I think they give me more of a boost. (p. 13)

It is difficult to argue assimilation is occurring when the francophone aspects of identity remain close to the heart of adolescent thinking. Even as Breanne speaks English and mixes with anglophone friends, she remains aware of her French language ties and only sees them as sitting silent.

Alicia understands this phenomenon as an expression of bilingualism. What is more difficult for her to understand is assimilation that occurs because people just do not try to keep their first language. She feels it is sad when francophones fail to express that essential part of their identity.

- J'en vois b'en gros en train de s'assimiler. Moi j'ai tellement forte pour ma langue. Quand je dis Canadien français ce n'est pas pour rien. Comme c'est ma langue et je suis fière, je voudrais pas changer. Et quand le monde n'essaie pas de garder leur propre langue et, p'is il n'essaie même pas de montrer à leurs enfants leur langue, je trouve ça fait pitié. Parce que juste même être bilingue, il n'y a rien de plus beau. Surtout au Canada t'as besoin d'être bilingue, comme le Canada est supposé d'être bilingue. Le Canada est supposé d'être francophone et d'être anglophone. Je trouve quand quelqu'un français ne montre pas son héritage, il manque quelque chose de spécial. C'est triste pour l'en faire. (p. 3)

### **Language and Sense of Self**

"Ce que la langue nous donne est l'identité" (Process Log, p. 14). Whatever the frequency of English being used by francophone adolescents, participants maintained that their language is an important aspect of how they see themselves and define themselves as French Canadian.

- C'est important parce que... c'est la langue primaire. C'est qu'est-ce que je suis né, et bien, c'est ce que j'suis dans le monde. C'est une culture aussi, c'est pas rien qu'une langue. (Michel, p. 94)

Katherine emphasized the importance of language to French Canadians. Their language is unique in comparison to the French spoken in other parts of the world, and it is the first proof of how French Canadians are different:

- Parce que le français qui est parlé au Canada n'est pas parlé nul part d'autre au monde. C'est pas le même que le français de France, ou l'Acadie, n'importe quoi, ça c'est le français du Canada. Pis on a une histoire qui n'est pas pareille à personne d'autre. Alors c'est important qu'on garde la langue parce que c'est la preuve, la première preuve qu'on est différent, qu'on a une histoire différente. (p. 55)

Julie was born in Thunder Bay, but her parents came here from the Maritimes and make visits home once or twice a year. These trips and family reunions give Julie a chance to see more of French Canada. This contact and her experiences at home in Thunder Bay have allowed her to see how she is a Franco-Ontarian:

- Les Franco-Ontariens, ils trouvent qu'on est pareil que les Québécois. Comme ma tante elle vient du Québec, p'is je peux voir quand on a des réunions de famille, je peux voir que nous autres on est Franco-Ontarien juste par la façon qu'on parle, la façon qu'on s'exprime. On est différent de valeur. Une chose difficile ici à Thunder Bay, le monde pense tout le temps qu'on est Québécois... vu que je suis française, p'is je vis à Thunder Bay, j'ai venu du Québec. Mais, je suis Franco-Ontarienne,

il n'y a pas de comparaisons... (p. 75)

Diane has only her immediate family in Thunder Bay. She credits her francophone development to her parents, her schooling, her travels and to herself. She cannot precisely define what it is that makes her francophone; it is a feeling of pride in her language, a language that has made many things possible for her:

- Je me sens française, mais je ne me sens pas Québécoise. Non, c'est différent. Je me sens francophone plutôt, c'est plus global que québécois. Je me sens différent parce que mes racines sont là, c'est familial. C'est une identité très abstraite, fait que mon identité n'est pas dépendante sur la province. C'est important pour moi parce que j'ai beaucoup d'opportunités; et sans mon français je ne pourrais pas prendre des cours en français, j'aurais pas pu aller vivre en Suisse, dans un environnement complètement français pendant trois mois, je ne pourrais pas travailler pour le gouvernement fédéral l'été comme je fais... C'est quelque chose qui me complète, comme un sens d'une personne qui est complète. (p. 28)

One participant described the francophone community as a family, one that must keep and use the French language when they come together:

- français... la langue française... moi je pense qu'on est toute une famille. Il faut qu'on se tienne ensemble. Pis quand on est ensemble, il faut parler français. (Jean, p. 68)

Another respondent said that from the moment a person speaks French it is possible to feel a part of the francophone community in Thunder Bay:

- C'est pas vraiment difficile de se sentir un membre de la communauté du moment que tu parles français. Parce qu'il n'y a pas beaucoup de personnes à Thunder Bay qui parlent français, alors on se connaît tous de la même école, de la même église... on se rencontre tous à un moment ou un autre. La plupart des francophones se rencontrent à l'église, comme je disais. Vraiment la religion, elle est assez forte pour les francophones. On est très remarquable, parce que les personnes qui parlent le français... Mais la plupart des gens sont vraiment, n'ont pas peur... ne cachent pas leur identité. (Katherine, p. 55)

Michel feels proud of his language and believes speaking it is important.

- C'est différent pour tout le monde. Je suis fière de ma langue. Pis, je suis fière aussi d'être capable de parler le français, je ne suis pas gêné de ça à cause que je trouve que c'est important de pouvoir parler ma langue. (p. 98)

Julie would prefer to share rather than to isolate the francophone community. Her parents' support and strong values have encouraged her to be proud of who she is and her abilities (Reflection Notes, p. 80). She said that being francophone, in particular living as a minority, gives her a perspective and standpoint of experience that will inform the way she lives her life:

- Ça va pas me faire une meilleur personne, mais les expériences de différentes affaires... Comme tout le monde expérience des affaires. Mon expérience à la vie, mes valeurs, ma façon de voir la vie a changé à propos de ça. (p. 80)

Marina, who has two languages and cultures in her background, said that her dual-heritage is special

and being able to speak two, and now three, languages allow her to be "at home" with her people and more proud of who she is:

- Si je parlais pas la langue, je me sentirais vraiment imbalais. T'sais je me sentirais comme si je manquais un morceau. Fait-que je me sens bien, connaître différentes cultures, je peux connaître différentes affaires à part de la langue. Je peux faire tous sortes d'affaires, je me sens vraiment bien. Je me sens... je peux sortir, parler avec le monde. Je suis pas obligée de rester fermé à cause que je connais pas cette langue là. T'sais, je me sens... plus... à l'aise, plus en famille, et plus fière de qui je suis. (p. 39)

Breanne said that going to school in French and using French in her work remind her that she is francophone, they give opportunities to share her language and develop her ethnocultural identity.

- Basically all the knowledge that I have, it's from my French. It's weird because I didn't really think of it. Like I'd go to school during the day and learn French, come home and talk English, go to school and learn French. And now also with work too, it's part of my identity. Because I go to work in a French language department, I'm a French language representative. So that's also a big part of my identity, working there. (p. 15)

The excerpts above reveal how language and community are important to adolescent francophones in Thunder Bay. The French language links them to their history, to their families, and to one another. The difficulties of the minority milieu tend to pale in comparison to the vitality of the francophone community. Even as they must adapt to their environment, the adolescent participants assert themselves as French Canadians living a francophone lifestyle with French language contacts and interests. They take pride in their identity and value the opportunities they have to share it with others.

**AGE AND AWARENESS.** The age of participants made some difference in the way they expressed their membership in the francophone community. Younger participants more readily accepted the need to adapt to the larger English social arena, and had fewer questions about the imbalance between the two linguistic communities. Those who struggle for the chance to speak more French are the exception among the younger adolescents. Where older adolescents had much to say about being francophone and adjusting to the milieu, younger participants more often did not concern themselves with the constraints on their community. This difference may stem from the social concerns of friendship and acceptance in early adolescence, as opposed to the broader awareness of self in society that corresponds to later adolescence. At the beginning of high school, francophone adolescents enter an environment of anglophone peers and get into the "habit" of speaking English among friends. As adolescents get older they make more choices for themselves and become more aware of what they want. When struggling to gain acceptance, it is easy to go along with the

crowd, to avoid doing things that make you different. By the time francophone adolescents get a little older, they make more decisions of what they want and expect from friends. Their teachers and parents remind them what they are giving up, and they see more of (return to) the francophone minority. This part of the vitality section addresses the age factor that seems to play a definite role in sense of self and awareness of others.

- **Moi, je m'identifie comme francophone... mes parents me forcent à parler français, nos professeurs nous forcent aussi pour qu'on garde la langue. Le point c'est qu'on parle français. C'est une question d'acceptance, étant minorité. Moi, j'aime ça parler en français. Mais l'assimilation, perdre l'identité... J'ai peur, je me suis presque fait assimiler. L'école donne le sens d'être française, parce que tout le monde parle français. Il faut parler ensemble. Beaucoup cachent leur langue, ils ont honte de parler français. C'est parce qu'ils sont une minorité, ils ont peur d'être différent. (Yvon, p. 93)**

Jean, who admitted feeling more comfortable speaking French, said that he had encountered negative reactions to his French. At first, it bothered him but he is now quite proud to be francophone.

- **Quand tu te rencontres ça, ça te dérange plus ce qu'ils pensent parce que... moi je suis fier d'être français, à cette heure. Ils nous influencent à apprendre l'anglais. Et là c'est influence. Ça il faut que je l'admette. De moins en moins avec l'âge, comme les douzième et les onzième années à mon école, ils peuvent parler français toute la journée et personne les dérange. Mais, quand tu rentres en neuvième année, il faut que tu rentres avec le groupe, right. Pis là tu parles anglais souvent. En dixième année, ça commence à être moins en moins parce que le monde sait que t'es français. Pis avec l'âge, t'en fou des groupes différents, tu veux être toi-même. C'est bon. (Jean, p. 70)**

Katherine felt that younger adolescents just do not concern themselves with issues of language. She felt that speaking with older adolescents and university age francophones would reveal how they come to realize who they are and what they want for themselves in life.

- **Les gens de quatorze ans là, ça ne les dérangent pas. Si tu parles aux étudiants de l'université qui ont l'intention de continuer leur éducation en français, eux autres vont dire que oui, ils aimeraient avoir une université en français, p'is que c'est bon et ont l'intention de continuer. Mais il faut que tu parles aux bonnes personnes. Parce que quand tu réalises que c'est le restant de ta vie que tu décides dans ces prochaines fin d'années, là tu penses vraiment à identité p'is tu dis, "Je suis francophone, p'is c'est mon devoir, et ça sera à mon avantage de garder ma langue et ma culture parce que je veux que mes enfants soient aussi bien en parlant français, qu'en anglais." (p. 64)**

Julie said that her francophone identity became more important to her as she got older. When she was younger, she did not have as much contact with francophones because the activities she wanted to participate in were done in English and her neighbourhood playmates were anglophone. As she has gotten older, she has found herself taking part in more francophone associations and has acquired a circle of French-speaking friends (Process Log, p. 75).

Cara and Linda maintain more anglophone contacts. However, both agreed that that does not

necessarily lessen the fact that they are also francophone:

L I think it always will be a part of me.

C Yeah, I feel the same way. I still feel that I'm French. A lot of people say, well, you're just Canadian, kind of thing, just Canadian, born in Canada, you're Canadian... I still feel very strongly attached to my French culture because my grandparents are French, and I'm close to a lot of French culture. It's really important to me, so I still feel French. Even though I don't see it as much in school, I still feel strongly. (Linda & Cara, p. 49)

Cara said that when she has children she would like them to speak French and know their francophone heritage.

- If I had the choice I'd really, really want them to have their education in French. I would want to make them proud of their background of being French. I wouldn't want them to be ashamed that their grandparents were French, or feel that French people were less. I really want to make them proud to be French like I am, so if I couldn't get them into a French program, like if there wasn't one around, I would still speak to them in French and make them learn French the way I did. I would like to see if they were able. I want my kids to be able to speak with me, talk with me, and understand the culture, understand the importance of being part of the community and all that. Even if they don't go to school, I will want them to be able to talk, talk with me. (Cara, p. 53)

Diane felt that being francophone became more important as she got older. When she was younger, she was almost ashamed of being French Canadian, even among her francophone friends she spoke English because that was what "everyone" did. As she got older, it mattered more to her to speak French and gaining French contacts made a difference.. Going to Switzerland on an exchange, and later going to school in Montreal, she came to appreciate her francophone identity:

- J'avais des amis francophones, p'is je ne parlais pas français avec eux autres... parce que quand j'étais jeune on parlait toujours l'anglais. Mais là j'ai une identité très ferme parce que j'ai quitté Thunder Bay. Comme là j'habite à Montréal. Pis aussi mon identité a vraiment fermentée quand j'étais en Europe... en Europe il y a vraiment une idée spécifique de qu'est ce que c'était un Canadien français. J'étais comme... entertainment. Ils voulaient me faire parler, ils voulaient écouter mon accent. Pis avant j'avais honte de mon accent parce que j'étais à Paris et c'était différent, p'is il y a rien de mal avec ça. Pis quand je suis revenue, mon français avait améliorée pendant trois mois. J'avais tellement peur là-bas, et je suis revenue et je me sentais fermement Canadienne française.

Là quand j'ai lu des Franco-Ontariens dans mon éducation, et j'ai vu que c'était une affaire complètement séparée. Parce qu'au Québec ils ont jamais eu... ils n'ont jamais besoin de se battre comme les Franco-Ontariens. Surtout à Thunder Bay c'est tellement difficile de préserver la langue et de garder une identité. Il faut voir... il faut qu'on voit d'où on vient. Tu sais? On n'est pas pire considérant qu'on est un grosse minorité. Quand j'étais jeune, j'avais presque honte de mon français; mais en vieillissant, j'ai complètement perdu ça.

Moi je dirais de souvent voyager en dehors. Parce que quand une personne fait contact avec une communauté bilingue comme Montréal ou francophone... c'est comme de rattrappe. (pp. 22, 23, 24, 27)

Diane's younger sister, Emilie hopes that she too, will have that chance:

- E Quand elle est revenue de la Suisse, elle parlait avec un accent.. elle a appris un nouveau formellesque, elle avait des gros mots...
- D Mon français s'est amélioré. J'étais plus fière de parler français et je voulais parler un français meilleur. Fait que moi il me semble qu'il faut faire des voyages. Sinon, ça va se perdre, tu sais. On n'a pas de famille, aucune parenté dans la ville, et je trouve que c'est vraiment de valeur.
- E Elle est chanceuse parce qu'elle est allée en Suisse et elle vit à Montréal. La différence est énorme. Moi, je veux... je veux faire ce qu'elle a fait. J'ai vu comment elle s'est évoluée et devenue une personne complètement différente. Elle est plus fière d'être francophone et elle parle le français mieux... (p. 28)

It is interesting to note that these two young women who so value their identity as francophones have been so far removed from the local French community. Although they have grown up in Thunder Bay, neither one has really experienced the local vitality described by other adolescents I spoke with.

- D L'autre affaire que je voulais dire... Si tu trouves quelqu'un, les parents nés en Ontario c'est rare qu'ils parlent encore français à leurs enfants. Tu verras pas ça. Tout le monde qu'on connaît ils sont pas d'ici originaires. Non, les parents sont comme première génération québécois. Je connais personne plus vieux que moi qui est né en Ontario.
- E Je pense pas qu'il y en a, mais c'est très rare au moins.
- D Je me demande s'il y en a des Franco-Ontariens; pas à Thunder Bay en tout cas.
- E Non. C'est très, très rare. (Diane & Emilie, p. 29)

This excerpt demonstrates how the isolation of francophones in Thunder Bay exists even as these particular adolescents themselves feel the importance of their identity. Often it seems adolescent francophones must look within themselves for broader horizons to appreciate their cultural community, because the larger society seems to swallow the minority. Contact with other francophones makes a critical difference to their ethnolinguistic vitality. Community contacts in particular, are important because they provide a continual reflection of being an individual within a group.

**BILINGUALISM.** The benefits of bilingualism are communication and bridges between people who are different. The francophone adolescent participants in this research placed great importance on being bilingual. Foremost, they were proud to be bilingual. They feel lucky to have more than one language because not everyone does. They value the opportunities bilingualism brings to them and enjoy their access to the world:

- Important moi je trouve. Je suis fière de ça. T'es fière d'avoir fait ça, parce que ça c'est dur. Il y a pas beaucoup de monde qui font ça, qui sont capables de parler deux langues. Au Québec ils parlent tous français, p'is en Ontario et les autres de même ils parlent tous anglais... Il y en a une couple qui peuvent parler les deux langues p'is... c'est spécial. (Jean, p. 72)



Katherine expressed pride in her nation's bilingualism, as well as for its recognition of her culture.

Bilingualism balances the distance between people so they can be "at home:"

- B'en c'est une bonne idée premièrement, le Canada... je suis fière que mon pays soit bilingue. Parce que l'anglais c'est devenue le langage internationale, mais le français quand-même c'est ma langue, p'is je suis contente que ça soit reconnu comme étant une des deux langues prioritaires. (p. 60)

The participants noted that bilingualism brought more options, and more opportunities. Bilingualism enabled them to offer more to the people they meet.

- Comme je trouve que c'est vraiment un atout. Vraiment, je me trouve, je me sens chanceuse de pouvoir parler ça p'is... c'est un héritage qu'on va pouvoir vivre, c'est un bon héritage. Pis c'est pas mal le fun de pouvoir parler le français à d'autre monde au lieu d'être poigné avec une seule langue ou de... c'est le fun. (Marina, pp. 39-40)
- Comme la plupart de mes amis le plus proches c'est tous des francophones. J'aimerais mieux de garder les deux, qu'en avoir rien qu'une seule. So... (Michel, p. 96)

These adolescents valued their francophone heritage and social identity, proud of all that can be done with their bilingualism:

- It's a gift that you're given. If you are lucky enough to have, like my parents, the desire to learn different languages. Even if it's not French. I guess it's that Canada is bilingual with English and French. I think it's a great opportunity and it's one of the best things. I know that my kids will be bilingual, they'll know both languages, I've already decided that. Just because I know that it's helped me, like lots; and it's been really good experience too, being able to learn two languages because there are lots of comparisons you can do through the languages.

It kind of makes me feel good about myself, knowing that I have... the power to actually know two languages, and am actually smart enough to be able to carry on two languages for my whole life so far. It makes me feel really good about myself. Well... I'm really really glad that I am bilingual. In fact one thing I have to thank my parents for is putting me in the French school. (Breanne, pp. 17, 19)

- Pour le futur, ça va t'aider. Quand tu vas être à l'université, ou quand tu vas essayer de te rendre loin dans la vie, c'est ça qui va te rendre loin dans la vie parce qu'il y a beaucoup de chances. Juste communiquer avec le monde, c'est comme pour communiquer avec le monde tu communique mieux avec leur propre langage. Pis, pour se débrouiller. Je pense que pas tout le monde parle plus qu'une langue, fait que si t'en parles plusieurs, je pense que c'est dix fois mieux.

Je trouve que ça va beaucoup aider, ça va impressionner t'sais. B'en, je me sens mieux, je me sens que je peux me débrouiller b'en mieux que plusieurs personnes. Je pense que parler français c'est une bonne affaire, p'is il y a plusieurs pays où tout le monde parle français. Pis tu te débrouilles mieux, je trouve tu te sens mieux. Je suis fière de ça. (Marina, pp. 30, 33, 39)

- D'être fière, d'être fière de ta langue, que t'as l'avantage sur un autre... c'est juste, I don't know, c'est un avantage d'avoir les deux... Comme aujourd'hui c'est comme qui je suis, c'est moi, c'est ma culture. Mais dans le futur ça va m'aider à continuer mon anglais, comme ils vont voir que j'ai la langue française, donc je vais avoir l'avantage. Des affaires de même. Juste comme les valeurs que je vais donner à mes enfants, savoir l'anglais, y va essayer tes valeurs. Mais tandis que moi j'ai vécu ma vie dans une ville anglaise, p'is comme j'ai eu des expériences qu'eux autres n'ont pas eues, fait que ça me fait un... better person. (Julie, p. 76)

The reasons for bilingualism cited most often included: communication, access, and opportunity. All are necessary for success in adolescent and in life.

- J'aime ça, j'aime connaître deux langues. C'est le fun. Tu peux communiquer plus, et plus facilement. (Yvon, p. 93)
- Je pense que c'est vraiment bon pour nous; il va y avoir beaucoup de places où il va falloir être bilingue. On aura plus d'opportunités. (Emilie, p. 25)
- Tu peux aller aux deux côtés. Avec des amis anglais ou français. (Alain, p. 26)
- T'as une grosse chance d'avoir une job, une meilleure chance, pas une grosse chance, mais une meilleure chance. Ah, oui, c'est une bonne affaire à avoir. (Jean, p. 71)
- On a la chance d'améliorer notre français et d'apprendre les deux langues. Nous avons plus de chance et de choix à quoi faire. (Hélène, p. 44)
- Non. Je pense que c'est un gros atout de parler plusieurs langues, parce que moi je parle anglais, français, et Espagnol. Fait que je me sens fière et je trouve que ça va m'aider dans le futur, ça va m'aider beaucoup parce que maintenant les langues sont une affaire des plus importantes. (Marina, p. 31)

Bilingualism facilitates a world of communication for people. It helps to avoid misunderstandings that result from the barrier that exist between languages:

- Okay, je pense que tout le monde devrait parler les deux langues, ça sera plus facile de communiquer avec tout le monde. Et en étant anglophone ou francophone si tu parles les deux langues il n'y aura plus de chicane, il y aura rien. Parce que les deux vont partager les intérêts en commun, en ayant la facilité de parler les deux langues. Il va avoir moins de manque de communication. (Carolynne, p. 7)
- Oui, je suis bilingue. C'est comme je peux me débrouiller n'importe où, n'importe quand, je peux aller à une université anglaise autant que française et je pourrais réussir. Tu sais? Fait que ça c'est bilingue... (Julie, p. 76)

Being a French Canadian adolescent in the minority milieu requires balancing the demands of an anglophone community with the desire to maintain one's francophone lifestyle and identity. The findings of this research indicate isolation and adaptation as the two key elements of the experience. For all the constraints on the minority population, the ethnolinguistic vitality of francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay is high because they believe in themselves, what they have to keep and to offer to the dominant community. Through interaction with anglophones in most spheres of everyday activity, adolescent francophones in Thunder Bay develop a better understanding of their place as a minority group within the larger community. Participants suggested that adaptation to the environment is necessary and is possible by learning English. For all but one participant, speaking English has permitted these francophone adolescents to become

**bilingual.**

Participants described how they maintain their French at home with their families, at school with teachers and friends, and through community contacts with French language clubs and francophone associations. They are conscious of the risk of assimilation, and fear it, but are confident they can maintain language and culture in the minority milieu if a point is made to live a francophone lifestyle. The research findings suggest that the francophone adolescents who participated in this study adapt to the social environment in Thunder Bay by living as "French as possible."

## **CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay are a minority group who must adapt to the social conditions of their environment and adapt to the practices of the dominant anglophone culture. Francophones need to negotiate their way for participation and interaction in most situations by speaking English much of the time. The findings suggest that minority francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay live a dual-language experience. Francophone adolescents manage to keep their first language by maintaining contact with a community of people who speak French and who teach them to value the culture associated with their language. These contacts make possible a francophone lifestyle for some spheres of activity in the minority group member's daily life, and permits francophone adolescents to experience a sense of ethnic belonging in this milieu where they are a small minority.

This chapter discusses the research findings with the goal of answering the questions that focused the study and showing what the minority francophone adolescent's experience in Thunder Bay is like. Throughout the discussion, references are made to relevant literature in the field of ethnicity and social relations to demonstrate how this research study contributes to the discourse surrounding French Canadians outside Quebec.

The discussion is organized much the way the findings were presented, but also aims to address the issues raised in the research questions. The first section describes the anglophone environment to which the francophone minority must adapt. The second section focuses on how language maintenance is possible in the minority milieu and reiterates how francophone culture is kept active through lifestyle choices. Finally, the third section of the discussion asserts the positive ethnolinguistic vitality of francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay as evidenced by their identity as French people who happen to live in, and must accommodate, an English-speaking city. Revisiting the research questions that guided this inquiry serves as a starting point for discussing the findings:

1. What is the lived experience of minority francophone adolescents within a dominant English culture?
2. What opportunities exist for linguistic and cultural maintenance in the minority milieu?

3. How do social contacts contribute to or change francophone identity and ethnolinguistic vitality?
  - 4.1 When do francophone minority adolescents use English or French?
  - 4.2 In what contexts do they use French?
  - 4.3 In what contexts do they use English?
5. In what ways does the dominant (English) culture influence the language use of francophone minority adolescents?
6. How do community demographics, social organizations, and individual standpoints affect experience in the community?

### **The Environment**

francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay must contend with the constraints of an English-speaking and anglophone-oriented milieu. The inability of most anglophones to speak French, the official unilingualism of the city, and the "big eyes" that stare when French is spoken create distance between the two language communities. Francophone adolescents are acutely aware of the imbalance between French and English, a condition that initiates their relationship with the larger community. Francophone adolescents live between two language groups, speaking French where possible and appropriate, and English everywhere else. English allows them access to the dominant community and allows them to participate more fully in their milieu since the environment in which they live is anglophone. Their adaptation is necessary because the situation would otherwise entail a rather lonely and unsatisfying experience (Carolynne, p. 7; Helène, p. 44; Phillip, p. 90). Unless they are among other francophones, participants find themselves speaking the dominant language. The participants in this study suggest that francophones in Thunder Bay face prejudice and rejection from the dominant group because of ignorance and prevailing attitudes regarding Quebec (Interviews Notes, pp. 4, 6, 12, 23, 33, 37, 68, 77, 82, 96, 98). The interpretations and behaviour of the francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay reflect the relationship between the French minority and the anglophone majority. Adolescents adapt to the English because of among the anglophone population they are so often in contact with.

Gilbert (1996) asserts that local conditions need to be considered in the discussion of a minority group experience. The social relations between a minority group and the dominant community temper interaction;

these particulars need to be taken into account if anything meaningful is to be learned.

Gilbert argues distinct peoples will work out their differences to find some equilibrium, which is why there is variety in the language shift that occurs in different cities. In Thunder Bay the francophone minority is such a small proportion of the local population, it is they who make the adjustment. Again and again, participants emphasized the necessity of English and of adapting to this environment where French has limited applicability except among the minority community. The adolescent participants believe francophones choose to live in Thunder Bay and that choice entails accommodating their anglophone hosts.

The concept of diglossia corresponds to the ideas held by francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay in that they have to make room for the dominant language in their social practice if they are to live fully satisfying lives. Diglossia refers to the phenomenon of a community that uses one language for most purposes, and another language in separate spheres of social and cultural activity (Hornby, 1977; Hamers & LeBlanc, 1989). There is concern over language shift in situations of diglossia where there is inter-ethnic contact or interaction between a minority language group and a majority society that is different. At issue is whether the minority group can maintain its mother-tongue while participating in domains belonging to the dominant language group (Hamers & LeBlanc, 1989, pp. 176-78). Barth (1969), Tajfel (1974), and Roosens (1989) addressed the implications of diglossia on minority populations suggesting that social conditions and inter-ethnic relations influence the kind of language shift that occurs when two groups come into contact.

In Thunder Bay, the adolescent respondents described a situation that clearly distinguishes between language groups. The sharp line drawn between English situations and French situations suggests that strict language boundaries exist in Thunder Bay. These boundaries reflect the diglossia that occurs for minority francophones. Since a great many of the activities and interaction of adolescents involves contact with the dominant anglophone community, they live with diglossia and become bilingual (except that one). Just as Barth (1969), Tajfel (1974) and Roosens (1989) found in their research, a range of language shift and identity boundaries exist among the participants in this study. The social, cultural, and political barriers which keep "French" separate from the dominant group facilitate accommodation to the environment because there is no other choice but isolation.

Bilingualism plays an important part in adapting to Thunder Bay because it enables adolescents to

participate in either language community, fit into either group. Bilingualism permits minority francophones to maintain a French lifestyle, while also crossing the language boundary to work or shop or socialize in English (Stebbins, 1995). Stebbins (1995, 1996) suggests that even as the minority francophone groups in Alberta must accommodate the English-speaking environments in which they live, they also maintain francophone lifestyles in some domains of activity which allow them to use their language and keep in regular contact with a French community. His research illustrates how it is possible for minority francophones to experience a positive language shift.

Small as the French Canadian community may be in Thunder Bay, many adolescents choose to maintain their French and accommodate the English environment. They are aware of the risks to their language, but these adolescents have both languages and they consider it a choice. Participants in this study have found it is advantageous for them to adapt to the predominance of English; otherwise, they would be isolated and excluded from a wide range of social options. Bilingualism permits both the maintenance of language and culture, as well as access to the larger community. Bilingualism becomes customary as participants adapt their environment while also ensuring their first language retains its vitality.

To be bilingual is an accomplishment of some significance, because not everyone can speak two languages and enjoy the advantageous opportunities that implies. Participants' preference for one language over the other, the extent of their fluency, and their ideas about what bilingualism does or does not mean reflect lifestyles. Bilingualism or the lack of it influences what participants have access to and what they can pursue. The differences in participant bilingualism and their ideas about it change their experience. Some do not question it, these participants grew up bilingual, consider it "normal and "necessary," and they cannot imagine not having both languages. Others are proud of it. A few are threatened by it, angered by the imposition of English and concerned with what affect it may have on their first language.

Bilingualism facilitates the flexibility of social identity so that minority group members may traverse the boundaries that exist around each language community. The participants in this study suggest that bilingualism enables dual-community participation. Their contact with anglophone peers, English-speaking friends, the lack of French resources, as well as their adolescent desire to be understood and accepted requires their adaptation to dominant practice. Speaking English permits their entry into anglophone spheres

of activity. The anglophone environment necessitates adaption but more importantly adaption allows the development of their bilingualism and increased awareness of themselves as minority francophones. While speaking French is a choice they make and must practice on their own.

These adolescents originally drew my attention because of their dual membership, the way they balance their participation in both communities. As Roosens (1989) and others suggested, they are living in a situation that requires them to adapt to the dominant anglophone cultural community. Nonetheless, they value their francophone identity more, perhaps, because of their awareness of the situation. Their isolation as minority group members can only be overcome by crossing boundaries. For most that crossing is easy because it is so valuable. However, what participants must do (speak English) makes them think about what they cannot do (speak French), pushing them to see their culture and language as something special, different, and worth keeping.

Everywhere in the literature, I was overwhelmed by the note of fear that by participating in two communities identity is eroded to the extent of only belonging in the dominant one, and having just distant association with one's first ethnocultural community. Participants in this study spoke of risks placed on the minority population because of the predominance of English in Thunder Bay. Participants suggested some people opt to not use French anymore because of the convenience or mixed marriages and mixed company, or because parents think their children will be confused with two languages.

While respondents (21 of 22) saw assimilation as a concern the French minority must guard against, they felt it was not a risk if people made the effort to keep their language. Usually, they said, francophone people choose to adapt to the English community and learn the language. As far as these adolescents are concerned, francophones can speak French at home, kids can go to French schools, they can join French groups and/or make visits to see francophone relatives in French regions, and people can choose to maintain their French. Assimilation results from lack of contact with other francophones, and not discouraging one's children from crossing over to the dominant group and forgetting the most vital aspect of francophone identity: language. "Assimilated is to not know French and not want to" (Reflection Note, p. 19).

Participants, and the parents I spoke to on my way into or out of interviews, stressed the importance of being socialized as French, of enforcing children's language and cultural outside the public domains which



tend to be English. This corresponds to Stebbins' (1995, 1996) research on Franco-Calgarian lifestyles. Like Gilbert (1996), Roosens (1989), and Tajfel (1974), Stebbins argues that it is possible for minority groups to offset assimilation by maintaining ethnic contacts. Choosing to keep in contact while also participating in the majority culture, it is possible for even French Canadians in the worst minority situation like Thunder Bay. To maintain language and sustain francophone culture by living a French lifestyle beyond the dominant group's domain, the participants in this study manage their environment and adapt to the predominance of English by becoming bilingual. They maintain their francophone ethnicity, culture, and language by living French lifestyles within particular domains of daily experience.

### **Lifestyle and Language Maintenance**

Language maintenance and ethnic identity occur in the social spheres that permit the minority group to express themselves, apart from the dominating majority society (Barth, 1969; Roosens, 1989). The participants in this study all agreed that the development of their identity as French Canadians and their will to speak French in the minority milieu are fostered in childhood, in the home and the school. Maintenance of the parent's language among minority francophone adolescents is possible because of their contact with other French-speaking people. Living "as French as possible" is a choice to participate in the minority community, giving a place to language and francophone culture. This section discusses the influence of the family and relatives, the school, community groups, and adolescents on one another; these contacts provide vital opportunities to practice the language, appreciate the company, and learn about oneself as a francophone. Language maintenance is the product of French contacts and making the choice to have a francophone lifestyle.

Stebbins (1995, 1996) suggests that even as minority French Canadians must accommodate the English-speaking majority in their cities, they also maintain a francophone lifestyle in some domains of daily life. At home, in school, with friends, and at social events they use their language and participate in the French community. Stebbins' work gave me a way of describing what I have found in Thunder Bay. The contacts adolescents describe, their hurt at the rejection and anger at the prejudice, as well as their awareness of themselves as being francophone in an English environment, contribute to a sense of self and a desire to keep what they have to someday pass on to their children. The opportunities minority francophone

adolescents have to use their language are very important to their remaining a part of an ethnic community.

### **Family**

Parents who raise their children to speak French at home assure their primary socialization into the first-language community. The adolescents in this study credit and thank their parents for seeing to their francophone enculturation. In all the homes where both parents were French and in three of the mixed language families, French was spoken more often or always — sometimes the English habit carries over, but most parents are pretty strict about French in the house.

In the mixed families, English was spoken more often because of the anglophone parent having trouble with French. Nonetheless, these adolescents credited their francophone parent for giving them the language, making a point to try and use it when the occasion arose. These English-French adolescents, even Louis who feels he can not speak French, say that the language and the francophone spirit are always with them. They live a bilingual and bicultural life from the start and it is their French parent who gives them the first contacts and their start.

This finding was somewhat expected because of all the references to the home as important to minority experiences. The survival of the language is best assured through the efforts of parents with their children (Roosens, 1989, Allaire & Fedigan, 1993; Smith, 1992; Desjarlais, 1983, Maxwell, 1977). Maintenance of language starts with parents teaching their minority children to speak French, providing them with family and relatives and a community of people, sending them to French schools, setting an example. These choices in the home are widely recognized as being vital to minority children and adolescents not assimilating. The support and encouragement of parents make adolescents value their language and keep it. The participants in this study suggested that the practice of using French at home is a big part of language maintenance. They forget to speak French sometimes, more of the television shows they like are English, but the presence of French is in their lives.

The role of parents is particularly visible with Louis. His parents speak English together. He tried French Immersion, but it was not for him. Although his mother speaks French to him on occasion, he does not feel comfortable with it and suggests he "can't speak it." Some assimilation arguments would have him counted. However he does understand some French and he admires his mother's fluency, so he may

someday gain more confidence and an inclination to regain the loss. Even without much strength in the language, Louis did show cultural pride in being a little different (from classmates) and a sense of his francophone self in his boyish pleasure that from time to time at school he can show off what his mother gave him.

The language of the French parent is also the adolescents' link to family relations who live in francophone communities. Regular trips and phone calls remind adolescents where they come from and where they fit in. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, sisters... the importance of relatives who speak French mostly is critical to the French Canadian identity (Cara, p. 45). The extended family of adolescents living in Thunder Bay diminishes their sense of isolation and gives them all the more reason to continue speaking French and maintaining the language, even as they live as a minority in this particular milieu. Visits allow francophone adolescents to be enculturated and to have their language revitalized.

The literature on minority French Canadians is very specific about the role of parents on their children. Although there are not many references to extended family in the literature this aspect of family is of particular significance in Thunder Bay. In most cases, the respondents had few or no francophone family living in the city. On the one hand, this contributes to the feeling of isolation among francophones here. On the other hand, though, relatives living in French communities are links "home." Visits are made, trips are taken, the taste for French is fuelled as people come together. The local francophone community is so small and adolescents have such limited opportunities to speak French, holiday vacations give them the chance to get into the culture. They have a chance and a reason to practice their language and want to know more about the community to which they belong. An interesting point is that the adolescents in Thunder Bay have links to friends and family all across the country. These ties encourage them to feel a sense of belonging; the more they reach out, the more they see themselves, and it keeps them feeling French Canadian, and in some cases Franco-Ontarian.

### **School**

French language school programs are the second essential element to the maintenance of language and culture in the minority milieu. The immersion systems supports minority adolescents by permitting them to master their language, while interacting with members of the dominant community who want to share their

language. Although the five participants who attended French Immersion did not elaborate to any great extent, it was apparent in our conversations that they appreciate learning in an environment where they are special and unique in the class. That position of status among their peers is an incentive for them to do well, and in the process they value who they are to a greater degree. The immersion schools might have one or two francophone among every sixty students; these adolescents have visibility among the anglophones, their French is good (usually better than classmates) and they get heard using their language. Rather than detracting from their francophone identity, this inter-group contact is quite positive and reinforces the value they hold for their language.

The school experience is quite different for adolescents in the French First Language program where the school and classes are geared to teaching minority francophones. At the FFL elementary or the mixed high school, minority adolescents are educated in French by French Canadian teachers beside francophone peers. The FFL program is geared to the needs of the students, building on the regular curriculum by increasing their awareness of the minority community and helping them to appreciate their differences. The FFL school tries to give adolescents opportunities to discuss their situation and act as a community. The school provides an initial contact point for francophone friends, as well as to groups and organizations which are geared to the minority population.

These findings reflect what others have said about the school acting as a linguistic catalyst in the lives of young francophones (Carey, 1993; Smith, 1992; Desjarlais, 1980, 1983; Tardiff, 1993; Gérin-Lajoie, 1993; McMahon, 1996). As much as French education in minority contexts is expected to transmit the language through its use in all subject areas, the school has a responsibility to communicate an understanding of a francophone community, of culture and identity, of self and others. In Thunder Bay, the teachers achieve that and adolescents learn a lot about themselves, the city and the world. Many times participants made references to the school rules and their teachers' efforts on their behalf. Teachers remind them to speak their language, they teach them their history and help them to celebrate their culture.

In Ontario and other provinces, there is concern that exposure to the dominant anglophones will lead to the use of English and assimilation among francophones, especially among children in mixed schools (Desjarlais, 1980, 1983; Maxwell, 1977; Landry, Allard & Théberge, 1990). At issue is whether francophone

students can withstand the pressures to speak English and not lose their language. Language loss is measured by the amount of English used, compared to French, and in the number of anglicisms that encroach upon the language (Desjarlais, 1983; Maxwell, 1977; Landry, Allard & Th  berge, 1990). Such studies seem to be skewed toward finding assimilation, and do not consider the circumstances of particular situations.

This study illustrates minority francophone adolescents' patterns of language maintenance and the weight they give to those opportunities where they speak French or think about their social identity. At home, in school, among friends, to speak their mother-tongue and, slowly, assimilation rates was beyond the scope of this study; however, the findings do reflect concern over assimilation as an issue for minority adolescents and demonstrates what the participants do to protect themselves from it. These findings suggest their community compensates for its isolation with heightened awareness that yields a greater vitality.

In Thunder Bay francophone adolescents in mixed schools are a small minority compared to their English peers who are mostly unilingual. All the participants found the school to be an important point of contact and learning. In each school situation, there are advantages and disadvantages for FFL, immersion or core students. Though it happens in different ways, interaction with dominant group anglophones in school contributes to their sense of self and their determination to maintain their language.

In FFL the classes are French and are held in designated classrooms. They are mostly invisible to the rest of the school — that is, participants suggested that they have to speak English so much some people might not know they were French or even that there were francophone students at the school. Francophone participants attending the mixed high schools expressed appreciation for having the chance to study in French, but also mentioned tensions with anglophone students that could be overcome with changes in voice and visibility that might alter attitudes. However, among friends who admire their bilingualism they feel proud. They also realize, through their interaction with unilingual anglophones, the advantages they have over peers in terms of opportunities.

The one participant attending a core French class described similar feelings about doing well in school with it now (as opposed to when he was in immersion). Even though he feels his French "is not very good" or "good like (his) mother's," Louis admitted to acknowledging his difference from classmates and being proud that he could "get things" before them in French class. The school offers Louis a level of French he can

handle, which he appreciates. It is unfortunate, however, that he didn't have a more French network to draw on and develop his language further than "core" French will allow.

Stebbins (1996) described francophone lifestyles that occur among minority populations who otherwise participate in things mediated through the dominant language. In Thunder Bay the school, particularly the FFL, offers adolescents access to a lifestyle that values French and keeps the minority active. The adolescents who participated in this study were adamant about the importance of the school in their lives: they have attended it every day for a dozen or more years, and it is quite central to their experience.

### **Community Contacts and Activities**

Driedger's (1979) idea of ethnic enclaves encompasses the social domains in which the minority group gathers. Speaking their language and living their culture protects their community by providing a secure environment that is separated from the pressing forces of the dominant society. Participants agreed that there are definite limits to the availability of choices, activities, and group resources for francophones in Thunder Bay. However, they also stress the importance of participating where possible, of joining clubs and going to socials, and using whatever opportunities there are to speak French with other francophones.

"Acti-jeu" and "FESFO," French youth groups, were mentioned by most of the participants. These clubs provide them with the chance to participate in activities with other francophones and have fun while speaking French. The coming together of minority children, adolescents, and grown-ups at socials and retreats sponsored by FESFO bring francophone youth together from all regions of the province. This contact counters the isolation of the minority milieu by permitting participants to live as French Canadians and discuss their situation as minority group members. The help and direction of adults who care that they keep their culture is crucial to these opportunities. The adults who organize these groups and clubs are sponsors in the social development and language maintenance of youth in the minority milieu.

The participants described the fun they have around others who share their language, how at these events, it gives them a sense of belonging and being a community. They like having the chance to use their language and getting to think about who they are within the larger, anglophone-dominated population of Thunder Bay. Francophone associations keep the small French minority close. The adolescents in FFL particularly find that they meet many of their classmates, their friends' parents, their teachers' kids at the

activities put on by Acti-jeu, FESFO, and AFNOO (L'Association francophone de Nord-ouest de l'Ontario, an organization central francophone networks in the community). The sense of community adolescents realize when "all the French people get together" is a strong feeling similar to family closeness, a bond to other francophones who share similar values and who encounter many of the same difficulties in their everyday experience.

The French language is maintained and francophone identity easily "put on" when the community comes together. The fact that there are limited occasions to use it in the context of an anglophone environment makes contact with other French-speaking people more meaningful. The adolescents who participated felt that being with one another at social gatherings and feeling part of the community, helps them to appreciate their language. They receive encouragement to speak French and find themselves wanting to use it.

Another point of contact with the francophone community in Thunder Bay is accessible to adolescents (and adults) who work in French. Whether people are local residents or visitors to the city, adolescents who meet them through work feel like representatives of the cultural community in an environment that is otherwise English. It gives them a sense of offering unity and a kindred spirit through the shared use of a language that often is not available.

French media are also sources of contact for minority adolescents in Thunder Bay. They watch TFO (Television Franco-Ontarian) and Channel 3; they listen to Radio—CBC in French hearing programs for francophones from around the province and nation; they listen to French music sometimes found in local stores, but mostly bought and brought back from others cities; they read French books when they can. There may not be very many options at first glance, however, the adolescent participants all had some media source satisfying their interests.

### **Lifestyle**

According to Stebbins (1995) language maintenance and minority bilingualism are possible for people who make a point to live francophone lifestyles. The presence of the majority society is rendered less potent when minority French Canadians participate in leisure activities and social events sponsored by francophone groups for the community to be closer.

Bernard (1988) argued that Franco-Ontarians are a people determined to bridge the gaps between English and French. He found francophones in Ontario who live in places where they are a small minority tend to accommodate the majority population by speaking English. At the same time, though, Franco-Ontarians value their minority identity and make a conscious effort to keep the language active and alive.

This holds true in Thunder Bay as well. The francophone community actively works to maintain the language and support the cultural development of its youth. The clubs, social groups, and francophone associations give minority adolescents contact that supports their socialization into the minority group. This gives them a chance to practice their language and celebrate their culture, reinforcing their identity as francophones and strengthening their resolve to remain active in the community. Living a francophone lifestyle in Thunder Bay is possible because the minority community makes a point to do so. Participants suggested that they maintain some measure of a francophone lifestyle by speaking French at home, by learning in French, and by taking the chances that come to participate in their cultural community. All of these contacts and positive experiences protect against language loss and revitalize identity.

### **Ethnolinguistic Vitality**

This part of the discussion considers the ethnolinguistic vitality of minority francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay. When a minority language group is living among the dominant society, there is concern about how interethnic contact will affect the language practices and social identity of the smaller group since they are often accommodating to the majority language. Landry, Allard and Théberge (1991) suggest that minority francophones can maintain their ethnolinguistic vitality and become bilingual when they have a supportive degree of French ambiance in certain social spheres.

In Thunder Bay, 21 of the 22 adolescents who were interviewed for this study suggest that their sense of francophone identity and of being a part of a community is facilitated by their maintenance of language and participation in school, at home, and with one another. The sections below describe the ethnolinguistic vitality of minority francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay. Their sense of self and others, their language choices, and their feelings about the minority community illustrate how the participants in this research hold their identity as francophones in high regard despite tensions and their need to adapt to the majority society.



## **Language Choice**

The bilingualism of participants in this study reflects both the necessity of knowing English in Thunder Bay, as well as the choice to keep French active in the minority milieu. Adolescents remain committed to safeguarding their French; so even as the world around them moves in English, minority francophones place high importance on their own language.

French often is not amenable to the linguistic conditions in Thunder Bay, evidenced in the lack of French language services. As such, minority francophones adolescents find that they often speak English. While speaking English enables francophone adolescents to enjoy a broader range of social activities, their interaction with anglophones reminds them of their minority status. On one hand, they become defensive about the francophone community as they perceive prejudice against "The French" and find they are expected to speak the dominant language. On the other hand, interaction with unilingual anglophone friends helps francophone adolescents to become bilingual and to appreciate their difference. Both situations reinforce their determination to maintain the minority language. In almost every reference participants made to speaking English, they also mention how they choose to use French when it is possible. They ask for services in French, speak French more often, and think about what they have to lose.

Several participants mentioned that francophones often "lose their voice" in interaction with anglophones, so many will switch to English to accommodate the situation. Although they are disappointed by the imbalance between language groups, they do not feel disadvantaged or threatened. Learning the language of "the other" permits minority francophones to experience more. The follow excerpt from Hertzner (1965) reflects the way adolescents in this study interpret their bilingualism and their adjustment to the dominant cultural group:

Having proficiency in one or more national languages other than his own makes the individual a participant in as many new cultural worlds with their different values, attitudes, interests, institutional forms, styles of life and world views. It is fundamentally true that he who is adept in two languages lives in two worlds, and his experiential and cultural insights and reach are extended correspondingly. These insights are integral to his personality, environment and stature. (p. 399)

As many languages as someone speaks,  
So many times is he a man. (Charles V)

## **Self and Community**

While interaction with anglophones makes francophone adolescents more aware of themselves and

the French community to which they belong, their ethnolinguistic vitality is also influenced by the minority itself. Maintaining French in the home provides francophone adolescents with their sense of identity. Family and kinship are crucial to ensuring that minority group children are socialized as francophone. Bonds to parents and relatives provide security for adolescents that encourages their belonging to a community. The school also provides critical reinforcement to adolescents by teaching them their language and calling on them to think about how important it is. Francophone youth groups and clubs are also instrumental for their socialization into the community. All these social ties to other francophones inform minority adolescents of the community to which they belong. The degree of French "ambiance" in an individual's social network informs the identity of minority adolescents (Landry, Allard, & Th  berge, 1991). They can see their origins, envision a future, and live a francophone lifestyle.

The participants in this research want to stay close to their community: the more they adapt to the dominant group, the more they realize who they are and what it means to be French. Their plans to continue studying in French, as well as their desire to pass their language and culture on to the children they may someday have, suggest that their ethnolinguistic vitality is highly positive. Certainly in the minority milieu there will be occasions where French does not fit; yet the adolescents who participated in this study look to family and friends, to the school and community, and have reason to cherish their identity as francophones.

Although "social capital" has been used by Landry, Allard and Th  berge (1991) to measure ethnolinguistic vitality, demographic, economic, and political measures of capital would not suggest there is such vitality in Thunder Bay. However, cultural capital in the form of people who want to speak French and groups who value the minority community, contribute greatly to the ethnolinguistic vitality of the adolescents who took part in this research. In spite of the isolation of the minority, adolescents find strength in their community. They are taught the importance of their cultural heritage and, even though they sometimes feel a pull towards the dominant group, they remain secure in their sense of self and their desire to keep the community alive.

Age has a lot to do with the ethnolinguistic vitality of minority francophone adolescents. Younger participants tend to accept the constraints on their language and readily adjust to new networks of social activity being English. By the time they reach mid to late adolescence, participants suggest they return to the

minority community and become more active in their identification as francophones. This reflects choices about maintaining the community and deciding for oneself to live as much as possible in French. Younger adolescents are pulled in more directions by their eagerness to be accepted by peers who are mostly English. By the time they reach late adolescence, it is okay to be French and friends are people who accept that part of them. Socialization into the francophone community links language to identity, and their choice to use it whenever possible reflects a chosen lifestyle.

### **Conclusions**

The lived experience of minority francophone adolescents is one of isolation and adaptation. It is not feasible to think a minority group could live amidst a dominant society without at least some interethnic contact. Rather than detracting from the francophone identity, interaction with anglophones permits adolescents to become bilingual and makes them aware of how their social group is different, distinct and special. The ethnolinguistic vitality of minority adolescents is fortified by their sense of self and others, as well as by the commitment of the francophone minority community to protect its youth. Minority francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay become accustomed to living a dual-language experience, which informs their practice and shapes their sense of self.

This research sought to describe the lived experience of minority francophone adolescents in Thunder Bay. The findings suggest that while they adapt to the majority anglophone environment by speaking English and becoming bilingual, they are also successful at keeping the vitality of the francophone community and maintaining their language in this milieu. The lifestyle they maintain beyond the domain of anglophones, at home or school or in community groups, informs their francophone identity. They see assimilation as a risk for minority group members, but insist that it is possible for francophones to choose to remain active as a minority and to choose to speak French whenever possible.

Stebbins' (1995, 1996) illustration of francophone lifestyles, Bernard's (1988) descriptions of Ontario francophones and Cazabon's (1996) reflection on the actuality of minority experience show how minority francophones have made a place for themselves in predominantly anglophone environments. So too, in Thunder Bay, are minority francophones a vital and active segment of the population. The adolescents who participated in this study are firmly francophone, Franco-Ontarian, and French Canadian; they make conscious

use of their language and value their culture, even as they must shift to speaking English and interacting with the dominant group.

The findings of this study demonstrate how minority adolescents have greater ethnic awareness and ethnolinguistic vitality as they confront their isolation. This research did not refer to other studies of francophones in Northern Ontario, however, articles from *Revue du Nouvel-Ontario* or from the "Institut Franco-Ontarien" could be valuable resources for comparative analysis. One of the difficulties I had with this study was that I found very little in the way of similar standpoints until I was at the end and by then it was too late to incorporate area-specific studies into my work. It is unfortunate that in my isolation at Lakehead I did not have access to the research publications that would have made my concerns and findings easier to describe.

Future research endeavours might look more closely for the minority voice, as I have tried to do. Questions arise about how adolescents in Thunder Bay work out their place in the community. There are all kinds of intricate details that speak of the minority experience, but which I lacked the experience to properly attend to. More accounts of commonalities in cultural persistence would go a long way to rendering francophones more visible. These include the issue of rejection by the dominant group and how resistance is possible. There is a need for studies that look closely at lifestyle patterns and at the means by which francophones could have more voice in the larger community. Future research might also address the parents or teachers of minority francophone adolescents to get a better idea of the difference they make to the community's maintenance. Identity as francophone, French Canadian and Franco-Ontarian could be asked to better understand "who" the minority is and how they live. Another consideration is that the sample for this study overwhelmingly consisted of pro-active francophone adolescents; further studies might consider language loss among "assimilated francophones" to see how closely identity is tied to language. Indeed, action research might be done to recover losses and have more visibility and voice within the community to discourage isolation.

This research study has demonstrated how minority francophone adolescents are aware of themselves, their community, and their place among Canadians outside Quebec. Research needs to be committed to explicating the minority experience, focusing to a greater degree on the processes of minority group membership and participation in the dominant community. Such goals in research would permit greater

visibility to minority populations, a louder "echo" of their experience to raise awareness about the minority francophone community.

## References

- Allaire, G., & Fedigan, L. (1993, June). Survivance et assimilation: Les deux faces de la même médaille. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 49(4), 672-686.
- Barth, F. (Ed.). (1969). *Ethnic groups and boundaries*. Bergin, Oslo: Universitets Forlaget.
- Bernard, R. (1988). *De Québécois à Ontariens*. Hearst, ON: Les Editions du Nordir.
- Bogdan, F., & Biklen, S.N. (1992). *Qualitative research for education*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Castonguay, C. (1982). The decline of French as a home language in the Quebec and Acadian diaspora of Canada and the United States. In R. Breton and P. Savard (Eds.), *The Quebec and Acadian Diaspora in North America* (pp. 91-99). Toronto, ON: The Multicultural Society of Ontario.
- Cazabon, B. (1996). Comment, à trop distinguer, les sujets en arrivent à vider l'objet minoritaire de toute consistance. In B. Cazabon (Ed.), *Pour un espace de recherche au Canada français* (pp. 13-34). Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa.
- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds.). (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Desjarlais, L. (1980). *Les élèves ne parlant peu ou pas le français dans les modules scolaires de langue française en Ontario*. Toronto: Le ministre de l'éducation.
- Desjarlais, L. (1983). *L'influence du milieu sociolinguistique sur les élèves franco-ontariennes*. Toronto: Le ministre de l'éducation.
- Driedger, L. (1979, Winter). Maintenance of urban ethnic boundaries: The French in St. Boniface. *Sociological Quarterly* 20, 89-108.
- Edwards, J. (1985). *Language, society and identity*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.
- Fishman, J.A. (1977). Language and ethnicity. In H. Giles (Ed.), *Language, ethnicity and intergroup relations* (pp. 15-43). London: Academic Press Inc.
- Gérin-Lajoie, D. (1996). Le contexte de mise en oeuvre d'une innovation scolaire: Le cas d'une école secondaire franco-ontarienne. In B. Cazabon (Ed.), *Pour un espace de recherche au Canada français* (pp. 267-282). Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa.

- Gérin-Lajoie, D. (1993). Les programmes d'initiation à l'enseignement en milieu francophone minoritaire. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 49(4), 799-814.
- Gervais, G. (1993). L'Ontario Français (1981-1910). In E.J. Jaenen (Ed.), *Les Franco-Ontariens* (pp. 49-126). Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa.
- Gilbert, A. (1996). L'espace francophone: Regard sur les pratiques linguistiques dans différents milieux. In B. Cazabon (Ed.), *Pour un espace de recherche au Canada francophone* (pp. 53-74). Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa.
- Giles, H. (Ed.). (1977). *Language, ethnicity and intergroup relations*. London: Academic Press., pp. 1-14.
- Giles, H., Bourhis, R.Y., & Taylor, D.M. (1977). Towards a theory of language in ethnic group relations. In H. Giles (Ed.), *Language ethnicity and intergroup relations* (pp. 307-348). London: Academic Press.
- Giles, H., & Byrnes, J. (1982). An intergroup approach to second language acquisition. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, (3), 17-40.
- Glesne, C., & Peshkin, A. (1992). *Becoming qualitative researchers*. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Guba, E.G., & Lincoln, Y.S. (1981). *Effective evaluation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Hamers, J.F., & Blanc, M.H.A. (1989). *Bilinguality and bilingualism*. Great Britain: Cambridge University Press.
- Harvey, R.F. (Ed.). (1987). Polyphony: *Thunder Bay's people*, 9(2).
- Hébert, Y. (1996). Mes amis sont bilingue, comme moi. In B. Cazabon (Ed.), *Pour un espace de recherche au Canada francophone* (pp. 141-158). Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa.
- Hertzer, J.O. (1965). *A sociology of language*. New York: Random House.
- Hornby, P.A. (Ed.). (1977). Bilingualism: An introduction and overview. In P.A. Hornby (Ed.), *Bilingualism and Intergroup Relations* (pp. 1-14). New York: Academic Press.
- Jaenen, C.J. (1993). L'ancien régime au pays d'en haut. In C.J. Jaenen (Ed.), *Les Franco-Ontariens* (pp. 9-48). Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa.
- Kirby, S., & McKenna, K. (1989). *Experience, research, social change: Methods from the margins*. Toronto, ON: Garamond Press.

- Kouritzin, S. (1996). *Illegitimate tongues*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation.] Paper presented at the annual conference of the Canadian Society for Studies in Education (CSSE), St. Catharines, ON, June 1996.
- Lambert, W.E. (1978). Cognitive and socio-cultural consequences of bilingualism. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 3(4), 537-547.
- Landry, R., & Allard, R. (1990). Contact des langues et développement bilingue: Un modèle macroscopique. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 46(3), 526-553.
- Landry, R., Allard, R., & Thériège, R. (1991, July). School and family French ambience and the bilingual development of francophone western Canadians. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 47(5), 878-915.
- Leclerc, J. (1992). *Langue et société* (2<sup>e</sup> édition). Laval, PQ: Mondia Editeurs Inc.
- Li, P.S. (1981). *Social research methods*. Toronto, ON: Butterworth & Co. (Canada) Ltd.
- Maxwell, T.R. (1977). *The invisible French*. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press.
- Maykut, P., & Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research*. London, England: The Falmer Press.
- McMahon, F. (1996). Le projet politique dans la formation des enseignants francophones en milieu minoritaire. In B. Cazabon (Ed.), *Pour un espace de recherche au Canada français* (pp. 75-92). Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa.
- Ministry of Industry, Science & Technology/Statistics Canada. (1992). *Profiles of 1991 census divisions and subdivisions in Ontario, Part A*. Ottawa, ON: Author.
- Ministry of Industry, Science & Technology/Statistics Canada. (1992). *Profiles of 1991 census divisions and subdivisions in Ontario, Part B*. Ottawa, ON: Author.
- Ministry of Industry, Science & Technology/Statistics Canada. (1992). Ethnic origin: The nation. *Statistics Canada Census 1991*. Ottawa, ON: Author.
- Mougeon, R., Heller, M., Beniak, E., & Canale, M. (1984, November). Acquisition et enseignement du français en situation minoritaire: Le cas des franco-ontariens. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 41(2), 308-314.
- Patton, M.Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.



- Reynolds, J.K. (1992). *Native conceptions of giftedness*. Thunder Bay, ON: Lakehead University Master of Education thesis.
- Roosens, E.E. (1989). *Creating ethnicity: The process of ethnogenesis*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Smith, S. (1992). *The minority francophone student endangered*. Thunder Bay, ON: Lakehead University, Master of Education Thesis.
- Spradley, J.P. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Stebbins, R.A. (1995). Famille, loisir, bilinguisme et style de vie francophone en milieu minoritaire. *Recherches Sociographiques, XXXVI(2)*, 265-278.
- Stebbins, R.A. (1996). Le style de vie linguistique: Une nouvelle optique pour l'étude des communautés francophones hors Québec. In B. Cazabon (Ed.), *Pour un espace de recherche au Canada français* (pp. 127-140). Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa.
- Tajfel, H. (1974). *Social identity and intergroup behavior in social science information, 13(2)*, 65-93.
- Tardiff, C. (1993). L'identité culturelle dans les écoles francophones minoritaires: Perceptions et croyances des enseignants. *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 49(4)*, 787-798.
- Thunder Bay Multicultural Association. (1983). *Thunder Bay mosaic: Ethnic community profiles* (pp. 27-29). Thunder Bay, ON.
- Welch, D. (1993, automne). Formes socio-economiques et identité franco-ontarien dans le nord-est de l'Ontario. *Egalité, 34*.

# **A P P E N D I X 1**

## **Letter of Permission**

Cher parent:

Je suis une candidate pour la maîtrise en arts, spécialisé en sociologie, à l'université Lakehead. Ma thèse s'agit d'une recherche des expériences des jeune francophones à Thunder Bay. Le projet s'intéresse à les interactions des élèves dans le développement d'une identité canadien-française. J'aimerais étudier la manière par laquelle les jeunes francophones réagissent à leur situation en tant que minorité.

La collection des données et l'analyse combineront une variété de méthodes pour arriver à une description et explication des expériences des jeune francophones en situation minoritaire. Pour préciser les expériences des individus, des entrevues seront effectuées. Les jeunes seront demandé d'élaborer au sujet de leur identité francophone, leur situation et leur expériences avec la communauté.

exemple de questions –

- Quelles sont les difficultés de la communauté francophone?
- Quelles sortes de contacts francophone avez-vous?
- Comment êtes-vous influencé par la présence de la communauté anglaise?
- Autre questions pour préciser l'expérience francophone.

La confiance est assuré et le nom de votre fils/fille ne paraître pas dans le rapportage ou l'usage des données. La recherche ne pose aucune risque aux participants. La participation est volontaire et les jeune peuvent retirer leur nom à n'importe-quel temps.

Si vous accordez la permission à la participation de votre fils/fille, signez la forme ci-joint et téléphonez le numéro ci-dessus pour préciser un temps convenable pour l'entrevue. Si vous avez des questions, n'hésitez pas de me téléphoner. Si vous avez des commentaires — au sujet de la francophonie en situation minoritaire, indiquez-les sur la forme de permission et je vais les conciderai en faisant ma recherche.

bien à vous,

Cindy Lynn Roche  
345-4695

---

***Détachez et retournez la forme le jour de l'entrevue.***

Ayant lu la lettre qui explique la recherche, Les adolescents francophone dans un milieu minoritaire, je comprend que:

- 1) la participation est volontaire et mon fils/ma fille peut se retirer à n'importe-quel temps.
- 2) aucune risque est possible dans la collection des données du projet.
- 3) les noms ne paraître pas dans le rapport final.

Je donne la permission à mon fils/ma fille, \_\_\_\_\_, de participer à la recherche.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*signature de parent/guardien(ne)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*DATE*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*signature de l'adolescent*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*DATE*

# **APPENDIX 2**

## **Codes**

## **CODES**

- E** was used to indicate comments made pertaining to the English environment.
- I** was used for Isolation experienced by the French community. It included the isolation Francophones experience within the English environment, isolation from familial contacts and French culture that occur in places other than Thunder Bay, and also isolation from other French people in the city.
- Ad** referred to strategies of adaptation which make it possible to be French in an English city.
- As** referred to the assimilation that occurs when Francophone identity is not valued and individuals begin to prefer being part of the dominant society.
- L** referred to the limitations inherent in being French in an English city; this code was used to mark comments made by participants about how their language does not lend itself to participating in this environment where English predominates.
- D** generally designated the difficulties encountered by Francophones in the minority milieu.
- R** referred to reports of rejection by the Anglophone community.
- Lp/Ls** were used to make references to first and second languages.
- L<sub>1</sub>/L<sub>2</sub>**
- U** was utilized to refer to the officially unilingual policies and character of Thunder Bay. This fact of the city is closely associated with the difficulties described by minority Francophones.
- B** became the code for bilingualism, both as an ideal in Canadian culture and society, as well as one of the practical benefits for French adolescents in the minority milieu.
- H** marked the habits of participants in terms of "d'habitude" and "ce qu'on fait."
- M** was used to indicate Francophone efforts and ways of maintenance that influence language, culture, and identity in the minority situation.
- P** was used to indicate participation for minority group members: on the one hand, it referred to adjustments they make so as to participate in the dominant society; on the other hand,

- participation in the minority community was important to linguistic and cultural maintenance.
- AF/FF** were the codes assigned to Anglophone and Francophone Friends who play a significant role in the experiences and social identity of the adolescent participants.
- C** specified French language contacts that contribute to being a part of "la communauté française." This was a fairly general code that could be classified further into particular kinds of contacts.
- F** was used as the code for family and descriptions for its importance to Francophone identity in the minority context.
- F<sub>L</sub>** referred to "la famille au loin" an important alternative to isolation and a source of affiliation to a larger network of Francophones.
- E** was the code used to highlight the role of French language education, as well as experiences as Francophones in predominantly English schools.
- Id** indicated Francophone identity, whether in terms of factors that contribute to language maintenance, a sense of self, or in reference to the community they are a part of.

# **APPENDIX 3**

## **French Summary**

**Chers participants:**

**Je vous remercie de votre aide lors de ma recherche menée l'année dernière. J'ai apprécié votre temps et tout ce que vous m'avez appris des jeunes francophones de Thunder Bay. Je me considère chanceuse d'avoir eu l'occasion de vous parler et de mieux comprendre l'expérience française locale.**

**J'espère que mes interprétations de nos entrevues présentent un aperçu fidèle de la vitalité de l'identité française dans cette communauté où les francophones vivent en milieu minoritaire.**

**Malgré toutes les contraintes rencontrées dans votre expérience de vie en tant que minorité, vous réussissez à maintenir un sens de la communauté vibrant, en développant un milieu propice à la sauvegarde de votre identité. Puisque vous voyez les difficultés rencontrées par les francophones, vous êtes aussi très conscients de votre responsabilité de trouver les moyens de les surmonter. C'est vrai que l'isolement et les préjugés font partie de votre quotidien. Pourtant, votre désir de vivre en français assure la survie et l'épanouissement de la vitalité de votre communauté. Vos efforts à combattre le rejet et le silence, l'exemple de vos parents et professeurs, votre fierté de l'héritage et de la famille, témoignent d'une identité présente et vivante.**

**Vous vous êtes adaptés à la situation minoritaire en devenant bilingues. Chaque fois que vous choisissez de vous exprimer en français, vous devenez plus visibles. Être français fait partie intégrale de votre identité. Vos manières de réagir à la situation minoritaire illustrent votre vitalité ethnolinguistique. Vous m'avez montré la réalité du rêve canadien, une célébration de l'héritage et une appréciation de ceux qu'on rencontre.**

**Le sommaire ci-joint, représente le résumé du chapitre abordant les résultats de ma recherche. Une copie de ma thèse sera dans la bibliothèque à l'université si vous voulez le voir dès que c'est prêt. J'espère que vous allez le lire afin de vérifier la justesse de mes impressions et de la description que je fais de votre expérience. Si vous avez des questions ou des commentaires, n'hésitez pas à me joindre au numéro de téléphone suivant: 345-4695.**

**Merci encore. Les mots me manquent pour pouvoir suffisamment exprimer ma reconnaissance.**

**Cindy Lynn Roche  
345-4695**



## **La vitalité ethnoлингuistique des jeunes francophones à Thunder Bay**

**DÉFINITION:** La vitalité ethnoлингuistique est la mesure de la cohésion, de l'ensemble et de l'esprit d'un groupe et de ce qui arrive quand des communautés différents entrent en contact. Un groupe ayant une vitalité négative est plus apte à subir l'assimilation. Une vitalité positive résulte d'une estime élevée qu'on a de sa langue et de son histoire aussi bien que de l'effet des forces sociales, démographiques et politiques qui aident au maintien et au développement de la langue et de la culture. En plus, les contacts entre confrères favorisent l'existence de cette vitalité.

### **Introduction**

La ville de Thunder Bay est unilingue anglaise. Cette recherche a étudié l'expérience des adolescents français qui réussissent à maintenir et développer une identité distincte en situation minoritaire. Les francophones doivent s'adapter à cette ville officiellement anglaise. Ils font partie d'une toute petite minorité linguistique et culturelle, donc ils n'ont pas le choix de ne pas participer activement à la vie de communauté anglaise. Ils s'en montrent capables et ils deviennent bilingues, participant activement dans la vie des deux communautés. En faisant partie de la société d'expression anglaise, ils sauvegardent leur identité française en conservant la langue et la culture françaises. Cette vitalité positive est le résultat de plusieurs influences, telles que l'effort et les forces sociales qui aident au développement et au maintien de la langue et de la culture.

Ils voient l'assimilation des autres francophones et regrettent ce fait. Pourtant, les jeunes auxquels j'ai parlé trouvent que leur langue est une partie importante de l'identité qu'ils n'ont pas l'intention de la perdre. C'est quelque chose qui ne s'explique pas, c'est là au fond du cœur et dans sa tête, on l'amène partout. Même si des fois on ne la voit pas, l'identité française est forte et fière, toujours assez proche pour y penser et se souvenir de ce qu'on a et de qui on est.

### **Les participants**

Quinze entrevues ont été faites avec vingt-deux jeunes francophones qui habitent à Thunder

Bay. Les participants étaient âgés de 13 à 20 ans, étudiants de huitième année au secondaire jusqu'au collège et l'université. Sept d'entre eux sont nés au Québec. Les autres sont franco-ontariens de naissance, dont douze viennent de Thunder Bay. Plus de la majorité sont d'origine complètement française et presque tous ont l'habitude d'utiliser le français à la maison. Dans deux des huit familles mixtes, l'origine du parent non-francophone n'est pas anglaise — un est presque complètement assimilé, alors que l'autre devient trilingue.

Les participants m'ont beaucoup aidé avec leurs entrevues et l'intérêt qu'ils portaient à ma recherche. J'espère pouvoir donner une bonne image d'eux. Plusieurs m'ont connu comme suppléante à leur école avant que je n'ai commencé. Cette recherche est le résultat des contacts qu'ils m'ont offerts. Je les en remercie.

### **L'environnement des francophones dans la ville anglaise**

L'état unilingue anglais de la ville de Thunder Bay existe légalement depuis dix ans. Cette loi municipale déclarant Thunder Bay ville unilingue a été une réaction au séparatisme du Québec, ainsi qu'à la politique de l'Ontario. Cette loi a eu une signification énorme pour les Canadiens français de Thunder Bay, surtout pour chaque francophone qui revendique ses droits. Les jeunes interprètent cette loi comme un "acte agressif" dont témoignent les invectives et les préjugés auxquels ils font face régulièrement vis à vis de la communauté française, le rejet que ses membres ressentent, le manque d'opportunité en français, le tout parle du sens aigu que les jeunes éprouvent chaque jour, le sens d'être seul. Ils n'ont pas le choix de ne pas s'intégrer: la plupart des choses qu'ils veulent faire sont en anglais, et presque personne parle français.

Mais les adolescents francophones réussissent à combattre tout ça avec leur fierté francophone et ils apprennent à s'intégrer. Ils apprécient la situation et ils sont conscients de ce qu'il faut faire. Peu à peu, ils se rendent compte qu'ils sont bilingues et qu'ils sont capables de réagir. Ils deviennent bilingues: ils saisissent les occasions qui se présentent pour montrer qui ils sont et ils apprennent la valeur d'être différents. Ils font ce qu'ils peuvent. Les jeunes francophones

existent entre deux cultures, ils utilisent deux langues, et donnent l'exemple de l'identité canadienne en partageant ce qu'ils sont.

La vitalité se développe pendant qu'ils vivent l'expérience francophone. Les contacts francophones les aident à maintenir la langue et la culture, c'est de cela que provient l'identité française; les contacts avec les anglais leur montrent comment ils sont une collectivité spéciale et distincte.

### **Vitalité d'une style de vie**

#### **Le milieu francophone**

Ils se contentent de l'école et de la famille, d'habitude; de plus, des vacances plusieurs fois par an leur permettent de voir la famille au loin. De temps en temps, ils participent à des activités offertes par les clubs francophones — que ce soit une soirée de musique française, une rencontre de jeunes, une fin de semaine pour s'amuser et discuter en français, ou un jeu de quilles avec parents et frères et soeurs. Les jeunes francophones savent qu'il faut garder la langue et que c'est assez facile de la perdre. Pendant nos conversations, ils ont exprimé l'importance de parler la langue et de participer à la vie de la communauté française.

Les jeunes francophones s'intéressent à la communauté française. Ils veulent connaître leur histoire, garder leur langue et maintenir leur culture. Bien que petite, ils réussissent à avoir une communauté française. Leur parents partagent ce qu'ils sont, les jeunes l'apprennent et le gardent près du coeur.

À la maison, ils parlent français, ils sont encouragés à lire en français et à regarder des émissions françaises. Des fois, leurs parents leur interdisent d'utiliser l'anglais à la maison. C'est la première communauté de socialisation linguistique. Les parents, les grand-parents, les tantes et les cousins représentent la parenté, l'héritage et l'histoire. En famille on apprend l'importance de son origine et de se qui l'on est. L'exemple des parents et l'effort des jeunes, l'emploi de la langue à la maison et les contacts avec la famille éloignée, tous ces aspects sont extrêmement

importants pour les jeunes pour qu'ils puissent développer la langue, maintenir leur culture, et aussi avoir une ethnicité positive en situation minoritaire. La famille nous donne la langue et plus encore!

Peut-être la moitié des parents des adolescents avec qui j'ai parlé travaillent en français ou en situation bilingue; le restant travaille dans un milieu anglais. Cela montre aux jeunes les possibilités qui s'offrent à ceux qui possèdent les deux langues. Cela aussi encourage les jeunes à continuer avec leur français.

### **La scolarité française**

L'école est l'autre grand contact français pour les jeunes francophones. C'est là où ils pratiquent la langue, où ils rencontrent d'autres comme eux, et où ils apprennent à connaître le monde. Le milieu scolaire donne aux jeunes la chance de mieux comprendre la communauté française.

Au niveau primaire, les jeunes francophones sont plutôt isolés et protégés. Il y a une école française où les enfants francophones sont instruits par des enseignant(e)s français(e)s. L'anglais est interdit dans les classes, les couloirs, dans l'autobus et dehors dans la cour pendant la récréation.

Au secondaire, les élèves francophones ont des enseignant(e)s français(e)s, mais aussi ils rencontrent des élèves anglais parce que, qu'ils soient en immersion ou dans la section de langue française, ces programmes se trouvent dans des écoles où l'anglais est prédominant. Ils commencent à parler plus d'anglais parce que c'est la langue populaire; ils veulent être acceptés et souvent ça veut dire qu'il faut mettre son français de côté pour participer à l'anglais. De plus en plus les jeunes francophones rencontrent les élèves anglais et prennent des cours en anglais. Ici aussi ils se sentent isolés par l'environnement. Ils sont séparés de reste de l'école étant "la section française." Ils ont des petites classes, toujours avec les mêmes six ou dix ou quinze personnes. Ils ont les mêmes professeurs pendant quatre ans. Ils apprécient l'attention de leurs enseignant(e)s et le fait de la partager avec peu d'autres élèves au lieu d'une trentaine. Après quelques années

de secondaire les jeunes francophones ont des amis anglais et français. Ils voient qu'ils sont bilingues et la chance qu'ils ont d'avoir deux langues.

La plupart des jeunes francophones avec qui j'ai parlé ont l'intention de continuer leurs études après le secondaire. Pour continuer en français, il faut qu'ils quittent la ville pour aller au collège ou à l'université au Québec, ou dans un des centres de l'Ontario où se trouve une plus grande concentration du monde francophone. L'autre choix c'est de rester à Thunder Bay et de prendre des cours en anglais à l'université ou au collège communautaire. Parmi les trois jeunes femmes auxquelles j'ai parlé, deux font leur première année au collège local, et l'autre étudie à Montréal où elle suit des cours bilingues.

### **Le bilinguisme**

Les jeunes expliquent comment c'est nécessaire de parler français et de faire des choses avec du monde français, vivre en français quand c'est possible. Ils parlent de la façon dont ils doivent s'adapter à la vie anglaise. Dès qu'ils arrivent au secondaire, ils sont entourés par le monde anglophone. La plupart des amis en dehors de la classe sont anglais. Le plus souvent les emplois qu'ils prennent se passent en anglais et c'est plus l'exception que certains d'entre eux parlent français au travail. Il faut qu'ils parlent anglais la plupart du temps. Les sports, les films, les vidéos, les émissions qu'ils veulent voir à la télé, les conversations d'amis: tout se passe en anglais. Les choix anglais sont plus abondants et les jeunes ne veulent rien manquer.

Les opportunités pour les bilingues sont énormes, et les jeunes espèrent en profiter un de ces jours. Ils sont fiers de leur bilinguisme et ils espèrent que ça va les aider dans le futur. Ils parlent français quand ils peuvent, mais ils sont obligés d'être bilingues ou, au moins d'apprendre l'anglais. Tout se fait en anglais! Ceux qui sont nés ici dans la région du nord-ouest sont souvent bilingues avant même de comprendre les faits de leur bilinguisme. Ils sont bilingues parce que la langue française est limitée par les conditions de vie de la communauté et il faut s'adapter. Hors de la maison ou des classes à l'école, ce n'est pas souvent qu'on peut communiquer en français.

S'adapter et s'intégrer à la ville demande que les jeunes utilisent l'anglais. Parler anglais devient l'habitude pour eux, ça se fait partout. Quoi qu'ils veillent faire, c'est en anglais. Alors, ils deviennent bilingues et parlent français quand c'est possible.

### **La vitalité ethno­linguistique**

La vitalité ethno­linguistique se montre dans la valeur qu'ils attachent à la langue et à la culture: le plaisir qu'ils ont de rencontrer d'autres personnes françaises et d'avoir des réunions pour s'amuser en français. Ils sentent une sorte de fierté quand les amis anglais sont jaloux de leur français et leur habilité bilingue.

Ils apprécient l'effort de leurs parents, l'aide de leurs professeurs. Ils savent les difficultés qui sont devant eux et ils sont conscients de ce qu'il faut faire. À la maison, ils essaient de préserver la langue, de parler en français avec leurs parents, d'écouter des cassettes françaises et de se souvenir de ce qui peut arriver quand on perd la langue en famille. Ils veulent étudier en français, et développer leur bilinguisme. Ils ont l'intention d'apprendre le français aux enfants que, peut-être, ils auront un jour. Ils sont fières de qui ils sont, et de la façon dont se distinguent des autres de la ville. Ils ne veulent pas être séparés du reste de la société, alors ils s'adaptent aux circonstances.

Les jeunes francophones de Thunder Bay sont bilingues, ou deviennent bilingues, parce que ça les aide à participer à la vie communautaire. Mais cela ne veut pas dire qu'ils laisseraient le français ou pourraient l'oublier. La vitalité de l'identité française assure la langue et la culture. Les jeunes francophones de Thunder Bay connaissent leurs droits et font ce qu'ils peuvent dans la situation présente. Ils sont une minorité, et souvent les jeunes francophones sont isolés les uns des autres. Quand la situation demande l'anglais, ils utilisent l'anglais. Ils ont de la peine des fois; ils souffrent quand ils ressentent le rejet de la communauté anglaise, le manque de services en français, et les gros yeux qui les regardent quand ils essaient de parler français en public. Ils deviennent impatients avec l'invisibilité des francophones aux yeux des anglais, qui ne les voient pas et ne veulent pas essayer de les voir. Malgré cela, ils se réunissent et parlent de la situation.

Le français, c'est l'identité. Elle n'est jamais loin d'eux et ils tiennent la langue proche pour s'en servir plus tard, toujours là à retirer et utiliser. Les adolescents francophones ont la vitalité ethnolinguistique nécessaire pour réussir à garder leur héritage. Face à tout, ils sont conscients de ce qu'ils sont: francophones. Ils regrettent le manque de choix pour leur communauté, mais ils gardent leur langue quand-même. Il sont fières de leur langue maternelle et heureux d'en avoir une deuxième. Parmi toutes les contraintes de la société, les adolescents francophones ont une identité forte et fière.

Je me sens plus proche des canadiens-français après avoir fait cette recherche. J'ai appris beaucoup au sujet de l'isolement qu'ils les rencontrent, les difficultés auxquelles ils sont confrontés, et l'esprit qu'ils possèdent leur permettant de vivre la vie d'une minorité et réussir à participer à la vie de deux communautés. Le but de cette recherche était de montrer la vitalité des jeunes francophones de Thunder Bay; j'essaie de parler de l'expérience et de décrire la style de vie qui permet la socialisation des jeunes à la communauté, réussissant au maintien de la langue et la culture française parmi la petite minorité déterminer. Chaque entrevue m'a donné des directions à suivre et des questions à poser. Il en reste beaucoup à partager, mais de ma part j'essaie d'offrir l'écho de mes participants et de leurs communauté.

---

# **A P P E N D I X 4**

## **Francophone Club Information**



## ÉGLISE SAINTE-ELIZABETH

Vous pouvez assister à une messe bilingue à l'Église Sainte-Élisabeth, tous les dimanches à 11 h.

Tél. : 622-1085

✽

## ACTIJOUFranco

Le groupe ActiJouFranco réunit des jeunes de 7 à 17 ans sous la supervision d'adultes responsables. Ces jeunes organisent des symposiums, des rencontres, des randonnées, des séances d'improvisation, etc. Les réunions du comité exécutif ont lieu tous les lundis au bureau de l'AFNOO.

Tél. : 475-1346

✽

## MAMAN ET MOI

Il s'agit d'un programme offert aux petits d'âge préscolaire. Une fois par semaine, parents, grands-parents et enfants se rencontrent pour participer à diverses activités qui permettent aux petits de socialiser et de s'amuser.

Tél. : 346-9368

✽

## ALPHA THUNDER BAY

Toute personne désireuse de renouer avec la lecture, l'écriture, le calcul élémentaire ou veut apprendre à lire et à écrire est invitée à bénéficier des services offerts par Alpha Thunder Bay.

Pour de plus amples renseignements, communiquez avec nous au 622-2767.

Téléphone : 622-2767

## HISTORIQUE DE L'AFNOO

L'AFNOO a été créée à l'automne 1977 et a élaboré ses buts et objectifs.

Voici en bref les principaux objectifs de L'AFNOO : mettre sur pied des programmes liés au bien-être culturel, éducatif, économique et politique des francophones; informer les groupes membres de ces objectifs et leur demander une étroite collaboration afin de pouvoir affirmer l'identité francophone en Ontario. Il importe d'établir un lien avec les autres organisations et de demeurer visible dans la communauté. Les francophones doivent participer activement au développement communautaire et à divers programmes. Il est très important de recueillir des fonds afin de bien gérer ces programmes.

L'AFNOO est un organisme cadre (23 groupes membres) dans le Nord-Ouest et correspond à la région 1 du ministère de l'Éducation et de la Formation. La présidence nous représente à l'ACFO (Association canadienne française de l'Ontario) provinciale. Les réunions du conseil exécutif et celles du conseil administratif nous permettent de mettre à jour notre planification et nos dossiers.

116, rue May nord

Thunder Bay (Ontario)

P7C 3P1

Avril 1995

# LA FRANCOPHONIE C'EST NOUS ...



## Vivre en français à Thunder Bay

✽

### L'Association des Francophones du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario (AFNOO)

Une de nos priorités est d'œuvrer au niveau politique afin de conserver et d'améliorer nos services en français.

Notre organisation prête gratuitement des livres, des revues et des vidéocassettes en français. Nous publions également un journal mensuel, "Le Relais", qui est distribué à 1200 familles de la région. Par le biais de nos 23 groupes membres répartis dans tout le Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario, nous vous offrons des services d'information au sujet des écoles, des églises, des clubs, des activités, etc.

Tél. : 622-2767

✽

### L'ACCUEIL FRANCOPHONE DE THUNDER BAY

Cet organisme a été créé en 1986 afin d'aider les francophones à se procurer des services médicaux et sociaux dans leur propre langue. L'Accueil offre des services d'interprétation, des visites aux clients francophones hospitalisés, aux personnels des maisons de soins infirmiers et des foyers pour personnes âgées, fait la traduction de documents pour les organismes, oriente les clients dans la ville de Thunder Bay pour les rendez-vous médicaux et aide à la recherche d'hébergement temporaire à prix modique.

Tél. : 622-2262

✽

✽

### LE GROUPE FÉMININ PLURI-ELLES

Ce groupe permet aux femmes francophones de se rencontrer une fois par mois pour aborder des sujets tels que la loi familiale, l'éducation, l'aide à l'emploi, les pensions, la prévention de la violence, bref, des sujets qui touchent de près les femmes. Bien souvent, c'est une personne ressource qui anime les discussions.

La carte de membre annuelle coûte 5,00 \$ et vous donne droit, lors de chaque réunion, à une entrée gratuite et à un goûter.

Tél. : 622-2767

✽

### Le Comité des femmes francophones du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario (CFFNOO)

Le Comité a pour but d'aider les groupes à se concerter et de coordonner l'action communautaire pour assurer le mieux-être des femmes francophones de la région. Le CFFNOO organise des forums, des séances de formation et offre de l'information et des ressources au sujet de la violence et de l'agression à caractère sexuel. Nous travaillons pour la mise en œuvre d'une ligne info-détresse 1 800 pour le Nord-Ouest.

TÉL. : 622-2262

✽

✽

### LE CLUB CANADIEN FRANÇAIS

Le Club canadien français dont le siège est situé au 116, rue May nord, organise surtout des activités sociales telles que danses, promenades en traineau, 4pluchette de bié d'Inde, feux de camp, etc.

Vous pouvez également vous joindre à la ligue de quilles francophone et bilingue les vendredis soir de 19 h à 21 h au Play Time Lane, Red River Road.

Tél. : 622-2767 ou 1 (807) 933-4868

✽

### L'ÉCOLE CATHOLIQUE FRANCO-SUPÉRIEUR

L'unique école française de Thunder Bay située au 2645 Donald est, offre tous les cours en français de la maternelle à la 8<sup>e</sup> année.

Tél. : 621-6547

✽

### L'ASSOCIATION PARENTS-ENSEIGNANTS ES

L'A.P.E. de l'école Franco-Supérieur travaille au bien-être des élèves. Des parents bénévoles participent aux levées de fonds, aux excursions, aux différentes activités proposées par les professeurs. Les bénévoles sont toujours bienvenus. Si vous désirez vous joindre à ce groupe, présentez-vous à l'École Catholique Franco-Supérieur 2645 Donald Est et laissez-y votre nom.

✽

### L'ÉCOLE SECONDAIRE SAINT-IGNATIUS

La section de langue française de cette école offre aux élèves un certain nombre de cours en français. Pour de plus amples renseignements, composez le 344-8433.

## Why Should You Join?

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact one of us!

Don Bemko .....	475-3441
Ruth Berzel .....	346-0943
Donna Carew .....	622-9166
George Fillion .....	622-2870
Judy LeFevre .....	622-7920
Alex Matheson .....	344-3160
Yves Prévost .....	473-4350

### Mission of a Toastmasters Club

*The mission of a Toastmasters Club is to provide a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which every member has the opportunity to develop communication and leadership skills, which in turn foster self-confidence and personal growth.*



## Thunder Bay Francophone Toastmasters Club

We would like you to join the Thunder Bay Francophone Toastmasters Club...

### Why should you?

Because, through the Francophone Toastmasters Club you will:

1. Improve your communication skills.
2. Improve your leadership skills.
3. Build your self-confidence through involvement and achievement.
4. Use and maintain your French language skills.

### You will...

Improve your communication skills by

- Presenting prepared manual speeches.
- Speaking impromptu.
- Speaking one-on-one.
- Developing your listening skills.

Improve your leadership skills by

- Organizing and chairing meetings.
- Organizing special events like speech contests, debates, guest nights and educational sessions.
- Taking on a club executive position, such as President, Vice President of Education, Membership or Public Relations, Secretary, Treasurer or Sergeant-at-Arms.
- Getting involved in Toastmasters events outside of your club, such as training sessions, educational workshops, speech contests and conferences.
- Taking on leadership roles outside of your club: Area Governor, Division Governor, Governor Assistant and others.

Increase your self-confidence through personal achievement by

- Taking on duties at Toastmasters meetings, completing speeches from your Communication and Leadership manual, or filling an executive position with your club.
- Through every achievement you will gain more confidence and greater skills.

Use and Maintain your French Language Skills by

- Participating in weekly French meetings.
- Preparing and delivering presentations in French.
- Meeting and networking with other Francophones.



**LE CENTRE  
D'ALPHABÉTISATION  
ALPHA  
THUNDER BAY**



**UN SIMPLE  
COUP DE FIL  
ET C'EST PARTI!**

**VEZ AMÉLIORER  
VOS CAPACITÉS  
DE  
LECTURE  
D'ÉCRITURE  
OU DE  
CALCUL POUR:**

**VOUS LE POUVEZ  
SI VOUS PENSEZ  
EN ÊTRE CAPABLE**

**LECTURE**

\*LIRE LE JOURNAL

\*REMPLIR UN FORMULAIRE

\*REMPLIR UNE DEMANDE D'EMPLOI

\*FAIRE UN CHEQUE

\*AIDER VOS ENFANTS À FAIRE  
LEURS DEVOIRS

\*SORTIR DE L'ISOLEMENT

\*AUGMENTER VOS CONNAISSANCES

**ÉCRITURE**

**CALCUL**

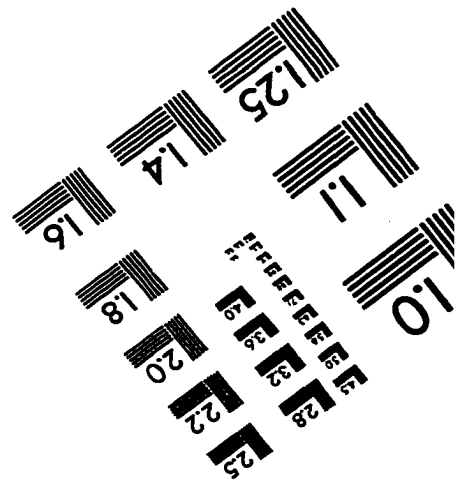
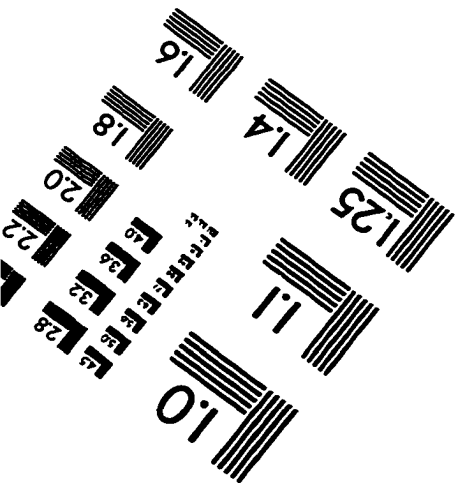
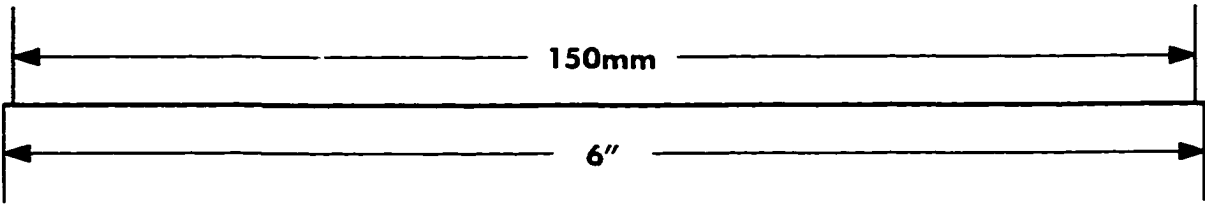
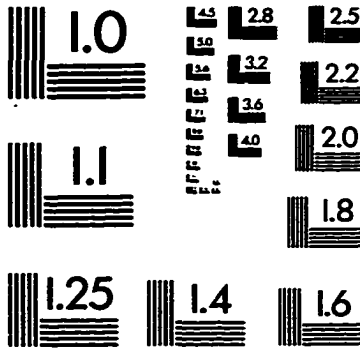
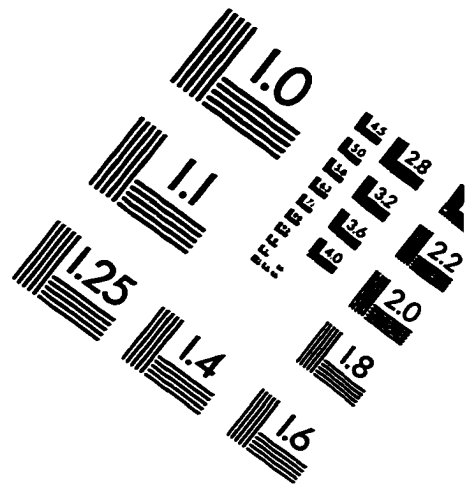
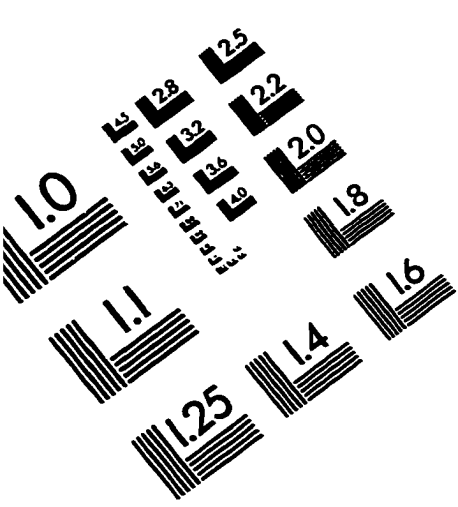
**ENVIRON 25% DES FRANCOPHONES  
DE THUNDER BAY  
ONT UN TAUX DE SCOLARITÉ  
INFÉRIEUR À LA 9<sup>e</sup> ANNÉE**

**623-0455**

**C'EST GRATUIT.**

**À DIFFÉRENTS NIVEAUX**

# IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



**APPLIED IMAGE, Inc**  
1653 East Main Street  
Rochester, NY 14609 USA  
Phone: 716/482-0300  
Fax: 716/288-5989

© 1993, Applied Image, Inc., All Rights Reserved