MULTIPLE IDENTITIES AND SOCIAL COHESION IN QUEBEC: IMPLICATIONS FOR QUEBEC ENGLISH SPEAKING COMMUNITIES

Richard Bourhis is a member of the Society for Experimental Social Psychology and is Fellow of the Canadian Psychological Association and the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. He received the Robert C. Gardner Award for outstanding Research in bilingualism from the International Association of Language and Social Psychology and was finalist for the Canadian Race Relations Foundation award of excellence in anti-racism in Canada. He was director of the Concordia-UQAM Chair in Ethnic Studies and is presently Director of the Centre des etudes ethniques des universites montrealaises (CEETUM) at the Universite de Montreal, Canada.

ABSTRACT

This article shows that Québécois Anglophones and Immigrants who are Francophone and Anglophone have multiple identity profiles which differ from those of the dominant Québécois Francophone majority in Quebec. The study also shows that while Anglophones and Allophones feel threatened by the dominant Francophone majority, the latter feel more threatened by all minority outgroups. Other results show that bilingual and trilingual Allophones suffer income disadvantages ranging from 34% to 12% relative to unilingual Francophones, even when controlling for level of education and years of work experience in Quebec. Results suggest that Québécois Francophones remain imbued more with the psychology of a besieged minority than a dominant majority feeling responsible for its vulnerable minorities.

Personal and social identities provide individuals with a positive self-esteem, a sense of personal continuity, a framework of meaning through which people can understand the world, a way of distinguishing the self from others as individuals and as group members, and a sense of security and solidarity with members of the ingroup. Shared social identity can nourish group trust and altruism through connections of cultural, ethnic and linguistic linguistic similarity, thus contributing to social cohesion. However, shared social identity can also be used to glorify the ingroup, nourish fear of outgroups, mobilize intergroup rivalry through the demonization of outgroups defined as diluting or contaminating the authenticity of the ingroup on linguistic, ethnic or religious grounds. With the polarization of "us-them" categories often nurtured by nationalist ideologies, comes the tendency to essentialize the content of ingroup vs outgroup characteristics and values, to disparage outgroups on the basis of their category memberships and social identities. These processes along with competition over scarce resources, such as jobs and housing, help account for the development of prejudice and discrimination against outgroups such as immigrants and national minorities.

However, people also belong to multiple social identities by virtue of their age, gender, occupational status and group memberships based on language, ethnicity, religion and national origin. For instance in the Quebec setting, there is no fixed hierarchy in which a person will

always feel more strongly Anglophone than Muslim or Federalist. Different social identities will light up or switch off depending on the social context and the immediate situation in which people find themselves. Thus while a doctor may identify most as an Anglophone when working in Montreal, he may identify most as a Quebecker when attending a professional conference in Toronto, and feel most Canadian when travelling as a tourist in the USA. Thus multiple identities are situated and contextualized, although individuals do struggle to harmonize and integrate their multiple social identities within a coherent sense of the self. Through immigration and the growing recognition of national minorities and first nations, the reality of multiple group identities is the rule rather than the exception in most nation states of the world.

The issue of multiple group identities is especially salient for the English speaking communities of Quebec (ESCQ) who, as declining minorities, are faced with a dominant majority of Québécois Francophones who share French as a mother tongue and whose ethnically mixed ancestry is nevertheless constructed as being predominantly French Canadian and Catholic in background since the days of "La Nouvelle- France".

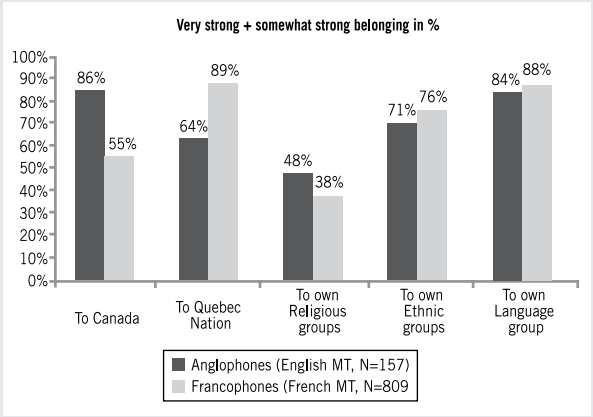
From a ruling economic elite up to the early 20th century, the Anglophones of Quebec have dropped to the status of a linguistic minority whose ethnic boundaries have become more permeable by including not only the old stock Scottish and Irish historical constituents but also immigrants rejected by the French Canadian and Catholic elites of the 19th and mid 20th century.

SENSE OF BELONGING AND MULTIPLE IDENTITIES

The multiple identities of Quebec Anglophones and Francophones were explored in a recent survey designed by Jack Jedwab, Director of the *Association of Canadian Studies*. The Leger poll was conducted with a representative sample of the Quebec population made up of French (N= 809) and English (N=157) mother tongue (MT) respondents sampled in Montreal and across the province.

As can be seen in Figure 1, results show that more Anglophones feel they strongly belong to Canada (86%) than do Francophones (55%). Conversely more Francophones (89%) have a strong sense of belonging to the Quebec Nation than do Anglophones (64%). Importantly, as great a proportion of Anglophones declared they had a strong feeling of belonging to their own language group (84%) as did Francophones (88%). Thus the vast majority of Quebec Anglophones and Francophones identify strongly with their own language group in the province. Likewise the majority of both Anglophones (71%) and Francophones (76%) strongly identify with their respective ethnic group. Finally, more Anglophones (48%) identified strongly with their religious group than did Francophones (38%). These results suggest that the 2008 hearings on religious 'reasonable accommodations' held by the Bouchard-Taylor Commission may not have focused on the most important element of group identification for the Quebec population. No wonder so many testimonials dealt more with language, ethnic and national identity than with religious considerations.

FIGURE 1. Anglophone and Francophone sense of belonging to multiple social identities



The Department of Canadian Heritage conducted a large survey of attitudes towards Canada's Official Languages published in 2006. The survey of the Canadian population included a sample of English mother tongue respondents residing in Quebec (N= 567) and a sample of French mother tongue Canadians (N= 1506) living in the rest of Canada (ROC). Results obtained with Francophones in the ROC showed that the vast majority of Francophones (76%) strongly identified with their Francophone community in their own region and also felt it was very important for them to be part of their Francophone community (81%). Importantly, results also showed that the majority of Quebec Anglophones (74%) strongly identified with their regional Anglophone community and also felt it was very important for them to be part of their own Anglophone community in Quebec (74%). Clearly, Anglophones in Quebec are as loyal and committed to their own distinct language community as are Francophones in the ROC. From a public policy perspective these linguistic identification results suggest that it is as imperative for the federal and provincial governments to maintain and develop the vitality of Anglophones in Quebec as it is to do so for Francophone communities across the rest of Canada.

Multiple identity studies were also conducted in Quebec with samples of Anglophone and Francophone mother tongue college students, as well as Francophone and Anglophone first and second generation immigrants attending CEGEPS on Montreal Island. These survey studies, though not representative of the overall Quebec population, had the advantage of controlling for the socio-economic status and educational level of students who represent the next generation of decision makers in the Province. Results presented herein are selected from more extensive questionnaires monitoring the acculturation orientations of host community and immigrant students attending French and English language CEGEPS in Montreal by Bourhis and colleagues. The students who took part in the studies were: 1) Anglophones (N=399) born in Quebec with English as a mother tongue and with both parents born in Quebec with English as their L1; 2) Francophones (N=637) born in Quebec with French as a mother tongue and with both parents born in Quebec also with French as a first language (L1); 3) first and second generation Anglophone immigrants with English as a mother tongue (N=473); 4) firsts and second generation Francophone immigrants with French as a mother tongue (N=103). Using a seven point scale, students rated how much they identified (7 = very much, 1 = not at all) with each of a series of group identities including: Québécois, Canadian, Francophone, Anglophone, immigrant, sovereignist, and federalist.

As can be seen in Figure 2, Québécois Francophones and Anglophones as well as Francophone and Anglophone immigrants show contrasting multiple identity profiles that have consequences for ethnic group relations in Quebec. Quebec Anglophones identify very strongly as Canadian (6.6), Anglophone (6.6) and federalist (5.6), moderately as Québécois (4.5) and not at all as sovereignist (1.4). Québec Francophones identify very strongly as Québécois (6.5) and Francophone (6.6) and moderately strongly as sovereignist (4.8); moderately as Canadian (4.3) and only a little as federalist (2.4). Francophone immigrants identify moderately strongly as Canadian (4.7) and Francophone (4.8), moderately as immigrant (4.1) and federalist (3.9). However Francophone immigrants, though attending French colleges, identify moderately weakly as Québécois (3.5) and Anglophone (3.3) and little as sovereignist (1.9). Anglophone immigrants identify moderately strongly as Canadian (5.1), Anglophone (5.1), immigrant (4.6) and federalist (4.7) but very little as Québécois (2.8), Francophone (2.4) and least as sovereignist (1.7). Thus, Quebec Anglophones as well as immigrants of Anglophone and Francophone background share in common their identification as Canadian and federalist and their rejection of Quebec sovereignty. As

FIGURE 2. Multiple Identities of Montreal College Students in Montreal

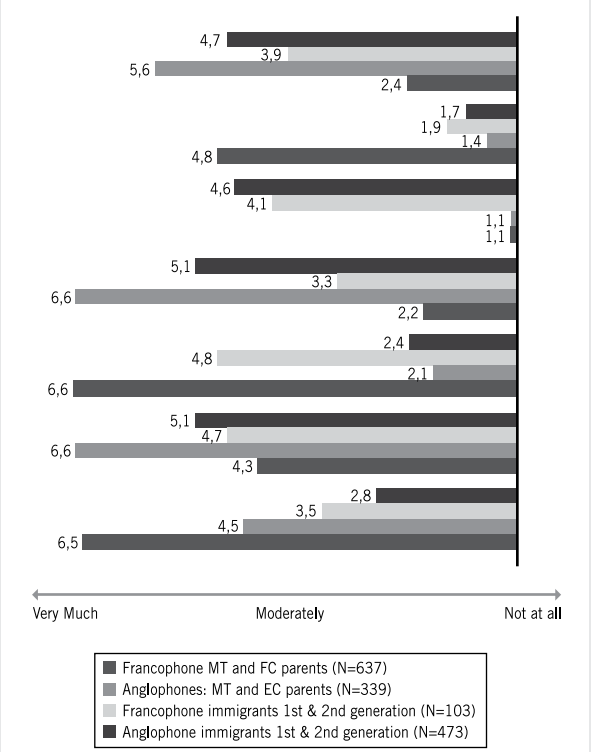
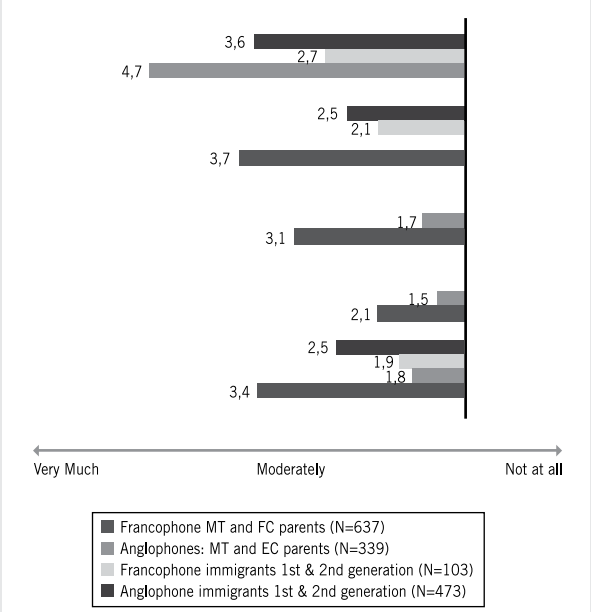


FIGURE 3. Feeling of threat from presence of various groups in Montreal



members of the dominant majority group in the Province, Québécois Francophones identify twice as strongly as sovereignst than as federalists, thus sustaining the reproduction of the classic 'two solitudes' on the political front in Quebec.

Immigrants identify less as Québécois than as Canadians suggesting that it is more difficult for them to gain a sense of belonging within the Francophone host majority than with the Anglophone minority in the Province. Studies have shown that host communities have an important role to play in the integration of immigrants. Members of host communities who endorse integrationist acculturation orientations towards immigrants are more likely to attract immigrants within their community than host communities who endorse less welcoming orientations such as assimilationism, segregationism and exclusionism. Acculturation studies with college students have shown that Québécois Anglophones tend to endorse more welcoming acculturation orientations towards immigrants than do Québécois Francophones.

FEELINGS OF THREAT FROM THE PRESENCE OF OUTGROUPS

The same four groups of college students then rated how threatened they felt by the presence of various ethnic groups in Quebec including immigrants in general, 'valued' and 'devalued' immigrants, as well as host majority Québécois Francophones and host minority Québécois Anglophones. For Francophone students the 'valued' immigrants were those from France while 'devalued' immigrants were visible minority Haitians. Note that both these French-speaking immigrants contribute to the French speaking majority in Quebec. For Anglophone respondents the 'valued' immigrants were those from Britain while the 'devalued' ones were visible minority Sikhs from the Punjab in India.

As seen in Figure 3, feelings of threat were generally low on the seven point scale, though the following trends emerged. Compared to the three groups of minority students, Francophone host majority respondents felt more threatened by the presence of *all* outgroups in the province. Notably, Québécois Francophones felt more threatened by the presence of Québécois Anglophones (3.7) than by French immigrants from France (2.1). Anglophone host minority students did not feel threatened by the presence of immigrants in general (1.8), immigrants from Britain (1.5) or Sikhs from India (1.7) but did feel threatened by the presence of the Québécois Francophone majority (4.7). As seen in Figure 3, Francophone and Anglophone immigrants did not feel threatened by immigrants in general (1.9 & 2.5) or by Québécois Anglophone host minority members (2.1 & 2.5). However, Anglophone immigrants felt more threatened (3.6) than Francophone immigrants (2.7) by the presence of Québécois Francophones.

Taken together, Québécois Anglophones and immigrants of both French and English background share in common their feeling of threat from the dominant majority in Quebec, namely Québécois Francophones. On the symbolic front, it is the case that Anglophones and immigrants remain painfully aware of the former Quebec Prime Minister statement that the sovereignist vote was lost in the 1995 referendum because of 'money and the ethnic vote'. In a follow-up interview in 1997, Jacques Parizeau clearly identified those he blamed for the referendum defeat: the Jews, the Greeks and the Italians, and this despite the fact that 40% of the Québécois francophone majority also voted against separatism in 1995. Subsequent nationalists campaigns blamed immigrants and Anglophones for not speaking French at home and being the cause of the decrease in the proportion of Québécois Francophones on the Island of Montreal through the slogan "Nous perdons Montreal" (We are losing Montreal). Though ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity is high amongst English-speaking communities of Quebec, the feeling of being 'singled out' as part of the problem rather than as part of the solution in the public discourse, contributes to a sense of common fate when issues of language, ethnic and religious identities are made salient by influential segments of the Francophone majority.

Why do Québécois Francophone majority students in our studies feel more threatened by the presence of 'others' than do minority group members such as Québécois Anglophones, Allophones and immigrants of French and English background ? It must be recalled that the Québécois nationalist movement has long nurtured feelings of insecurity as regards the position of the French language in Quebec, a security represented as being undermined by the presence of linguistic outgroups such as Quebec Anglophones, English-speaking immigrant and Allophone minorities in the Province. Nationalist movements have a vested interest in nurturing feelings of threat from the presence of 'exogenous' groups as such sentiments reinforce feelings of ingroup solidarity, boost loyalty to the ingroup cause and mobilize action against perceived rival outgroups and enemies. The Quebec nationalist movement nurtures a sense of linguistic insecurity despite the fact that over 93% of the Quebec population declared a knowledge of French in the Canadian census (1991 to 2006) attesting to the success of the Charter of the French language (Bill 101) in establishing French as the only public language of Quebec society. This sense of linguistic insecurity is nurtured

despite the decline in the English mother tongue population of the province from 9.2% in 1991 to 8.2% in 2006. However, nationalists highlight the fact that the French mother tongue population dropped from 82% in 1991 to 80% in 2006, while noting the commensurate rise in proportion of Allophones in the province from 8.8% of the population in 1991 to 11.9% in 2006, an inevitable result of immigration trends in the province. Nationalists also bemoan that Québécois Francophones remain a threatened minority of 23% in Canada and of only 2% in North America.

That Québécois Francophone students also felt threatened by the presence of Francophone immigrants from Haiti shows that feelings of threat can be generalized to any outgroup, even those contributing to the French speaking majority in Quebec. Thus Québécois Francophones can feel threatened by the presence of Haitians because their 'devalued' position is related to another dimension of difference, namely their visible minority status. Other studies have shown that as with other Canadians, Québécois Francophones tend to hold prejudicial attitudes towards outgroups, especially towards visible minorities and Arab Muslim immigrants.

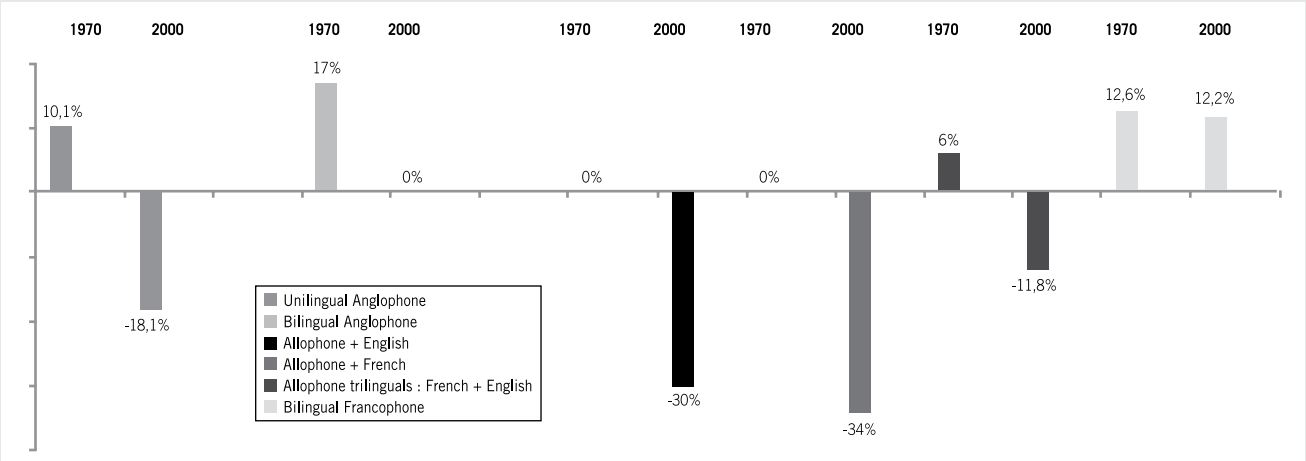
ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND SOCIAL COHESION

By virtue of their control of the state through the government, the public administration and the economy, dominant host majority members play an important role in the successful economic, linguistic, cultural and political integration of immigrants. Of these interrelated domains of integration it is economic inclusion which contributes most to the successful integration of immigrants. The economic inclusion of first and second generation immigrants facilitates their linguistic, cultural and political integration thus contributing to the social cohesion of multiethnic societies. Conversely, non recognition of foreign credentials and work experience, chronic underemployment and systemic income disadvantage relative to host majority employees may contribute to mistrust, acculturative stress, frustration, anger, mental and physical breakdown, ethnic separatism, criminality, and the erosion of social cohesion.

What can be said of the economic integration of Allophones and Anglophones depending on their language skills within the Quebec economy ? Historically, the election of pro-independence governments, two referendums on Quebec separation, fiscal policies and the *francisation* of the Quebec workplace contributed to the departure of many Anglo-Canadian business firms in the 1970s and 1980s. The resulting outmigration of Anglophones and the cumulative effect of Bill 101 eroded the demographic and institutional vitality of the English-speaking communities of Quebec. However, these same trends can be credited for improving the position of the Francophone majority relative to Anglophone and Allophone minorities in the province.

Analyses of the ownership of the Quebec economy using employment data from the censuses and Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey documented the growth of ownership of Quebec's economy by Francophone firms from 47% in the 1960s to 67% in mid 2000. Such studies also showed a decline in foreign ownership of Quebec's economy by 26 % between 1961 and 2003, while Anglophone Canadian ownership declined by 44% during the

FIGURE 4. Income differentials of Anglophones and Allophones relative to unilingual Francophones (horizontal line) in Quebec: 1970 vs 2000. (Vaillancourt, Lemay & Vaillancourt, 2007)



Controlling for level of education, years of experience in Quebec, number of weeks worked on labour income.

same period. Using census data and controlling for level of education, years of labour market experience and number of weeks worked on labour income, Vaillancourt, Lemay & Vaillancourt (2007) used the labour income of unilingual Francophone men to calculate the percent advantage of being unilingual or bilingual in the Quebec workforce in 1970 and 2000. The horizontal line in Figure 4 represents the income baseline of unilingual Francophones calculated in 1970 and 2000.

As can be seen in Figure 4, while a unilingual Anglophone had a 10.1% income advantage over a unilingual Francophone in 1970, by 2000 Anglophone unilinguals had an 18.1% income disadvantage relative to unilingual Francophones. While bilingual Anglophones had a 17% income advantage over a unilingual Francophone in 1970, this advantage was reduced to a zero effect by 2000. The income position of Allophone men relative to Francophone unilinguals declined substantially from 1970 to 2000 in Quebec. While English-speaking Allophones (bilinguals) had zero advantage in 1970, they suffered a -30% income disadvantage relative to Francophone unilinguals in 2000. While French-speaking Allophones (bilinguals) contribute to the French speaking majority in Quebec, they gained 0% income advantage relative to Francophone unilinguals in 1970, and were suffering a -33.9% income disadvantage relative to Francophone unilinguals in 2000. Finally, while French-English Allophones enjoyed a 6% income advantage over Francophone unilinguals in 1970, such trilingual Allophones were suffering a -11.8 % income disadvantage relative to Francophone unilinguals in 2000. In contrast, bilingual Québécois Francophones, as members of the Quebec majority, maintained their income advantage over unilingual Francophones: 12.6% in 1970 and 12.2% in 2000. In Commenting on their findings, Vaillancourt and colleagues noted that "The socioeconomic status of francophones in Quebec has increased substantially since 1960, whether one uses as an indicator mean labour income, returns to language skills, or ownership of the Quebec economy. The relative status of francophones within Quebec itself is under no immediate threat, though one might see a relative decline in the socioeconomic status of all Quebec workers in the North American context if policy makers fail to address concerns about productivity issues." (p. 11)

Given that the goal of the Vaillancourt study sought to document the economic fate of the dominant Francophone majority, little attention was devoted to the negative consequences of income disadvantages suffered by Allophone and Anglophone minorities in the Province. While the Quebec Government is adopting incentives to improve the recognition of foreign job experience and credentials for first and second generation immigrants and Allophones, autonomous professional corporations resist such measures in the name of quality control for the general population while in fact being more concerned with the protection of their historical corporate membership. Likewise, while cases of systemic income disadvantage experienced by Allophones and visible minority employees should be promptly treated by the Quebec Human Rights Commission, systemic under funding of such institutions by the Government limit the scope and speed of their interventions.

Taken together, results presented in this overview attest to the challenges of better integrating immigrants and Allophones within Quebec's two founding host communities. Allophone and immigrant minorities can be blamed by some for integrating within the Québécois Anglophone host minority while being blamed by others for integrating within the Francophone majority. Multiple identities remain an adaptive option for Allophone and immigrant minorities integrating linguistically within both host communities while maintaining their own cultural and linguistic identities within their transnational globalised networks. However, the income disparities suffered by both bilingual and trilingual Allophone minorities remain a cost to be paid for settling in a divided society whose dominant host majority remains imbued more with the psychology of a besieged minority, than a majority feeling responsible for its vulnerable minorities.

REFERENCES

Bourhis, R.Y. (2008).(Ed.). *The vitality of the English-speaking communities of Quebec: From Community Decline to Revival.* Montreal, Quebec: CEETUM, Université de Montréal. Available in PDF format: www.ceetum.umontreal.ca ; www.qcgn.ca

Bourhis, R.Y. & Gagnon, A. (2006). Les préjugés, la discrimination et les relations intergroupes. In : R.J. Vallerand (Ed.) *Les Fondements de la Psychologie Sociale,* 2e édition. Montréal, QC : Canada : Gaetan Morin & Chenelière Éducation. Pp 531-598

Bourhis, R.Y., Montreuil, A., Helly, D. & Jantzen, L. (2007). Discrimination et linguicisme au Québec: Enquête sur la diversité ethnique au Québec. *Canadian Ethnic Studies/ Études Ethniques au Canada*, 39, 31-49.

Castano, E. & Kofta,M. (2009) (Eds.) Dehumanization: Humanity and its Denial: Special Issue. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 12, 695-817.

Eid, P. (2009) (ED.) *Pour une véritable intégration : Droit au travail sans discrimination. Montréal,* Québec: Fides.

Montreuil, A. & Bourhis, R.Y. (2004). Acculturation orientations of competing host communities towards valued and devalued immigrants. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations,* 28, 507-532

Reitz, J.R., Breton, R., Dion, K.K. & Dion, K.L. (2009) *Multiculturalism and Social Cohesion.* New York: Springer.

Vaillancourt, F., Lemay, D. & Vaillancourt. L. (2007). *Laggards No More: The changed Socioeconomic Status of Francophones in Quebec.* C.D. Howe Institute Backgrounder, 103, www.cdhowe.org