

French & English in Dieppe (NB)

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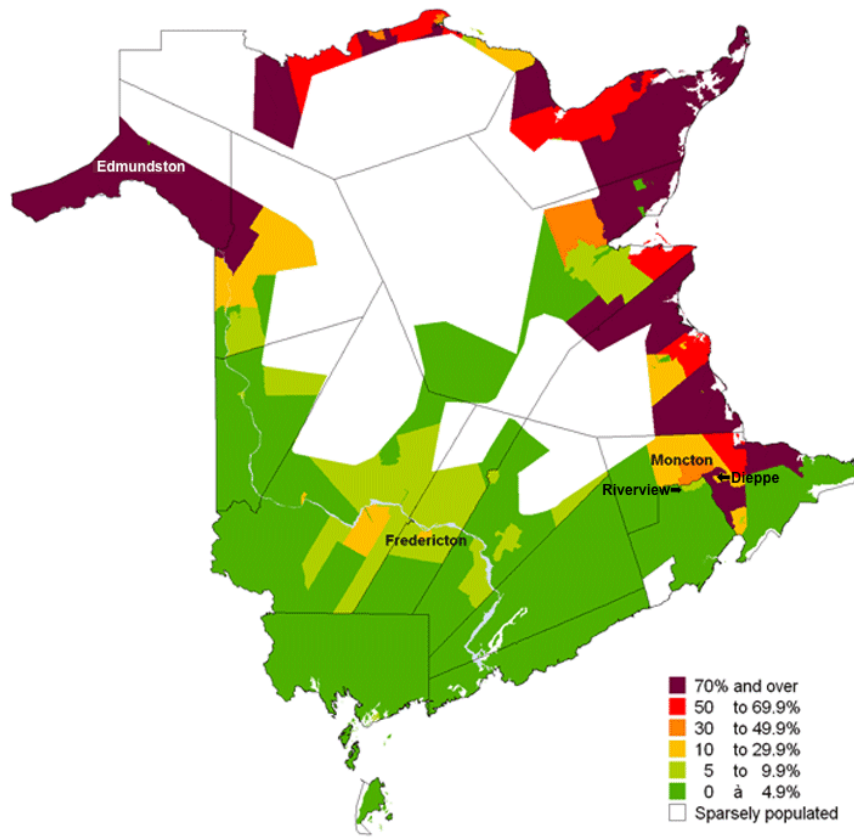
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Le présent article décrit la situation linguistique à Dieppe. À la fois dernière ville francophone au sud-est de l'arc acadien et immédiate banlieue de la ville de Moncton, elle héberge une majorité de francophones en contact permanent avec la communauté anglophone, majoritaire dans la province du Nouveau-Brunswick. Le continuum linguistique est le plus étendu possible, allant de locuteurs unilingues français à des locuteurs unilingues anglais, en passant par des locuteurs parfaitement bilingues. À l'aide de différentes sources (sondages de Statistiques Canada, sondages municipaux et enquête de terrain), nous tentons de dresser le portrait des communautés francophones et anglophones, ainsi que des relations qu'elles entretiennent. Se dessine une relation plutôt apaisée, mais plus instable qu'on l'imagine de prime abord.

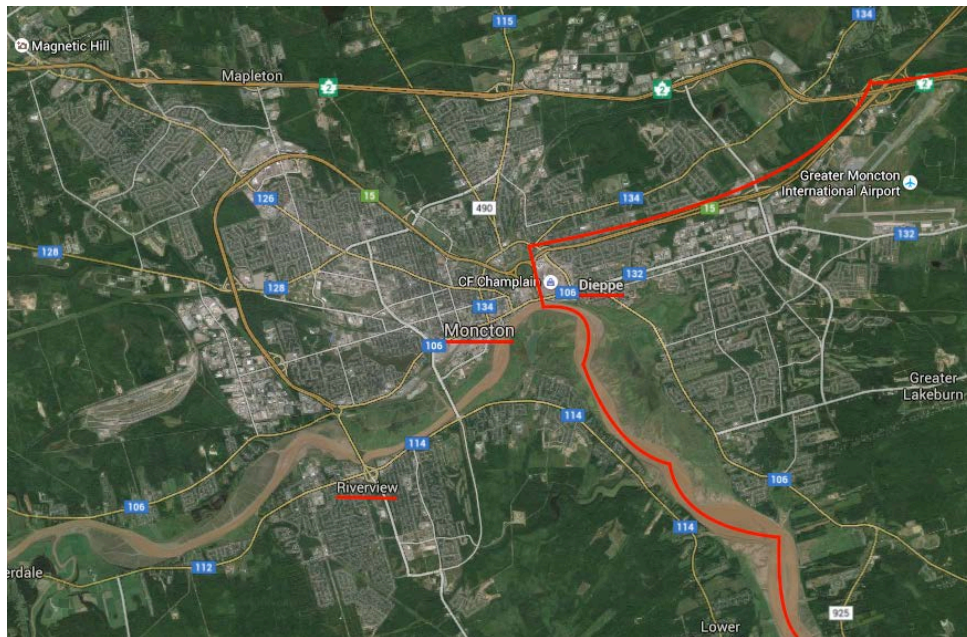
1. Introduction

Dieppe is a Canadian city in the southwestern part of the francophone area of New Brunswick, located in the immediate suburb of Moncton, which is the largest city of the province (Map 1). Even though the province of New Brunswick and the city of Moncton are officially bilingual, French is the mother tongue of less than a third of the inhabitants, whereas more than 70% of Dieppe's citizens are native French speakers. Therefore, Dieppe can be seen as the gate offering access to urban life for the francophone population of the mostly rural north-west part of the province.

Despite the existence of the Greater Moncton Census Metropolitan Area, which encompasses Moncton, Riverview and Dieppe, we had the impression during our visit that Dieppe is not merely a neighbourhood within a homogeneous political and cultural unit, but rather a peninsula. On top of the linguistic situation, various geographical factors prevent any urban continuity. The Petitcodiac River clearly separates Riverview from the two other cities, and especially from Dieppe, from which there is no bridge. Detached from Riverview on its eastern border, Dieppe is also separated from Moncton to the east by a huge shopping mall (CF Champlain), and to the north by the Route 15, which can only be crossed at the eastern and the western extremities of the city (Map 2). Dieppe is therefore simultaneously a suburban town of a greater ensemble, an entry point for the francophone hinterland, and a centre in itself, making it a pretty unique city in New Brunswick and in Canada.



Map 1. Percentage of the population with French as first official language spoken by census subdivisions, 2006.



Map 2. Greater Moncton Census Metropolitan Area.

2. Sources and methodology

The present article draws part of its data from questionnaires prepared by the students of the Université de Neuchâtel (we joined the study trip too late to help), which were completed by random passers-by in the streets of Dieppe. A detailed description of the questionnaire can be found in the article written by Julie Perret (this volume), who carried out exactly the same survey as us in Riverview, the English-speaking counterpart of Dieppe.

In addition to Perret's work, the results from our survey can be contrasted with two other sources of information. The first ones are the results from Statistics Canada (hereunder StatCan), which undertakes countrywide censuses every five years, and carries out regular surveys on specific topics, such as francophones in New Brunswick (Lepage, Bouchard-Coulombe & Chavez 2011). All the results are published in both in English and in French.

The second important source of information, which is specific to Dieppe, the "Sondage auprès des citoyens et citoyennes", is commissioned by the municipality, and was published in 2011 and 2015. These surveys take the form of analytical reports, but, on request, the city hall also provides the raw data¹, with tables breaking down the answers into various categories such as age, gender, income, education and language. This second format provides interesting information that can only be superficially used in the present article, but which would be interesting to properly decipher in a future study.

We thought that our survey should confront these different yet complementary sets of data for two reasons. The first one is to assess the representativeness of our sample, the second one is to illustrate with actual cases the results shown in the tables of big surveys. In doing so, we hope to better understand the linguistic dynamics at work in Dieppe, and especially the interactions between anglophones and francophones that we would like to portray in the present article.

2.1 *Limits*

The help of the group has been at the same time the strength and the weakness of our research. Since most of the group helped us during one day, we can rely on a much greater set of questionnaires than if we had been on our own. However, (1) the fact that almost nobody had previous experience conducting sociolinguistic interviews led to significant mistakes. (2) The command of English of some members of the group was a serious impediment during our fieldwork: the inability to speak English slants the results by increasing the amount of francophones in the sample of respondents, since anglophones who are not confident enough in French are more likely to turn

¹ We would like to thank M. Luc Richard of the city of Dieppe for sending us the documents.

down the offer to participate². (3) Due to the impossibility of carrying a pre-inquiry, some adjustments had to be improvised, and it is therefore impossible to compare results of questions that were not systematically asked. (4) Some important problems in the questionnaires were not systematically corrected, and the solutions found by the interviewers did not always correspond.

Question 12 exemplifies some of the problems we have been confronted with. The question was: "Do you think it is an advantage or a handicap being an English speaker [if the respondent is a francophone: a French speaker] in Riverview?". (1) Such a question does not address the situation of Dieppe, and the name of the town was not systematically adapted. (2) According to the respondents, the problem is not really to be an English or a French speaker, but to be unilingual, since those who speak only one language are the true linguistic minority. Considering the fact that Dieppe is a French-speaking town, we tried to discuss the case of unilingual English speakers, but the situation of unilingual French speakers would also need to be addressed. (3) The questionnaire offered a closed-ended answer (yes/no) to a question discussing "advantages" and "disadvantages", which is nonsensical.

3. Investigation process

One day before the day spent with the group, we went on our own to conduct interviews in Dieppe's public places (bars, restaurants, mall, city hall, etc.). As it was a Sunday, we assumed that people would have more time to talk, but the streets were rather empty, and our work on Monday turned out to be far more efficient.

Our total lack of experience of the interview technique remained problematic until the end of our stay, but the few days spent interviewing passers-by in Québec and Caraquet prior to our arrival in Dieppe did teach us a few things. One of them is that if we let people fill out the questionnaires on their own, they tend not to answer to all the questions (especially open-ended ones), so we tried as often as possible to have a conversation, while writing down their answers. The idea was to move from a simple list of questions to a semi-structured interview to get as much information as possible. A great majority had no problem with us recording the discussion, which was of a considerable help afterwards to process the data back in Europe.

In our view, a discussion delivers much more information for two main reasons. First, trust is not earned instantly, and some respondents who are afraid of being politically incorrect need time to go beyond classical answers and express strong criticism of the situation (e.g. linguistic discrimination on the labour market). Second, discussing with the respondent about his or her

² This was particularly true for recorded interviews. Moreover, if there was a French and an English version of the questionnaire, we did not have enough copies of the English one.

acquaintances is the fastest way to obtain additional information about marginal cases that are rare but interesting to study (unilingual speakers, discrimination, complete assimilation, etc.).

4. Proportions (growth and migration)

We have 48 questionnaires with approximately the same amount of men (23) and women (25). In the sample, only one person has been speaking French and English with both her parents and her grandparents³ (2%), nine were anglophones (19%) and 37 francophones (79%) — only two being unilingual speakers. Unfortunately, we did not ask systematically about the place of residence: it is therefore impossible to isolate Dieppe citizens and differentiate their answers from the others. Such a distribution is however representative of the population of Dieppe according to StatCan:

	2006 census		2011 census		Evolution
Population	18,320 (18,565 according to the 2011 census)		23,310 (population surveyed: 22,885)		+27.2%
French	13,600	74.2%	16,560	72.4%	+21.8 %
English	4,185	22.8%	5,335	23.3%	+27.5 %
Non-official language	355	1.9%	480	2.1%	+35.2%

Table 1. Mother tongue in Dieppe (StatCan).

These figures might explain the presence of two unilingual speakers in our sample — one francophone and one anglophone. According to StatCan, Dieppe is by far the city with the highest growth in New Brunswick: +27.2%, a much faster pace than neighbouring cities like Moncton (+7.7%) or Riverview (+7.3%). The population jumped from 18,320 to 23,310 inhabitants in five years, and now clearly outweighs Riverview (23,310 vs. 19,128 inhabitants) even though the latter was still bigger in 2001 (14,951 vs. 17,832 inhabitants)⁴. Linguistic contact zones being by definition exceptions, most of this migration logically originates from unilingual areas, where people can be bilingual, but to a lesser degree.

Driven by a logic of geographical concentration (Roy & Cao 2013), most of the immigrants are francophone, which probably helps Dieppe keep a stable linguistic distribution between French and English native speakers ($\approx 75\%$ vs. $\approx 25\%$), despite the fact that the city remains under the assimilation threshold of 88% (Castonguay & Marion 1974: 24). Our interviewees rightly locate the

³ She has been speaking French and English with her siblings, parents and grand-parents.

⁴ On the demographic growth in Greater Moncton (Allain 2006: 98-100).

origin of these migrants in Québec or in other areas of New Brunswick (Beaudin & Forgues 2006: 196; Allain 2006: 100; Beaudin, Forgues & Guignard-Noël 2013)⁵ where English is less vital than in Dieppe, such as Edmundston and the northern part of the province. This explanation is corroborated by our survey: one young woman from the North could not speak English, one young man from Edmundston admitted his difficulty to speak English, and one woman gave the example of her mother who had arrived from Québec in 2000, and whose English is not good enough to avoid problems with the anglophone community.

However, a significant proportion of the migration is also anglophone: the area of Moncton-Richibucto is now the second most popular destination for anglophone migrants after Fredericton-Oromocto (Forgues, Beaudin, Guignard-Noël & Boudreau 2009: 21). If the percentage of unilingual French speakers has diminished between 2006 and 2011 (-21%) to represent 9.1% of the population (2,240 persons), the amount of unilingual English speakers has increased quantitatively (2,835 vs. 3,700) and statistically (15.5% vs. 16.2%) during the same period. The unilingual English native speaker we interviewed is therefore a pretty typical case: a commuter originating from Moncton, now living in Shediac with her French-speaking husband, and working in Dieppe.

Finally, knowing the importance of immigration from abroad in Canada, we tried to interview recent immigrants originating from francophone and non-francophone countries. While the former cases were bilingual (two respondents from the Maghreb), the latter (all from Korea⁶) were not and refused to answer our questions. Their supposed unfriendliness towards French was pointed out by a respondent (Violette 2014: 138)⁷.

5. Linguistic practices with relatives

When looking at StatCan's figures concerning the languages spoken most often at home (table 2), one realises that the quantity of people that speak English is higher than the number of people whose mother tongue is English (+4.3 percentage point in 2011). This could be the sign of a facilitated shift towards English from the francophones, more at ease in their second

⁵ Migration from the northern parts of New Brunswick by young francophones is well known and thoroughly studied.

⁶ Korean is the first most common non-official mother tongue in Dieppe (25.5% of non-official language mother-tongue population)

⁷ Such a remark partly contradicts Isabelle Violette, according to whom "n'étant pas construits comme membres de la francophonie, les immigrants coréens ne semblent pas susciter d'attentes particulières de la part des nationalistes acadiens."

According to the research of Leyla Sall, the statement of our respondent as well as our experience should be nuanced. He indeed quotes a Korean migrant explaining that "mon mari et moi [sommes venus] au Canada pour que nos enfants étudient ici et apprennent le français et l'anglais" (Sall 2015: 51).

language than their anglophone counterparts: when household members have different linguistic backgrounds, English would be favoured. At home, French rises in numbers (+2,485) but declines slightly in percentage (-3.3 percentage points) between the censuses of 2006 and 2011.

	2006 census		2011 census		Evolution
Population	18,320 (18,565 according to the 2011 census)		23,310 (population surveyed: 22,885)		
French	13,050	71.2%	15,535	67.9%	+19%
English	4,960	27.1%	6,455	28.2%	+30.1%

Table 2. Language spoken most often at home (StatCan).

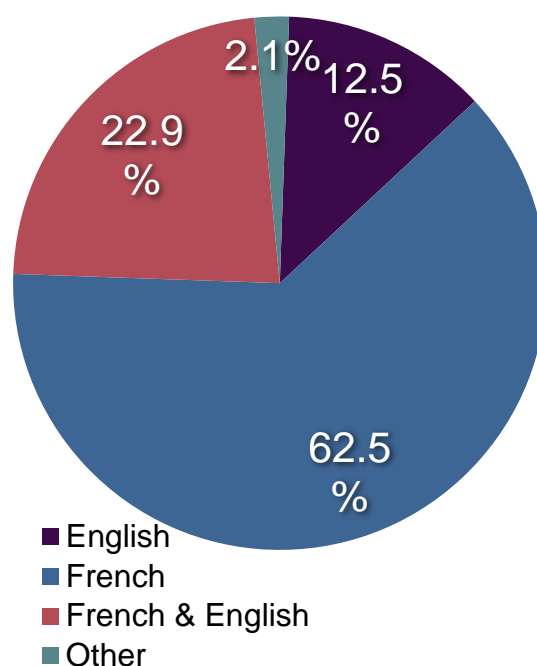
These figures imply a situation of bilingualism in some households that is not properly assessed. Unlike the statistics of StatCan, our questionnaire proposed the option "French & English", which offered us better insight into this question (chart 1).

When comparing the proportion of bilingual (22.9%, i.e. 11 out of 48) and anglophone (12.5%, i.e. 6) households (total=35.4%) to the proportion of English native speakers in our sample (19%), it seems that bilingualism at home does not necessarily imply a prevalence of English in everyday life with time: one can speak English at home, and consider himself a francophone (Castonguay 2005: 480)⁸. Four possible outcomes are attested:

Assimilation: a respondent told us that her husband, who only had a francophone father, barely understands French and does not speak it.

Continuity of bilingualism: one woman who spoke the two languages with her grandparents, parents and siblings still speaks both languages with her siblings, at work and in her everyday life.

Chart 1. Language(s) spoken with the parents (UniNe survey).



⁸ Bilingualism has indeed been analysed as an additional skill in NB and Québec, and not a transitory step towards Anglicisation like in other provinces.

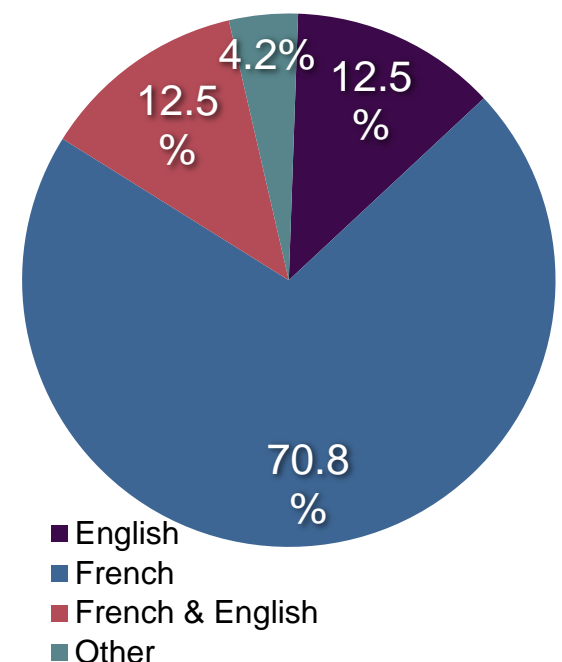
Complete retention: one woman, who grew up in a bilingual family, now speaks French with her parents and her siblings, which was not the case during her childhood, and uses more French than English in her everyday life.

Partial retention: one young man who grew up in a bilingual family now feels much more confident in English, despite the fact that his francophone mother made sure he attended a French immersion program: the language he now uses the most, including with his siblings, is English.

In this last case, the respondent also stated that his French grandparents were speaking French to him. If it was apparently not enough to retain a complete fluency in this language, the role of the grandparents remains crucial in other cases. The story of a young man who grew up in an English-speaking household, but who spoke enough French with his francophone grandparents that he is now completely fluent, attests a possible compensation of the vertical transmission (the parents) by an intrafamilial oblique transmission (the grandparents) of the language (Vézina & Houle 2014)⁹.

Indeed, it seems that the grandparents can counterbalance the action of the parents, who would be the weak point of the transmission of the language (chart 2). Since the amount of people only speaking French with their grandparents (70.8%, i.e. 34 out of 48) is higher than the one of people speaking French with their parents (62.5%, i.e. 30 out of 48), we cannot elude the possibility that bilingualism was introduced by one francophone parent who (partly) spoke English to his children. The questionnaire does not specify if the respondent had contacts with only one side of his family or if one of the parent actually is a step-parent (both are possible), but the story of a woman coming from a francophone family and whose mother was totally assimilated to the point that she now speaks English with her daughter confirms the possibility of a (total or partial) "linguistic conversion" of a francophone parent.

Chart 2. Language(s) spoken with the grand-parents (UniNe survey).



6. Linguistic practices at work, with friends and in shops

It is a known fact that the retention of English (98.6%) is higher than the retention of French (87.3%) (Pépin-Fillon 2013: 28) — a fact confirmed by our survey, according to which three respondents only manifest a partial retention

⁹ On the oblique transmission and the Cavalli-Sforza model in Canada.

of French. However, our last example proves that this situation should not be only attributed to linguistic practices at home. An extreme but edifying case found among our respondents is the following: a young man who spoke French in his childhood with his parents and his grandparents, and who grew up in the French town of Shediac eventually "did not grasp the language". He now speaks English with his parents and his siblings — interestingly, the situation is the same for his brother, but not for his sister, who still speaks French (Vézina & Houle 2014: 424)¹⁰. In this particular case, it is clear that we have to attribute this change to external factors.

Unfortunately, StatCan does not propose any figures about the language used most often in everyday life, and only the 2006 census studies the language used most often at work (chart 3).

Chart 3. Language used most often at work (StatCan 2006 census).

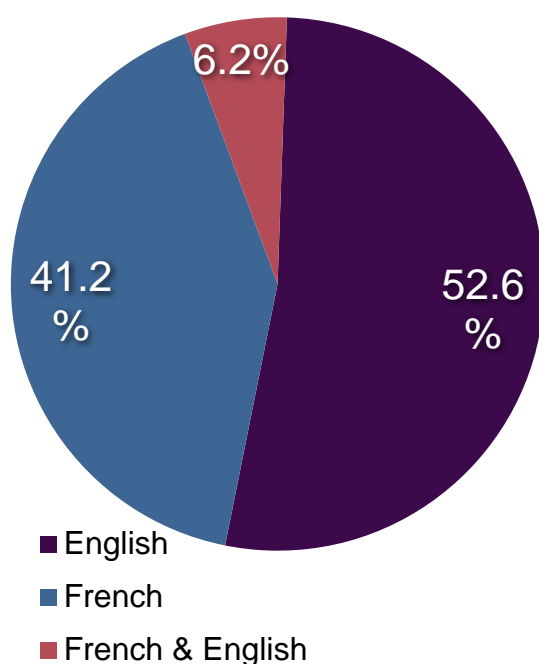
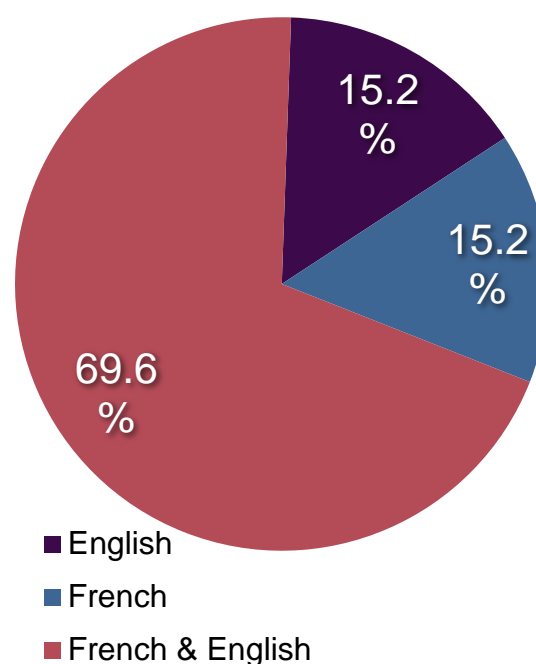


Chart 4. Language used at work (UniNe survey).



These figures require two additional remarks. First, it would be interesting to disentangle (when relevant) colleagues from customers — which is very important since people usually know the mother tongue of the former (LeBlanc 2006, 2014)¹¹, but not the one of the latter, with whom they could end up speaking English even if they are both francophones. Second, StatCan figures from 2006 once again imply a practice of bilingualism that is not properly

¹⁰ The retention rate is indeed slightly higher for girls than for boys.

¹¹ Recent studies in a public ministry (LeBlanc 2006: 125) and in a call centre (LeBlanc 2014: 162) show that francophone colleagues usually speak French together in an anglophone/bilingual environment.

assessed, and that is only revealed if asked for languages used at work (chart 4), and not for the one language used most often. If our survey does not clarify the first point, it does provide three answers to the second question. (1) Bilingualism tends to be the norm (69.6%, i.e. 32 out of 46). (2) The amount of people using only English (15.2%, i.e. 7) is slightly lower than the amount of Dieppe citizens speaking English (23.3%). (3) The amount of people using only French (15.2%, i.e. 7) is dramatically lower than the amount of Dieppe citizens speaking French (72.4%).

This asymmetrical bilingualism where French ends up being a secondary language could receive three different explanations that are not mutually exclusive. (1) At a general level, everyone makes an effort, but French native speakers make a bigger one. (2) Externally, Dieppe is caught up by a linguistic environment where English prevails. (3) Internally, English is spoken by French native speakers amongst themselves. This last idea brings back our previous hypothesis that English is introduced by French speakers in their own linguistic community. In this particular case, our idea is that some francophones tend to speak English when they do not know what the mother tongue of their interlocutor is, which may be French, both in a minority (Bahi & Forgues 2015: 174; Leclerc 2015)¹² and a majority context.

The problem is that the command of English of some francophones does not allow other French native speakers to recognise them (Forgues, Bahi & Michaud 2011: 95)¹³: without obvious signs (e.g. starting the discussion in French), the entire discussion can be in English without noticing the linguistic background of the person they are talking to — and we witnessed several times such a linguistic misunderstanding during our interviews in shops. A way to address this problem could be to compare the languages used with friends (chart 5), whom the respondent obviously knows, and the language used in shops (chart 6), with salespersons they (a priori) do not always know.

¹² A study of linguistic practices in the (anglophone) Horizon Health Network of NB states that "les patients et les employés francophones ont tendance à communiquer en anglais, si bien que les répondants ne connaissent pas, bien souvent, l'importance de la présence de collègues ou de patients francophones dans les hôpitaux." (Bahi & Forgues). The case of francophones speaking English to a francophone employee/patient in a hospital despite an active offer of service in French is therefore not uncommon in NB (Leclerc).

¹³ When asked, respondents of our survey say that they usually cannot recognise a francophone from his/her accent, except in specific cases (e.g. migrants from the north of the province). The fact that 17% of the respondents declare that they deduce the mother tongue of their interlocutor from the accent in a recent survey on health services in French in several areas including NB is therefore strange.

Chart 5. Language used with friends
(UniNe survey).

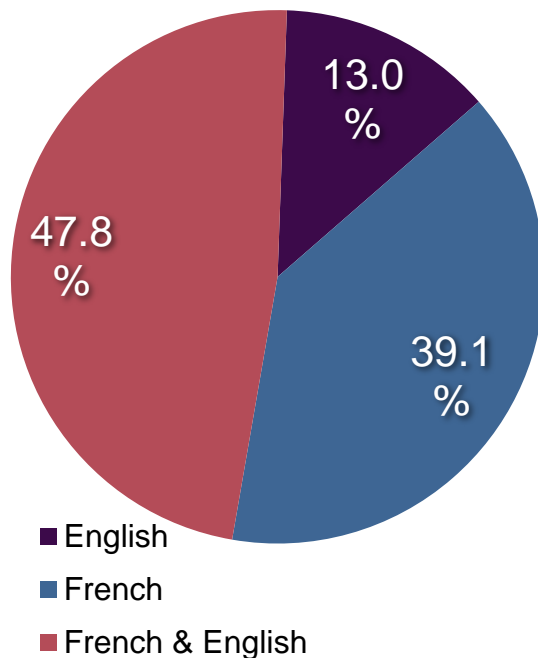
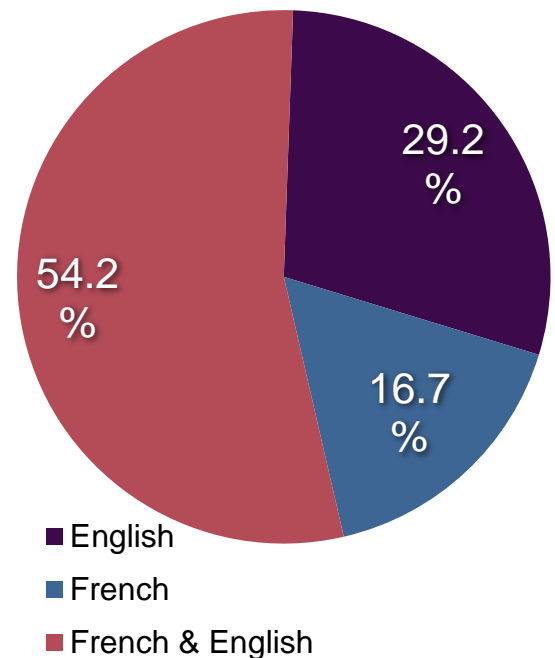


Chart 6. Language used in shops
(UniNe survey)



And indeed, when asked what language the respondents speak with their friends, French rises (39.1%, i.e. 18 out of 46), but when asked what language they use when shopping, French diminishes again (16.7%, i.e. 8 out of 48). However, such a proxy is not fully effective, for these figures could just show that French-speaking people have more French- than English-speaking friends, and that a lot of anglophones work in shops in Dieppe and its surroundings.

But if these two last explanations make sense, they do not invalidate our starting assumption, being that some francophones tend to use English rather than their mother tongue in case of linguistic indeterminacy. In our sample, French is by far the language used most often between friends (63.9%, i.e. 23 out of 36), confirming that most of our respondents have French-speaking friends. But, in a store, if the majority starts in French and switch to English if needed (only one speaks French no matter what the language of his interlocutor is), seven of the respondents who mostly speak French with their friends start the discussion in English with the clerk, one saying that it is easier, and another explaining that it is more efficient to do so. The idea that French native speakers deliberately abandon their language, without any (apparent) pressure of the English-speaking community, seems therefore relevant.

7. Dieppe in the eyes of its citizens

On a general level, the French-speaking community seems to pay a high price, partly abandoning its language on the altar of social cohesion. However, francophones are in part responsible of this situation¹⁴, and, above all, such a choice is not free of charge: it is made in return of advantages in the labour market, as we will later see, and administrative support for the sustainability of French (bilingual signage or administrative forms, etc.). This would explain why disputes over bilingual signage as well as concerns about the denunciation of the financial costs of bilingualism by anglophones was spontaneously mentioned three times by francophones.

At the level of Greater Moncton and the rest of the province, people who see big problems are a clear minority: one anglophone respondent seems worried by a hermetical barrier between the two communities, and another anglophone respondent thinks that a linguistic war is raging. On the contrary, seven respondents (two anglophones, five francophones) think the situation has improved, four (one anglophone, three francophones) adding that occasional tensions may remain. Two francophones mention the existence of rare tensions without mentioning any improvement, while eight francophones and one anglophone claim that the relations are smooth between the two communities.

Some respondents do not agree that the region of Moncton is bilingual, as one respondent considers that Moncton is English-speaking only. While five respondents consider that it is mostly anglophone, two consider it too anglophone, and three mention that there is a problem with service in French. The problem is that this situation of asymmetrical bilingualism is likely to persist, if not aggravate in a near future, even in Dieppe.

	2006 census		2011 census		Evolution
Population	18320 (18565 according to the 2011 census)		23310 (population surveyed: 22885)		+22.3%
French only	2305	12.6%	2240	9.8%	-2.8%
English only	2835	15.5%	3700	16.2%	+30.5%
French and English	13175	71.9%	16910	73.9%	+28.3%

Table 3. Knowledge of official languages in Dieppe (StatCan).

¹⁴ The Acadian reviewer – that we thank for this comment – has brought the following point to our attention: "[d]es rapports de domination font en sorte que les francophones n'ont souvent pas le choix de converser en français et ils ont souvent intériorisé l'idée que le français n'est pas l'équivalent de l'anglais pour toutes sortes de raisons".

When looking at the recent evolution of the official languages known in Dieppe (table 3), we see that the amount of people speaking only English is growing proportionally (+30.5%) and quantitatively (+865) while it is the opposite with French (-2.8%, i.e. -65), its native speakers tending toward increasing bilingualism.

This trend contradicts the wishes of our respondents: out of 37 people, 29 (78%) think that the ideal linguistic situation would be more bilingualism, and that the anglophones should make an effort to speak French — nine respondents adding that they already make efforts. Interestingly enough, anti-French behaviours come from the French community itself: 6 francophones out of 31 (19%) think that the linguistic situation should not change and that anglophones should not make an effort. One French native speaker even claims that only the francophones should be the ones making the effort, and the anglophone whose parents are both French declares that he thought for a long time that an English unilingual situation would be ideal.

Despite the fact that linguistic tendencies go against the wishes of the majority, the citizens of Dieppe seem happy in their city. No matter what the linguistic background is, more than 80% of the people would recommend settling in Dieppe to someone coming to New Brunswick (table 4).

Home language	French		English		Both	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Total	309	77.3%	68	17%	23	5.7%
I (completely) agree	290	94%	60	88%	18	80%
I (completely) disagree	19	6%	8	12%	5	20%

Table 4. Would recommend someone to settle in Dieppe? (Dieppe survey)¹⁵

Astonishingly, respondents who speak English and French at home seem however less happy than those who speak only French in a city where they can benefit to the maximum from their linguistic skills¹⁶ — knowing maybe that these skills would be even more valuable in a place where they are rarer¹⁷.

¹⁵ Sondage auprès des citoyens et citoyennes, 2015, raw data, table 8a.

The survey only gives hard numbers for the people surveyed in each of the three categories (French, English and bilingual). We reconstitute the hard numbers of people agreeing or disagreeing from the percentages given by the survey.

¹⁶ According to the χ^2 test, the difference between anglophones and francophones (94% vs. 98%), and between anglophones and bilingual speakers (88% vs. 80%) is too small to be really significant. These statistics must to be used with precautions.

¹⁷ The fact that they are less qualified than the rest of the population (cf. table 6), and therefore earn less than the average wage despite their linguistic skills could explain such a discontentment.

8. The criticisms of the anglophones

This relatively peaceful relationship is far from being idyllic. Field experience reveals that the anglophone community also expresses strong criticisms about the current situation. As we have already said, they do not demand unilingualism but a better access to bilingualism for the English native speakers: according to them, bilingual schools do not accept enough students, whose proficiency in French is not good enough at the end of high school to compete with native French speakers on the job market anyway¹⁸. Speaking French is indeed an asset according to French advocacy groups: the unemployment rate for bilinguals is three percent lower than it is for Canadians who only speak English, and the take home pay is 10 percent higher on average (Campbell 2013) — an argument we will come back to in detail later.

One English native speaker commuting between Dieppe and a remote anglophone village explains that the bilingual offer is relatively poor outside Greater Moncton Census Metropolitan Area — i.e. Moncton and its two suburban towns: the francophone Dieppe and its anglophone counterpart Riverview. She considers that the inhabitants of these villages play the same game but without equivalent cards: they are fully aware of the importance of mastering French if they want to climb the social (and financial) ladder, but they consider that there are fewer tools available to them to tackle the linguistic problem.

We must also impart here that criticisms do not express themselves easily: some tensions remain hidden, and it is only during long discussions, after the confidence of the interviewee has been gained, that he/she may express vehemently his/her discontentment, mainly because of the difficulty to get jobs for English native speakers. Indeed, most bilingual French native speakers have a better command of their secondary language than their anglophone counterpart, who therefore end up considerably disadvantaged in a labour market where bilingualism is a key asset.

The fear of a potential "reverse discrimination" (Forgues, Bahi & Michaud 2011: 157) against the anglophones seems present among English native speakers, who are sometimes afraid to lose their job for linguistic (but not professional) reasons (Forgues, Bahi & Michaud 2011: 65)¹⁹. Potential solutions such as employers not forcing their employee or reserving half of the jobs for the anglophones were mentioned each time once. If the francophones are aware of this problem (seven spontaneously mention the difficulty to get a

¹⁸ The enrolment in French immersion program is higher in New Brunswick than anywhere else in Canada (32% in 2000 according to Allen 2004), but it now only begins in third year.

¹⁹ The fear of unilingual anglophone employees to lose their jobs partly explains the resistance to the implementation of bilingual policies. This was for instance the case at the Moncton hospital, maybe because of the former (but recent) maximalist attitude of the government and its excessive expectations.

job for unilingual English speakers), they seem to consider it normal, stating that anglophones just have to learn French, like they learned English.

If the fact that bilingual job seekers are at an advantage in New Brunswick is known and not exclusive to Dieppe, this city appears to have a specificity when we look at the average pay, which could also explain discontentment. While the salary is usually not higher for bilingual French native speakers than for unilingual English speakers in the province (LeBlanc 2014), anglophones (who tend to be unilingual) earn lower wages than francophones (who tend to be bilingual) in Dieppe.

Category	Francophones		Anglophones		Total	
	2011 (n≈299)	2014 (n≈310)	2011 (n≈70)	2014 (n≈64)	2011 (n≈400)	2014 (n≈400)
<30.000\$	10%	9%	11%	7%	10%	9%
30.000\$<60.000\$	26%	23%	37%	28%	29%	24%
60.000\$<90.000\$	22%	21%	31%	27%	23%	22%
>90.000\$	42%	47%	22%	37%	38%	44%

Table 5. Total household income (Dieppe survey, 2015: 4).

The figures of household incomes in Dieppe show that the percentage of anglophones in the top-earning category is clearly under the average (44%): less than 40% of them earn more than 90.000\$, while nearly half of the francophones fall into the same category (LeBlanc 2014).²⁰

The discontentment of native English speakers can therefore be explained by the fact that they earn less, but also that this situation is unusual for them: contrary to what can be found in recent studies, it is the Anglophones (Desjardin 2005) and not the Francophones (Forgues, Beaudin & Béland 2006: 2) who have an economic superiority where French is the dominant language. The problem is that if English speakers observe the problem properly, they do not explain it correctly: in Dieppe's case, there is a correlation but no causation between language and wage. Indeed, the level of education helps us better understand such a disparity: people who speak French at home have slightly more diplomas than those who speak English, and much more than those who speak the two languages (table 6).

²⁰ This situation seems special to Dieppe, for bilingual French native speakers tend to have the same average pay than unilingual English speakers (but not unilingual native French speakers, who are paid less) at a general level in NB. The advantage of being bilingual in finding employment seems however true.

Home language ("Langue d'usage")	French	English	Both
	2015 (n≈309)	2015 (n≈68)	2015 (n≈23)
Some middle or high school	7%	8%	17%
High School Diploma	14%	26%	22%
College, trade or technical school diploma or certificate	30%	24%	38%
University degree	49%	41%	23%

Table 6. Level of education (Dieppe survey, 2015: 72).

A drain brain from Acadie to English-speaking areas has been postulated to explain the presence of a more qualified and a better paid francophone population in anglophone counties like York or Sunbury (Beaudin & Leclerc 1993: 268; Desjardin 2005): an equivalent phenomenon within the French-speaking region, with a movement of educated people from rural to urban areas (rural flight), could explain a similar financial advantage in Dieppe.

People are therefore correct to notice a pay gap in Moncton, but it is only correlated to, and not caused by languages. The dynamic seems anyway to be in favour of the anglophones, and if the trend is confirmed, they will eventually catch up with their francophone counterparts.

9. The criticisms of the francophones

Among the francophone informers, the scarcity of anglophones able to speak French is frequently highlighted, and brings different reactions, which can be totally contradictory and sometimes excessive. Whereas one informer claims that no English native speaker has ever tried to speak French, another one states that she does not know one anglophone who does not try to improve it.

When analysing the reason of massive unilingualism among the anglophones, several French native respondents express harsh criticisms on the attitude of English native speakers (four respondents specifying that such reproaches only apply to a minority): they do not like French, they think that the francophones are inferior, they do not want to make the effort, they do not care (two respondents), they do not try, they think French is less important, they think it makes communication harder, they think it is useless and, finally, they "don't give a damn about the French" ("ils se foutent des Français"). On the contrary, 15 respondents think anglophones generally have a neutral (they are used to it) or positive (they like it) opinion of French.

Some French native respondents have also added that it is not always the fault of the anglophones. Six have pointed out the complexity of the French language as an obstacle to bilingualism. According to four of them, the anglophones do not try to learn the language because it is too hard, one adding that the grammar is too complex, and another one that such a complexity outweighs the advantages. Two respondents have also mentioned that their English-speaking friends find it hard to meet francophones who are patient enough to let them speak French, and therefore improve their skills, for it is much more efficient for francophones to switch to English²¹.

During the interviews, one anglophone respondent mentioned the importance of francophone immigration for the survival of French in New Brunswick, one francophone commenting that if such a dynamic exists, it is not sufficient — a analysis shared by francophone newspapers (Gravel 2013). In a province where francophones represent a third of the population, the numbers are indeed not satisfactory (table 7), especially when considering that the first official language spoken by new immigrants is massively English ($\approx 85\%$ in 2006 and 2011) and not French ($\approx 11\%$ in 2006 and 2011) (Pépin-Fillon 2013: 31-37).

	2006 census		2011 census		Evolution
Immigration	26,395		28,465		+7.8%
French	2,435	9.2%	2,530	8.9%	-3.9%
English	14,325	54.3%	15,070	52.9%	+5.2%
French and English	120	0.5%	60	0.2%	-50%

Table 7. Mother tongue of immigrants in New Brunswick (Pépin-Fillon 2013: 37).

Noticing both the disproportion and the negative dynamics, the province has very recently set up a plan to correct the situation²². However, making francophones come to Dieppe does not necessarily imply that they will stay: a respondent stated that some francophone immigrants have problems coping with the local bilingual situation, despite the potential help of the government²³, and eventually move to Québec to avoid bilingualism.

²¹ A similar attitude has already been noted in other surveys, such as in Boudreau & Gadet 1998: 58.

²² The province has just issued its first "New Brunswick francophone Immigration Action Plan" in 2014, which "aims to attract 33 per cent francophone immigrants through its Provincial Nominee Program by 2020 to better reflect the linguistic makeup of the province".

²³ Immigrant services of the federal state provide government-funded classes of French and English.

10. Conclusion

At first glance, all indicators are green: a French community in majority, administratively defended by the city, the province and the state, still growing in number and keeping its stand in proportion. Such a situation, backed up by a will to ease old tensions, has probably developed a feeling of confidence on the sustainability of this community that might be slightly too optimistic. Vitality and retention are lower for French than for English, and if bilingualism does rise (Pépin-Fillon 2013: 33)²⁴, it is mainly among francophones — knowing that bilingualism is not a stable condition and its linguistic resolution tends on the long term to favour English (Castonguay 2005: 480).

The problem is that in Canada, where English has a tremendous attraction power, the assimilation threshold is very high (88%) and the city of Dieppe has been constantly under it for quite some time now. With a population predominantly constituted of French native speakers, citizens of Dieppe could think that the situation is sustainable while it is not really. Massive immigration from francophone areas of the province has probably helped avoiding linguistic problems until now, but such a situation is not eternal and the city remains closer than it appears at first sight to a dynamic reversal unfavourable to francophones.

But there is no need to panic: the dynamics is as important as the situation itself, and for now the circle is still virtuous. Acadians have gained an important role in the economic development of Greater Moncton (Allain 2005), where French has been successfully imposed as a political language and where bilingual signage is slowly adopted (Roussel 2015). The fact that, despite difficulties, the great majority of the respondents (francophones and anglophones) seem sincerely attached to bilingualism is probably the most significant achievement. The French language cannot yet be at rest in itself, but we are (for now, slowly) getting closer to this goal.

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²⁴ In New Brunswick, the trend seems to reverse itself, bilingualism slipping below one-third in 2006.

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