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TABLE OF CONTENTS / SOMMAIRE

FALL 2009 VOL. 44 Nº 3 / AUTOMNE 2009 VOL. 44 Nº 3

EDITORIAL

EXPANDING ACCESS TO THE MJE

We are currently involved in digitizing the whole back catalogue of the *MJE*. What that means is that eventually – quite soon, in fact – you will be able to browse through issues of the *McGill Journal of Education* from Volume 1, Number 1 (Spring 1966) to the most recent issue we have posted online. In the inaugural issue, you will be able to read this mission statement from the *Journal's* original editor, Margaret Gillett: "We hope [the *MJE*] will serve as a stimulus for educational discussion, a forum for ideas, an outlet for research, and a meeting ground for theoreticians and those engaged – at all levels – in the practical business of teaching" (p. 3). And so it has, for 45 years. The resulting corpus represents an extraordinary resource for anyone interested in the history of education. For example, a full review of *MJE* Vol. 1, No. 1 would reveal articles on education and "activism," the (then) contemporary reform in Québec's schools, French immersion, new methods of teaching math, and the role of examinations in education. Some of the discussion seems a little quaint, but much of it is remarkably current.

Perhaps the most stunning article in that first issue is by Canada's communications superstar, Marshall McLuhan who, more than 25 years before the World Wide Web appeared, wrote this: "When we have stretched instant electronic webs around the globe, all the cultures of the world, past and present, become simultaneously accessible. The world becomes a museum without walls" (p. 32). The prescience of this statement is eerie, and McLuhan's concerns about that networked future are as relevant today as then: "young students today have already adjusted to the new world of electronic circuitry. The absurdity in their lives consists in being instructed by people for whom the receding mechanical and fragmented world is the prime reality" (p. 33). McLuhan's call for a new technological literacy still has urgency: "Personally, I am not the least attracted to any of the new technologies except in so far as I can see quite clearly that they threaten our entire way of life. The only conceivable defence against the distorting effects of the new environments created by new technologies is a patient and total understanding of their powers and influences" (p. 33).

One characteristic of quality in many areas of human activity is the ability to be simultaneously timely and timeless. Great art seems to speak as much to

the current moment as to the time of its creation, and Aristotle's ideas can sound as fresh and radical as anything blogged yesterday. The articles in this issue of the *MJE*, like those in the very first issue, respond to their historical context, but each one also taps into something that will continue to perplex or vex or enlighten us for years to come, perhaps forever.

Four of the articles consider cultural and social dynamics that promote or prohibit inclusivity in educational settings, two deal with attempts to create greater coherence and cohesion is school activity, and one addresses issues related to science education. The first paper, by Marina Doucerain, is challenging rhetorically and linguistically, as well as intellectually: it is structured as parallel columns, and moves back and forth between English and French as Doucerain explores how language affected the development of her identity as a science teacher. The three following articles consider aspects of education from Aboriginal, Muslim-Canadian, and African-Canadian perspectives. These papers raise issues that might not have been predicted in 1966, but will surely occupy us for years to come. The final paper, by Allaire and Hamel, considers an application of McLuhan's networked world. Some of these articles may be *so* visionary, *so* far-seeing, that 45 years from now they will jump off the page as McLuhan's 1966 article does now. I encourage readers to read this issue with a sense of history: Which ideas are timely, which timeless, and which are both?

A. P.

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ÉDITORIAL

FACILITER L'ACCÈS À LA REVUE DES SCIENCES DE L'ÉDUCATION DE MCGILL

Nous sommes actuellement engagés dans un processus de digitalisation des archives de la *Revue des sciences de l'éducation de McGill*. Vous pourrez donc éventuellement – bientôt en fait – fureter dans l'ensemble des éditions de la *Revue des sciences de l'éducation de McGill*, que ce soit l'édition du printemps 1966 (Volume 1, numéro 1) ou encore la toute dernière édition mise en ligne. En lisant notre numéro initial, vous découvrirez de quelle manière notre première éditrice en chef, Margaret Gillett, exprimait la mission de la *Revue des sciences de l'éducation de McGill*: "Nous espérons que [la *Revue des sciences de l'éducation*

de McGill] sera un moteur de discussions sur les enjeux éducationnels, une tribune d'idées, une courroie de transmission pour les chercheurs et un lieu de rencontre pour les théoriciens et pour tout ceux engagés – à tous les niveaux – dans le domaine de l'éducation» (p.3).[1] C'était il y a 45 ans et le *corpus* constitué depuis par les articles de *Revue des sciences de l'éducation de McGill* se révèle une extraordinaire ressource pour quiconque s'intéresse à l'histoire de l'éducation. À titre d'exemple, une lecture attentive du Volume 1, numéro 1 de la *Revue des sciences de l'éducation de McGill* permet de constater à quel point plusieurs enjeux détaillés dans ces articles sont encore actuels. Les liens entre l'éducation et l'action sociale, la réforme (du moment) des écoles québécoises, l'immersion française, les récentes manières d'enseigner les mathématiques ou le rôle des examens dans l'éducation : si certains éléments sont un peu désuets, l'ensemble demeure remarquablement contemporain.

L'article le plus frappant de cette édition est sans contredit celui de la grande vedette des communications Marshall McLuhan qui, plus d'un quart de siècle avant l'avènement de l'Internet, a écrit: "En tissant des liens électroniques autour du globe, toutes les cultures du monde, du passé comme du présent, deviennent simultanément accessible. Le monde devient un musée sans murs." (p. 32).[2] La clairvoyance de ces propos est impressionnante et les préoccupations de McLuhan en ce qui a trait aux réseaux futurs sont aussi actuelles de nos jours qu'à l'époque : « les jeunes élèves d'aujourd'hui se sont déjà ajustés au nouveau monde électronique. Ils doivent donc négocier avec l'absurdité de devoir apprendre auprès d'individus pour qui un monde passéiste de machines et fragmenté prévaut encore » (p.33).[3] L'appel de McLuhan pour une nouvelle culture technologique est toujours d'une urgente actualité. « Personnellement, je suis réfractaire aux nouvelles technologies car je peux pressentir clairement qu'elles menacent de modifier notre mode de vie. La seule défense envisageable contre les bouleversements des nouveaux environnements engendrés par les récentes technologies est un apprentissage patient et complet de leurs pouvoirs et influences » (p. 33).[4]

Un gage de qualité dans plusieurs sphères est l'habilité d'être à la fois *de* son temps et de *transcender* le temps. Les chefs-d'œuvre d'hier nous interpellent autant de nos jours que lors de leur création alors que les idées d'Aristote nous semblent aussi rafraîchissantes et radicales que si elles avaient été « bloguées » hier. De la même manière, les articles de cette édition, à l'instar de ceux parus dans le tout premier numéro, font écho à leur contexte historique tout en soulevant des questions qui continueront de nous étonner, nous choquer ou nous éclairer fort longtemps et peut-être toujours.

Ainsi, quatre de ces articles examinent les dynamiques culturelles et sociales faisant la promotion ou brimant l'inclusion dans les contextes éducationnels. Deux autres abordent des tentatives de créer une plus grande cohérence et cohésion au sein des activités scolaires et un autre explore certaines problé-

matiques relatives à l'enseignement des sciences. Le premier article, écrit par Marina Doucerain, constitue un défi rhétorique, linguistique et intellectuel. Le texte est présenté en colonnes parallèles, passant de l'anglais au français à mesure que Doucerain explique la façon dont la langue a façonné son développement identitaire comme professeure de science. Les trois papiers suivants mettent en lumière des dimensions de l'éducation d'un point de vue autochtone, canado-musulman et africano-canadien. Bien que ces articles soulèvent des enjeux qui n'étaient pas envisagés en 1966, leurs propos alimenteront des débats pour plusieurs années à venir. Finalement, l'article d'Allaire et Hamel applique le concept de monde en réseaux articulé par McLuhan. Qui sait? Certains de ces articles sont peut-être *si* visionnaires, *si* inspirés, qu'ils seront, à l'image des écrits de McLuhan, toujours aussi actuels dans 45 ans. C'est pourquoi j'encourage les lecteurs à lire cette édition avec l'Histoire en tête. En effet, quelles idées sont de leur temps et lesquelles traverseront le temps... Lesquelles sont à la fois actuelles et intemporelles?

A. P.

NOTES

1. Traduction libre des propos de Margaret Gillett: "We hope [the *MJE*] will serve as a stimulus for educational discussion, a forum for ideas, an outlet for research, and a meeting ground for theoreticians and those engaged – at all levels – in the practical business of teaching" (p. 3).
2. Traduction libre des propos de Marshall McLuhan: "When we have stretched instant electronic webs around the globe, all the cultures of the world, past and present, become simultaneously accessible. The world becomes a museum without walls" (p. 32).
3. Traduction libre: "young students today have already adjusted to the new world of electronic circuitry. The absurdity in their lives consists in being instructed by people for whom the receding mechanical and fragmented world is the prime reality" (p. 33).
4. Traduction libre: "Personally, I am not the least attracted to any of the new technologies except in so far as I can see quite clearly that they threaten our entire way of life. The only conceivable defence against the distorting effects of the new environments created by new technologies is a patient and total understanding of their powers and influences" (p. 33).

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LIVED CURRICULUM & IDENTITÉ LINGUISTIQUE: DISCOURS PARALLÈLES BUT INTERTWINED

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ABSTRACT. The author uses an autobiographical approach to reinterpret her memories of being an immigrant and an English language learner and to probe how these memories are intimately involved in the process of becoming a science teacher. This reflexive process of "excavation" (Grumet, 1999) allows the writing of narratives that explore how words and language impact identity formation.

RÉSUMÉ. L'auteure emploie une approche autobiographique pour réinterpréter les souvenirs de son immigration et de son apprentissage de l'anglais comme langue seconde, ainsi que pour examiner la manière dont ces souvenirs sont intimement liés à la formation de son identité en temps qu'enseignante des sciences. Ce processus réflexif "d'excavation" (Grumet, 1999) permet l'écriture de narrations qui explorent l'impact des mots et du langage sur la formation de l'identité.

> *We start with narrative. It is necessary.*
>
> *When these account are omitted from our scholarship, when we look elsewhere, anywhere, for our sources, our reasons and motives, we perpetuate and exaggerate our exile." (Grumet, 1991, p. 84, p. 87)*

In *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*, Jerome Bruner (1986) asserted that narratives play an important role in how we make sense of the world and established the distinction between narrative and logico-scientific, or paradigmatic, modes of thought. The view that narratives are essential to life (Hardy, 1977) and one of the mind's fundamental ways of knowing and processing information (Lodge, 1990), summarized by Brian Sutton-Smith's (1988) qualification of the mind as a "narrative concern," provides the background to a cognitive argument supporting Jerome Bruner's claims. In the same line of thought, Hunter McEwan and Kieran Egan (1995) underscore the role of narratives in learning by stating that "we begin to learn something new with a story in mind" (p. xi), and Madeleine Grumet equates telling with knowing (2004). From a more phenomenological perspective, Hunter McEwan and Kieran Egan (1995) describe narrative as "embodied language" that refutes the traditional divorce of the self found in positivist texts. This turn to lived experience as

situated and contingent espouses a post-modern view of knowing that is partial, fragmented and local, but that is still knowing (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). In this theoretical framework, the narrator can only acknowledge that her narrative is both "enabled and constrained by a range of social resources and circumstances" (Chase, 2005, p. 657).

Pushing this argument one step further leads to considering language as but one of many "social resources" which, from a post-structuralist standpoint, is neither a transparent medium nor a reflection of social reality (Foucault, 1970; Derrida, 1974). Rather, language socially negotiates and creates social reality. As such, in narratives, language "constructs one's subjectivity in ways that are historically and locally specific" (Richardson & St-Pierre, 2005, p. 961). A corollary to this role of narrative in constructing one's subjectivity is the call to understand ourselves reflexively, a call that legitimates and frames narratives of the self, or autobiography, as a privileged way to locate the narrator's "biographical experiences in larger historical and sociological contexts" (p. 966).

In the realm of education, theorists have also relied on autobiography to provide "representations of subjectivity for the public world" (Grumet, 2004, p. 91). William Pinar's "currere" (2004), Barbara Kamler's "re-location" (2001), Madeleine Grumet's excavation (1981), or Claudia Mitchell and Sandra Weber's "reinvention" (1999) are all approaches that seek to construct the self in relation to its larger educational context. A common characteristic of these narrative endeavors is "phenomenological bracketing" (Pinar, 2004), or "de-centering" (Huberman, 1995), whereby one distances oneself from past and future selves. These geographical shifts in the narrator's mental landscapes – to use Maxine Greene's topological metaphor (1978) – become a paradoxical exile that enables "a process of the 'I' meeting the 'I'" (Greene, 1978, p.39). Yet, this meeting of the self cannot be an end in itself, lest autobiographical narratives be confined to self-scrutiny; it only paves the way to self-transformation, which, according to Teresa Wilson (2002), could only happen through this paradoxical exile. Claudia Mitchell and Sandra Weber view this process of self-transformation as a commitment to social change (1999), a belief largely shared by William Pinar (2004) when he describes autobiography as a "revolutionary act" that creates "passages out of and away from the statis of the historical present" (p. 39). It would be illusory to think that this "revolutionary act" advocated by William Pinar leads to a unified, cohesive, and continuous self. Quite the contrary, William Pinar describes it as practicing "autobiographics of self-shattering," a practice that acknowledges fissures and discontinuities in the self, and that leads to what Claudia Mitchel and Sandra Weber call "kaleidoscopic narratives." In a beautiful metaphor of autobiography as self-shattering, Madeleine Grumet contends that "there in the interstices, where the pieces don't quite meet, is where the light comes through" (1981, p. 122).

Thus, autobiographical narratives refute the existence of a unified self; they let multiple layers and multiple voices emerge through what becomes a com-

posite account of the self. I believe that the physical textual representation of an autobiographical narrative should attempt to reflect its "shattered" nature. So in "trying to find a form that enacts that there is never a single story" (Lather & Smithies, 1997, p. 220), let me represent what follows as a split multivoiced text, in respectful observance of researchers who used this format with the same purpose (Eisner, 1997; Lather & Smithies, 1997; Richardson, 1994; Sanders, 1999, all cited in Pillow, 2003).

Just as Patti Lather and Chris Smithies describe, let me "(practice) a kind of dispersal and (force) mobility of attention by putting into play simultaneously multiple stories that fold in and back on one another" (1997, p. 220).

The following narration and introspection adopt a post-structuralist perspective and draw on the autobiographical tradition briefly reviewed above. They do not seek definite answers to the questions that are asked – for how could fissures and discontinuities of the self yield anything definite? Rather, they wish to probe the changing nature of my identity and of lived curriculum, as both are continuously re-molded and rethought in the melting pot of daily life. As I engage in this reflexive process, the questions below serve as guides or as lenses that help focus my exploration.

- Quels sont les liens entre ma langue natale et ma langue adoptive ?
- Quelles relations ont su tisser en moi ces deux mondes aux horizons différents ?
- Quelles influences respectives ont eu – et continuent d'avoir – sur mon identité ces deux cultures aux discours et aux sensibilités souvent divergents ?
- De quels dialogues et affrontements suis-je le théâtre, alors que le français et l'anglais assurent la garde partagée de mon appréhension du monde et de sa signification?
- De quelle manière cette dualité a-t-elle façonné l'éducatrice et la femme que je suis ?
- Quels sont ma place et mon rôle dans une école d'immersion où les élèves s'expriment dans un franglais inventif et intempestif ?

Engaged in the process of "excavation," Madeleine Grumet (1999) unearths the image of her father "bending over (her) textbooks at the dining table, covering them with deep red, durable paper, rolled up and carried home from work on the subway just for that purpose" (p. 25). This image of the past is as much a vivid recollection as one of the numerous chisels carving out Madeleine Grumet's identity. My own memory is densely populated with such instances that influence every step I take, in a more or less conspicuous manner. Sometimes the link between the past and today is obvious, sometimes

it is lost in the interweaving meanders of identity construction. In both cases though, remembrances that I thought were long ago forgotten sporadically sneak through. They are called upon by my everyday encounters and experiences in the classroom, at other times they just infiltrate through the fractures and fissures of my present doubts and uncertainties.

Here they are on paper, these memories that cohabit and reshape the lived experience, roommates in this room of my own. Here they coalesce and evolve in parallel strands: the teacher and the learner, engaged in non-schizophrenic dialogue.

McGill University, Winter 2001. Small talk with a well-meaning student who specialized in investigating everyone's origin:

- Why did you choose to come to McGill, instead of UdM or UQAM?
- I wanted to learn English.

Université de Sherbrooke, automne 2003. Conseil amical d'un étudiant avisé :

- Si j'étais toi, je cacherais mon accent français. Le prof déteste les « maudits français », et ça risquerait de faire baisser ta moyenne.

Montreal's Academy,[1] job interview with the director of human resources:

- So, I see you're French from France... Surely your French must be good... Excellent, that's a real asset.

Montreal's Academy, automne 2006. Salle 312, classe de sciences sur les fluides :

- Madame, I don't get this taux d'écoulement thingy...
- Sit down Eva.[2] Je vais venir t'expliquer. En attendant, focus sur ton laptop.

These snapshot memories emerge as unexpected flagpoles among countless interactions. Together, they line the way to where I stood as a new science teacher, and where I begin my narration.

Montreal's Academy, 2007

• ... so if you need an idea for the science fair...

Neil giggled, with a large smile on his face.

• What? What's funny?

• Nothing, Miss. It's just the way you pronounce "idea." I mean, your English is really good, but it's just that word.

• What about it, how do you pronounce it?

• I-D-E-A

By that time, a couple of students had gathered around Neil; all were performing their best pronunciation of the word. I listened intently and carefully articulated again.

• I-D-E-E-R

• No Miss, I-D-E-A, but it's okay. It's just funny.

I went on with my dry explanation of what a science fair entitled, still cursing myself for not being able to pronounce that word.

Knock, knock, knock. I popped my head in Nathaly's office, knowing perfectly well that the staff meeting was about to start and that she had no time for my phonetic struggles; but I had to know.

• Nathaly, how do you pronounce "idea"?

She raised a dubious eyebrow and slowly uttered the problematic word:

• I—D—E—A

• Eye-Dee-A

• That's it! You have it.

• Eye-Dee-A. Eye-Dee-A. Thank you.

I left Nathaly's office in a highly spirited mood, and kept savoring the newly tamed word all the way to the auditorium. Eye-Dee-A. Eye-Dee-A.

• ...and the idea is to...

• Miss! You got it!

• Yes, I practiced a lot.

I smiled radiantly while half the class was clapping enthusiastically.

Je crois qu'ils étaient fiers de moi d'une certaine manière. Ou du moins, c'est ainsi que j'ai voulu interpréter leurs applaudissements. Après tout, j'avais persévéré pour être à la hauteur de leurs

« Tout exilé connaît au début les affres de l'abandon, du dénuement et de la solitude. Déchiré entre la nostalgie du passé et la dure condition du présent, il expérimente une souffrance plus « muette », plus humiliante, qui le tenaille : n'ayant qu'une connaissance rudimentaire de la langue de son pays d'adoption, il se voit réduit à un être primaire aux yeux de tous. Baragouinant des mots ou des phrases parfois approximatifs, incapable d'un récit clair et cohérent, il donne l'impression d'être dépourvu de pensées, voire de sentiments. » (Cheng, 2002, pp.28-29)

C'était dans la salle d'attente d'un médecin. Juste devant moi dans la file, une femme asiatique « parlait » avec la secrétaire. Ou plutôt, elle tentait d'obtenir une information à l'aide de signes et de mots hachés plus ou moins explicites. La secrétaire affichait une impatience et un dédain croissant ; la femme asiatique s'embrouillait dans ses explications. Quant à moi, je trépignais derrière, j'avais chaud dans mon manteau, et j'allais être en retard. La pensée m'a traversée que cette femme était vraiment stupide ; elle semblait « incapable d'un récit clair et cohérent ». Je me suis demandé un instant comment on pouvait être aussi peu clair, en revoyant mentalement les innombrables asiatiques qui vous abordent en été, brandissant une carte annotée et pointant du doigt une adresse improbable.

J'avoue avoir eu ces pensées, et avoir eu honte ensuite. Comme ma mémoire a été courte dans cette salle d'attente. J'ai moi aussi été cet « être primaire aux yeux de tous », il y a quelques années.

C'est il y a quelques années qu'a commencé mon dialogue avec la langue anglaise, par hasard. Au détour d'un concours au lycée. Un matin d'hiver, notre

attentes, et pour gagner leur respect sur ma capacité à vaincre l'insolence d'un mot rétif. J'ai moi aussi été fière de moi ce matin-là. Fière de ne pas avoir nié ni caché une de mes faiblesses à mes élèves, fière d'avoir pour un instant transformé la barrière linguistique qui me sépare d'eux en un lien de complicité et en une occasion de rire ; fière aussi de leur donner une opportunité de célébrer mes progrès au lieu des leurs. Pour une fois, leur expertise faisait loi.

Oh, bien sur, ce n'est qu'un mot, un tout petit succès de rien du tout, mais il paraît qu'il faut reconnaître ses succès et s'en réjouir ; c'est du moins ce qu'affirment les bouillons de poulet pour l'âme et compagnie exposés sur les tablettes de Renaud-Bray. Alors j'avoue, je savoure encore la chaleur qui enveloppe le mot « idea », chaque fois que je le prononce.

• C'est une vidéo d'environ 15 minutes. Vous n'avez pas vraiment besoin de prendre des notes, mais écoutez attentivement, parce que vous allez devoir répondre à quelques questions sur la vidéo.

Un doigt se lève. Je note intérieurement le valeureux effort d'honorer la règle n 1, « Respecter les autres », catégorie dans laquelle tombe la politesse de ne pas interrompre quelqu'une quand elle parle.

• Oui Doug ?

• Est-ce que le vidéo est en français ?

• Non, malheureusement, c'est en anglais. Je n'en ai pas trouvé en français.

Remous de satisfaction et de « yesss ! » étouffés. Je ne réplique pas, étant moi-même légèrement mal à l'aise avec ma conscience professionnelle.

• Je vais vous donner les questions avant de commencer la vidéo. Lisez-les attentivement, comme ça vous savez exactement quand noter les informations importantes.

S'ensuit évidemment un bruissement généralisé car trois ou quatre élèves n'ont pas de crayon, ni de stylo, ni quoi que ce soit d'ailleurs. Je distribue silencieusement les feuilles.

• Mais, Madame, les questions sont en français.

• Alors tu veux que nous traduise ce que ils disent dans le movie ?

• Mais pourquoi Madame ? Ça c'est difficile.

prof d'anglais nous a annoncé que le lycée organisait un concours d'anglais. Une rédaction, rien de plus; les deux meilleurs essais gagnaient une session de « Summer School » dans une école privée du Massachusetts. Aucun d'entre nous n'était vraiment convaincu, nous étions en première année et plutôt désavantagés par rapport aux seniors. Puis la prof a joué son argument massue : la rédaction aurait lieu pendant une période de math. La perspective d'échapper aux griffes de Mme Sanchez était autrement alléchante, nous avons tous signé.

Le sujet de l'essai était une citation de Mark Twain. Je ne me souviens plus des mots exacts, c'était une phrase dans le style « Travels decrease narrow-mindedness and prejudice in people ». Je me souviens avoir regardé les mots « narrow-mindedness » et « prejudice » pendant un long moment. Je les ai écrits et ré-écrits sur ma feuille, je me les suis répétés à voix basse, espérant d'une certaine manière qu'ils allaient ainsi me livrer leurs secrets. En désespoir de cause, je leur ai attribué un sens, basé sur un savant procédé d'élimination, d'associations de sons et de déductions. J'ai fait de mon mieux, et puis j'ai quitté la salle rapidement pour profiter d'une demi-heure de liberté avant la classe suivante.

Je n'aimais pas spécialement l'anglais au lycée, les mots me semblaient manquer de saveur, ils sonnaient vide. J'associais l'anglais à ces chansons creuses américaines qui dominaient les ondes et ravissaient une catégorie de personnes que, dans mon intransigeance adolescente, je jugeais stupides. L'anglais ne

• Je sais, je suis vraiment désolée. Mais je dois poser les questions en français. Vous allez voir, ce n'est vraiment pas difficile. La vidéo est facile, et les mots sont quasiment les mêmes en français. Faites de votre mieux.

• Si il est un mot que nous savons pas en français, est-ce que nous le mettre en quotation mark en anglais ?

• Est-ce que nous pouvons répondre en anglais si nous ne savons pas en français ?

Je réfléchis une seconde. I'm torn. Normalement, selon les règles instaurées par l'administration de l'école, je ne devrais pas accepter d'anglais à l'écrit. Ceci dit, normalement, je ne devrais pas donner de document en anglais non plus. Le problème, c'est qu'il n'y a pas de United Streaming en français. Personnellement, ça m'est égal s'ils répondent en anglais. De toutes façons, à quoi bon se leurrer ? Sans aller aussi loin que Hector Hammerly (1982, cité dans Rebuffot, 1993) quand il parle d'une « interlangue fautive, criblée d'anglicismes et d'erreurs » (Rebuffot, 1993, p. 93), je sais très bien que leurs réponses en français allongeraient mon temps de correction au moins de moitié.

• OK. Mais essayez autant que possible d'écrire en français.

Le OK les a rassurés je crois, ils ont retrouvé leur sourire et Amber semble moins paniquée. Je tamise la lumière en murmurant « Chuuut ! » d'un air faussement sévère, et je démarre la projection.

Assise au fond de la classe, je regarde pensivement l'écran où un pont s'écroule avec en narration de fond un homme qui parle de « applied forces ». Je me demande une fois de plus pourquoi l'administration a choisi d'enseigner les sciences 7 et 8 en français. Les sciences, entre toutes les matières !

Quand on me demande ce que j'enseigne, je réponds que je suis prof de sciences. On me demande ensuite à quels niveaux j'enseigne ; je réponds dûment à la question, et la conversation proceeds (oui, je sais, un mot anglais en plein milieu d'une phrase en français. Pourtant, j'ai tenté d'arrêter ma pensée, de me creuser le cerveau pour trouver le mot approprié en français, mais je ne l'ai pas trouvé. Je ne connais pas d'expression plus justement dosée, plus parfaitement circoncise pour décrire cette situation. « Proceeds » reflète parfaitement ma pensée, il a la couleur et la taille nécessaire, tant pis si c'est en anglais.). À chaque se comparait aucunement à l'allemand, que j'adorais. Je me délectais des sonorités rudes et chantantes de l'allemand, de ses constructions de phrase où le verbe se plaçait à la fin et dont le sens se trouvé transformé par un tout petit suffixe. Je me souviens avoir copié Die Lorelei en belles lettres dans mon agenda.

Mais Dieu sait pourquoi, un peu de hasard, un peu d'indulgence du jury, je me suis retrouvée un matin dans la cour du lycée avec mon copain qui s'est jeté sur moi en me félicitant. J'avais gagné le premier prix, me criait-il. J'ai mis quelques instants à comprendre, je n'y croyais pas trop, jusqu'à ce que je voie mon nom sur le tableau d'affichage.

J'ai paniqué pendant les quelques mois qui ont suivi. La bibliothèque possédait quelques livres bilingues. Ces livres où le texte original se trouve sur la page de droite, et la traduction des mots difficiles sur la page de gauche. Il y avait un recueil de nouvelles qui s'intitulait « The Umbrella », ou « The Umbrella man », je ne sais plus. J'ai détesté ce livre. Une des nouvelles, je crois, mettait en scène l'arrivée d'un voyageur dans une auberge qui réalise à la fin que tous les animaux étaient morts et empaillés. J'ai oublié le nom de l'auteur, les noms des personnages et la majorité de l'histoire, mais je me souviens du mot « tucked ». Pourquoi ce mot, comme un écueil dans la mémoire, est-il resté intact ? « Tucked », tout comme « prejudice » et « narrow-mindedness » ont gardé la saveur de notre première rencontre. « Tucked » est encore sur le bout de ma langue, je le prononce avec les lèvres serrées, avec un peu de dégoût et un brin d'horreur.

fois, je marque une pause, et me retire en moi-même pour délibérer. Ai-je été parfaitement exacte dans ma réponse ? Est-ce que j'enseigne réellement les sciences ? Or am I a French teacher that happens to choose scientific topics for my French lessons? Instead of lengthy analyses of Le Petit Nicolas or Les Contes du Chat Perché?

• ... Tu ne réalises peut-être pas, mais cette feuille représente des heures de travail pour la personne qui l'a écrite. En la déchirant et en la jetant par terre, c'est faire preuve d'un manque de respect inacceptable... (s'ensuit un chapelet de remontrances moralisatrices que je m'efforce de faire dans un français aussi simple et châtié que possible). As-tu quelque chose à dire à ce sujet ?

• Euh... Qu'est-ce que tu veux dire ?

• Et bien, est-ce qu'il y a quelque chose que tu aimerais dire sur le fait que tu as déchiré et piétiné cette feuille ?

• Euh... Est-ce que je peux le dire en anglais ?

• Bien sûr.

• I'm sorry...

• Do you think it's enough to be sorry?

• No...

• So what do you think might happen next?

• .... mmm... a detention?

• How would that solve the problem?

• It would be a punishment, so that I learn a lesson.

• And what would happen after that? Just because I give you a detention, you would become a "perfect" student?

Notre échange – ou plutôt ma maladroite tentative d'engager un dialogue disciplinaire – s'est poursuivi quelques instants de plus, jusqu'à ce que je réalise que mon discours se répétait en boucle. À dire vrai, je ne savais pas quelle mesure prendre, ni quelle suite donner à cette affaire, mais je voulais lui faire comprendre qu'un tel comportement était inacceptable. Je me retrouverais probablement le lendemain dans le bureau de Michael, à lui demander ce que je devrais faire selon lui.

Pourquoi Anthony avait-il tenu à s'excuser en anglais ? Ignore-t-il les mots français réservés à Un chat mort et empaillé était « tucked » dans les bras de cette affreuse femme.

Je suis arrivée à Boston le 2 juillet au soir, avec Béatrice, la seconde grande gagnante du concours. Il faisait nuit, et personne ne nous attendait, contrairement à ce qui était prévu. Nous avons parcouru le Logan Airport en long et en large, à la recherche d'une personne et d'une petite pancarte avec nos noms, comme on voit dans les films. Nous n'avons jamais trouvé cette personne. Il était bientôt minuit, et nous n'avions pas assez de change pour téléphoner en France. Nous avons mis nos pièces en commun, ces pièces si étranges qui se ressemblaient toutes, et avons tenté d'appeler Northfield Mount Hermon, l'école où nous devions nous rendre. Quelqu'un a finalement décroché, et c'est à ce moment que nous avons réalisé la futilité de notre entreprise. Nous avons pris le combiné à tour de rôle, nous avons hoché la tête, nous avons baragouiné une explication, jusqu'à ce nous ayons épuisé notre réserve de pièces et que la ligne coupe. Nous nous sommes regardées, consternées : nous n'avions pas compris un traître mot.

En arrivant à l'école cette nuit-là, après des heures de communication en langage des signes, je me souviens avoir compris le mot « room mate », et avoir prononcé le mot « sleep ».

Tous les étudiants ESL avaient été rassemblés dans un gymnase pour écrire un test d'aptitude en anglais. Quelqu'un a donné des instructions orales, je n'ai rien compris, et j'ai conclu que la seule chose logique à faire dans cette situation était de remplir la feuille de

cet usage ? Ce serait surprenant ; aucun élève de 8ième année en langue maternelle ou littérature ne connaît pas les mots « Excuse-moi ». Était-il moins humiliant pour lui de le dire en anglais ? Était-ce une manière de se distancer de ma diatribe, diatribe que lui avais assénée en français ? L'anglais lui servait-il dans ce cas d'armure pour se protéger d'une langue qu'il ne maîtrise pas et qui lui est hostile ? Dur à dire.

Et de mon côté, pourquoi avais-je continué mes réprimandes en anglais, une fois qu'Anthony ait choisi de s'excuser dans cette langue ? Je sais pertinemment qu'il comprend mieux l'anglais, et que pour établir un dialogue avec Anthony, je dois m'exprimer en anglais. Était-ce comme lui tendre la main, lui montrer par un signe linguistique que j'acceptais enfin de me mettre à son niveau et d'entendre ce qu'il avait à dire ?

Répondre oui à ces deux dernières questions impliquerait alors que mon choix initial de réprimander Anthony en français recelait une raison autre que celle d'utiliser la langue officielle du cours de sciences. Cela impliquerait que je me suis servi du français comme d'un outil pour châtier et rabaisser Anthony dans une certaine mesure. C'est dur à admettre, je n'aime pas rabaisser les élèves, mais je dois avouer qu'Anthony m'avait profondément énervée et déçue ce jour-là. Au fond, j'ai peut-être utilisé la langue pour donner plus de poids et plus de froideur tranchante à mes réprimandes. Je me demande si un tel usage est légitime.

When I stepped into the Memorial Gym, the entire assembly was silent and waiting for the Headmaster and the student council. I was late. I tiptoed, so that my high heels would not clap on the floor. I found an empty seat nearby and sat down. Very soon, the Headmaster along with the student council entered the room and took their place on the central podium. Mr. Sherman, the Headmaster invited us to stand up and sing the national anthem, as we do every Tuesday. We stood up while the band was playing the first notes of "O Canada."

Pourquoi cet infime détail dans ma vie quotidienne continue-t-il de m'impressionner ? Peut-être la solennité anglaise du moment se détache-t-elle avec contraste de l'irrévérence française qui a bercé mes années de collège et lycée. Adolescents, nous aurions ri et gloussé à l'idée de chanter l'hymne questions posée devant moi. J'ai fait de mon mieux, et ai rendu ma copie. Pendant l'heure qui a suivi, je me suis appliquée à reproduire exactement les actions de la majorité du groupe. Nous nous sommes tous retrouvés dehors, au soleil, et j'en ai déduit qu'il fallait attendre, probablement les résultats du test. Je me suis donc assise et ai attendu. Pour mon plus grand malheur, les autres élèves semblaient être d'humeur sociale. J'ai souri, j'ai répondu à toutes les questions par Yes, ou par No, en prenant un air inspiré, et en implorant intérieurement les puissances supérieures de me rendre invisible.

Quand le groupe est retourné à l'intérieur du gymnase, j'ai suivi. Un homme sur l'estrade s'est adressé à nous. Puis il a sorti une feuille et a commencé à lire une liste de noms. J'ai compris que ces élèves étaient invités à sortir de la salle. Alarmée au début, je me suis vite rassurée: je ne comprenais rien, mais je n'étais pas si mauvaise à l'écrit, je ne pouvais pas faire partie de cette liste. J'ai regardé sortir ces quelques élèves un à un. Je me demandais avec compassion quel genre de malheur allait s'abattre sur eux quand il m'a semblé entendre mon nom. « Michèle Annielle », a répété l'homme sur l'estrade.

Je me suis levée et suis sortie. J'ai eu à cet instant un violent désir de m'enfuir, d'appeler ma mère et de pleurer. J'ai ravalé mes sanglots en espérant lâchement que Béatrice soit aussi de la liste. Je ne voulais surtout pas qu'elle puisse rire de moi et de ma note pitoyable à ce test d'aptitude. J'ai regardé fixement la porte, priant pour que Béatrice apparaisse, mais après quelques minutes, l'homme de l'estrade s'est profilé

national. De telles démonstrations d'esprit de corps dans une salle pleine d'austères boiseries restaient pour nous une bonne blague… ou un décor à la Harry Potter.

Il était midi cinquante, l'heure du café. Michael Lipnar venait de congédier les élèves de la salle à manger et il restait une bonne vingtaine de minutes avant la prochaine période. Midi cinquante est un instant privilégié où il fait bon s'installer dans la salle des profs, se loger dans un des sofas moelleux et lire les premières pages de la Gazette – même si la Gazette est à mon sens l'outil de propagande libérale par excellence – pour se donner l'impression que l'on a le temps devant soi. Bien évidemment, c'est aussi l'heure du papotage autour du bar et des cafetières.

Le clan des français était d'ailleurs réuni autour de l'îlot central, tasse de café en main, bruyant et animé. Je m'armai de ma propre tasse et les rejoignis. Il était question de « cleavage », sujet fréquemment abordé par l'administration de l'école. Tout « cleavage » – zone sensible du bas de la gorge qui laisse deviner une séparation entre les deux seins – est formellement prohibé à l'école et passible de sanctions sévères. Je dois avouer que « cleavage » est un joli mot : discret, délicat, à saveur victorienne. Évidemment, c'est également une source de plaisanteries sans fin pour un québécois, et à fortiori pour un français. JP et Damien semblaient d'ailleurs prendre un malin plaisir à critiquer le puritanisme du concept. Carole riait à gorge déployée. Puis, comme la conversation ne comptait que des francophones, le sujet a rapidement dérivé sur l'utilisation et la couleur des soutiens-gorge. Puis sur l'assortiment du soutien-gorge avec la culotte. Et enfin sur le but de faire de tels assortiments.

• Moi, aucune de mes culottes n'est assortie avec mes soutiens-gorge. Tu te rends compte le prix ! Si tu veux acheter les coordonnés, c'est une fortune.

• Moi non plus j'ai pas de soutien-gorge assorti…

• Ah ah ah ! Ben tiens, tu m'étonnes JP. Je suis sure que ta femme t'aimerait avec un soutien-gorge pourtant !

• Moi j'en ai quelques uns d'assortis. Mais je les mets pas toute la semaine. Juste les vendredi ou dans l'encadrement et j'ai compris que Béatrice ne serait pas de ce petit groupe d'exclus.

L'homme de l'estrade s'est mis à nous parler en souriant et à distribuer une feuille à chacun de nous. C'était une liste de cours divers et variés, allant de l'histoire européenne contemporaine à la chimie organique.

Je devais avoir l'air particulièrement confuse, car l'homme de l'estrade est venu s'asseoir à côté de moi. Il m'a parlé lentement, très lentement. Il a articulé et répété ces mots qui m'échappaient, jusqu'à ce que je comprenne enfin. Je n'avais pas échoué le test. En fait, j'avais tellement bien réussi qu'on me proposait de prendre n'importe quel cours de mon choix au lieu d'ESL. Il m'a suggéré « Academic Writing », j'ai acquiescé. J'ai souri, remercié, et me suis ruée sur un téléphone pour appeler mes parents.

La prof d'« Academic writing » était une jeune femme rousse, aux cheveux courts et bouclés. Elle représentait pour moi l'archétype féminin américain. Elle portait des Teva, un short et un T-shirt. Elle ne se maquillait pas, et s'adressait à ses élèves comme à des amis. « Guys », disait-elle avec naturel quand elle commençait une phrase. J'ai cru tout d'abord que ce mot lui était propre, qu'il était l'expression de sa simplicité et cordialité, puis j'ai réalisé que c'était un des mots les plus usités du langage américain.

J'ai été légèrement déçue qu'il ne soit pas uniquement le fruit de l'originalité d'Emma, mais « guys » est resté pour moi l'emblème du choc culturel entre l'Amérique et l'Europe. J'ai mis six ans à lentement apprivoiser ce mot, à l'enfiler et le reposer comme un

samedi, parce que là, on sait jamais... Ça peut être utile.

Carole lança cette dernière phrase tout haut, puis s'esclaffa après, accompagnée par tout le groupe de francophones. Nous riions tous à pleins poumons, sans retenue. Carole en rajouta pendant quelques minutes, avant de quitter la salle.

My difficulties to come up with the abundance of words required to describe the weather at length, my going blank when small talk is needed, all of these vanish when talking with Carole. Words come to me spontaneously, and I seem to be in the right place. It is as if we had known each other for ages. Is it because she is French? Is it because we share a common legacy and a common background of cultural references? We don't necessarily draw upon these references, but it is there, potent, available to tap into, framing a common way of thinking and of communicating.

Had I been in the same staffroom some years ago, I would have laughed whole-heartedly without even thinking about it. I would not have cast a glance at the older Anglophone teachers sitting on the sofa. Nor would I have been able to read their silent disapproval. I have since learned the standards of English "bienséance" though. I have learned not to be too loud and not to mention intimate matters in public. I have also learned that things can be shocking. I have slowly been impregnated by the remnants of Victorian conventions and by puritan social behavior. I can now fully appreciate the meaning of "proper," and of "behave yourself." Maybe that is why I can no longer feel perfectly at home with Carole, or with anyone who speaks and laughs so loudly for that matter.

Patricia était debout devant le Smartboard, elle faisait face à une quarantaine d'élèves de septième année bruyants et entassés. Elle s'apprêtait à donner un tutoriel pour l'examen de Noël.

• OK, alors nous avons des élèves de Mme Annielle, et certains de mes élèves. Est-ce qu'il y a des élèves de Mr. Stiffler dans la salle ?

Aucune manifestation des élèves de Mr. Stiffler.

• Parce que s'il y a des élèves de Mr. Stiffler, on va faire le tutoriel en anglais, sinon on va le faire en français.

Brouhaha et vague de protestations.

vêtement étrange, jusqu'à ce qu'il devienne comme une seconde peau et que je ne sache plus interpeller ma classe autrement que par « guys ».

Nous étions trois à avoir réussi le test d'aptitude et à avoir choisi Academic writing. Nous pouvions toujours changer d'avis après une classe d'essai, si nous trouvions cela trop difficile. À la fin du premier cours, Emma s'est tourné vers nous et nous a parlé un petit moment. Évidement, je n'ai rien compris, mais j'ai vu les deux autres élèves secouer la tête d'un air de refus. Emma a tout répété lentement ; elle me demandait si je souhaiter rester ou retourner en ESL. « I want to try. I stay. »

C'est ainsi qu'ont commencé « les affres de l'abandon, du dénuement et de la solitude ». Pendant deux mois, j'ai appris à parler avec moi-même, à me regarder en face. J'ai fait connaissance avec le silence, ce silence immense et étrange fait de ma propre « muetteté ».

Le dernier jour, le jour d'émission des notes, tous les élèves furent rassemblés dans l'auditorium pour la remise des prix, ou « awards ». Les lauréats étaient appelés l'un après l'autre à monter sur l'estrade, recevoir leur prix et une poignée de main du directeur. Je les enviais, bien sûr, mais j'avais avec moi une profonde satisfaction : celle d'avoir fait de mon mieux et d'avoir travaillé autant que possible pour l'obtenir. C'était la première fois dans ma vie que quelque chose d'académique n'était pas facile.

« Michèle Annielle », on venait d'appeler mon nom ! C'est le souffle coupé que je suis montée sur l'estrade recevoir une poignée de main du directeur et un papier cartonné bleu. « Director's Award

• Mais Madame, est-ce que tu peux le faire en anglais quand même ?

• Oui, parce qu'on veut vraiment comprendre...

• I'm with Mr. Stiffler, Miss.

• OK, alors je vais parler en anglais, mais on va utiliser le vocabulaire spécifique en français et en anglais, pour pas que vous soyez perdus. OK ? So it will be a bilingual tutorial. So, let's start with the efficacité structurale, or structural efficiency. For Mme Annielle's and Mr. Stiffler's students, did you guys learn about the method of the triangle?

• Yes.

• Yes.

• Yes, but can we go over it again, I don't get the masse portée maximale.

• Sure, and we'll do word problems, because they are more tricky.

• But Miss, I don't wanna do word problems in English, because I'll understand them in English, but then they'll be in French on the exam. And that's the problem.

• Yeah, that's true. It's the words that are the problem.

La question des "word problems" semblait susciter un débat animé. Les élèves hésitaient sur la méthode la plus efficace pour leur assurer un A à l'examen de Noël.

• Guys, keep quiet. We don't have that much time, and I want to get through the whole structural efficiency. I'll do the word problems in both languages.

The teacher in front of the Smartboard could have been me. This teacher accepted the task of teaching science in French as an additional burden. She knew then that it entitled hours of translation from English resources, more difficulties to convey scientific concepts to students, and touchy juggling back and forth between both languages. This teacher is now facing pressure from the administration because class averages are too low. This teacher and I spent hours writing a December exam that would not draw too much on conceptual linguistic skills. We realized after correcting these exams that students fared poorly because it relied too heavily on mathematic formulas. We are now wondering what a linguistically easy and mathematically not too challenging science exam should look like.

It might be comforting to know that I am not the only teacher in this immersion boat for whom teaching material is an issue. Remembering his experience as

for Academic Excellence », c'est ce qui était écrit sur le papier bleu. J'avais obtenu un A dans mes deux cours, et mes deux profs m'avaient nommée pour cette récompense.

Pendant les deux années qui ont suivi, j'ai continué ma lente approche de la langue anglaise, comme on observe du coin de l'œil un lac mystérieux et un peu inquiétant. Je me suis parfois risquée à tremper le bout du pied dans ses eaux, la température restait froide.

Mes deux mois dans le Massachusetts avaient toutefois atténué mon désintérêt pour l'anglais, et je demandai des livres en anglais pour Noël. N'importe lesquels, puisque je n'en connaissais aucun. Ma mère passa probablement un long moment devant les rayons de Vaurard, la librairie locale de notre ville de province (c'était déjà un miracle qu'ils aient des ouvrages en anglais), et finit par choisir « Heart of Darkness » et « A passage to India ». Pourquoi ceux-là ? Elle-même ne saurait le dire. Mon premier contact en solo avec la littérature anglaise fut donc par les mots de Conrad.

"The sea-reach of the Thames stretched before us like the beginning of an interminable waterway. In the offing the sea and the sky were welded together without a joint, and in the luminous space the tanned sails of the barges drifting up with the tide seemed to stand still in red clusters of canvas sharply peaked, with gleams of varnished sprits. A haze rested on the low shores that ran out to sea in vanishing flatness. The air was dark above Gravesend, and farther back still seemed condensed into a mournful gloom, brooding motionless over the biggest, and the greatest, town on earth." (Conrad, 1899, p.1)

Je dois avouer aujourd'hui ne pas avoir compris la moitié de ses mots la première fois où je l'ai lu, et par conséquent ne pas

an immersion teacher, Jacques Rebuffot (1993) writes that "he had to re-write entire sections of manuals that had been designed and written for francophone students, in order to make the material more easily understandable for his immersion students" (p. 185, author's translation). Anne-Marie De Mejia (2002) raises similar issues, but she also touches on the sensitive core of the problem when she writes that "it should be noted that producing material requires time and dedication on the part of the teachers concerned and that this needs to be recognized at an institutional level" (p. 289). What remains to be discussed is what "institutional recognition" means: time, money, both, a medal presented during the end-of-the-year closing ceremony, a pat on the back?

•

• Madame, ça va sonner. C'est le temps de packer upper.

• Ok guys, packez uppez. Mais n'oubliez pas de finir la feuille d'exercices pour la prochaine fois.

Anyone sitting in my science classroom would certainly find evidence of numerous lexical and grammar deviations in my students and my own use of the French language. I am willing to admit that the new word "packer upper" might be construed as a horrifying example of how my grade 8 students and I butcher our respective languages. Granted. But I prefer to see it as a wonderful example of how being together and interacting with one another in our grade 8 classroom lead us to hybridize languages in order to build our own lived curriculum and class culture.

"Lorsque des enfants apprennent une langue seconde dans des contextes où ils sont coupés de ceux qui parlent cette langue, leurs productions sont rarement conformes aux productions des locuteurs natifs, qu'elles ne sont pas la traduction exacte de la langue première, qu'elles diffèrent de la langue qu'on veut apprendre de façon systématique, et, enfin, que les formes de leurs énoncés ne sont pas le fruit du hasard." (Selinka, Swain & Dumas, 1975, cited in Rebuffot, 1993, p. 78)

Selinka, Swain and Dumas thus describe what they call an "interlanguage," which is neither French nor English, but a hydrid that is created by and sometimes only understood by those who "talk immersion" (Lyster, 1987, in Rebuffot, 1993, p.100). While I must agree with Roy Lyster's point on the intelligibility of some of my students' utterances for any Francophone outside of immersion, I must also share the responsibility – and blame? – for the development of this "interlanguage." My own use of the French language is changing day after day. I end up using words and sentences that I would never had dreamed of inventing before. I sometimes hybridize English and French out of sheer fatigue, m'être rendue plus loin qu'une trentaine de page, mais j'ai adoré ma descente dans son texte. Il me sembla pénétrer un autre univers, aux couleurs diffuses et éthérées. Ces mots inconnus aux consonances troubles remplissaient le texte comme autant de personnages légèrement inquiétants ; ils lui conféraient une certaine magie et un attrait indéniable. Je me suis délectée des mots « welded », « gleams », « haze », « mournful », « gloom », « brooding » et « varnished », ignorant leur sens mais me refusant à utiliser le dictionnaire, pour ne pas détruire leur étonnant pouvoir. Ces mots, quelque puisse être leur rôle dans le texte, évoquèrent pour moi et continuent d'évoquer un tableau de Turner, grandiose et inquiétant.

J'ai passé bien des heures en face de mon lac aux eaux froides, aussi frustrée que contemplative, l'oubliant parfois pour continuer à vivre en français.

La littérature française n'offrait pas de mystère ni de dépaysement, mais elle continua de me façonner en m'offrant d'innombrables personnages pour exprimer mes pensées confuses, donner un sens à mes exaltations, ou débroussailler un chemin quand mes propres pas étaient en manque d'identification. Les mots français avaient été pendant dix-huit ans et étaient encore à cette époque les seuls à me définir parfaitement, à être moi. Tout particulièrement les mots de Proust.

« *À cette époque de la vie, on a déjà été atteint plusieurs fois par l'amour ; il n'évolue plus seul suivant ses propres lois inconnues et fatales, devant notre cœur étonné et passif. Nous venons à son aide, nous le faussons par la mémoire, par la suggestion. En reconnaissant un de ses symptômes, nous nous rappelons, nous faisons renaître les autres. Comme nous*

when it seems that my own brain is no longer functioning properly. More often though, I do it for the sake of practicality: it is just easier and more efficient to hybridize languages in order to get across to my students the scientific concepts studied. Surely I could rephrase endlessly and obtain similar results, but such practices would require oblivion to the eternal pressure to "get through the curriculum."

Je m'apprête à transférer la copie de Max de la montagne « non corrigé » au monticule « corrigé » quand mon annotation en rouge en dessous de la réponse de Max retient mon attention.

« Nomme un modèle qui t'est familier et donne une différence et une similarité entre ce modèle et ce qu'il représente. » (3 points)

Un petit camion en plastique. Similarité : il roule et il a les mêmes couleurs. Différence : il est en plastique et pas en métal.

Ce que tu décris ici est une maquette, pas un modèle.

J'ai réfléchi de longs instants à la réponse de Max. Elle est logique ; elle reflète parfaitement ce qu'un modèle signifie pour Max : un modèle réduit, une maquette. Il ne connaît d'ailleurs probablement pas le mot maquette. De son point de vue, c'est donc une réponse juste. Malheureusement pas du mien. J'avais pourtant insisté longuement sur ce concept en classe. J'avais expliqué en long, en large et en travers ce que signifiait le mot modèle. Dois-je en déduire que personne n'a prêté attention à mes explications soigneuses ? Ils avaient pourtant l'air d'écouter. Ou bien leur réalité du mot modèle est-elle si profondément ancrée dans leur manière d'appréhender le monde qu'une exposition de vingt minutes à une définition différente est incapable de leur faire entendre raison ? Comment suis-je donc supposée combattre quatorze ans de schémas cognitifs où un modèle est un avion miniature en plastique ?

"[...] bilinguality should be conceptualised on an additivity-subtractivity continuum which is the resultant force of two independent factors, that is, valorisation and cognitive functioning. [...] In the case of additive bilinguality a relatively high number of form-function mappings occur with many of these having two forms mapped onto one function. [...] In this case the bilingual child might develop a more complex set of form-function mappings than his monolingual counterpart, which possédons sa chanson, gravée en nous tout entière, nous n'avons pas besoin qu'une femme nous en dise le début [...] pour en trouver la suite. Et si elle commence au milieu [...] nous avons assez l'habitude de cette musique pour rejoindre tout de suite notre partenaire au passage où elle nous attend. » (Proust, 1913, p.114)

Je me rappelle encore lire ce passage comme une révélation. Tous ces sentiments et états d'âme indéfinis qui s'agitaient en moi, encombrants et indociles, se trouvaient soudain parfaitement circoncis et exprimés dans l'espace de quelques phrases. Les mots de Proust venaient existentialiser mon ressenti mieux que ma propre pensée n'aurait su le faire ; ils contribuaient à délimiter et unifier mon moi adolescent.

Proust est resté pour moi la quintessence de l'esprit et de la pensée française portés à leur plus haut niveau, mais il est culturellement « intransportable ». Aussi sont venus les jours où ses mots, dans un contexte montréalais, n'ont plus défini mon identité divisée, mes conflits linguistiques et ma solitude d'exilée.

D'aucuns argueront que les Québécois parlent français, et que la différence culturelle entre un Québécois et un Français est minime ; je maintiens le contraire. J'ai le souvenir de discussions où je ne prononçai pas un mot car les conventions sociales m'étaient inconnues et incompréhensibles, de rires collectifs où je forçai mon hilarité pour ne pas paraître ennuyeuse, et de publicités télévisées probablement hilarantes si j'avais su reconnaître les références culturelles.

Soudain tout avait explosé, tout ce que je me savais être n'était plus qu'un lointain souvenir douloureux. La France, les livres que

accounts for the cognitive advantages. On the other hand, in subtractive bilinguality the function that is to be mapped on is missing in the first place; as form-function mapping has not happened, it becomes difficult to map a new form onto absent or at best underdeveloped functions." (Hamers & Blanc, 2000, pp.108-109)

This model of bilinguality provides an explanation of why students might fail to internalize concepts in second language education when their first language is "devalorised" in the larger social landscape. I believe it probably applies to numerous allophones in Quebec who are struggling with French in Classes d'accueil (see Allen, 2006 for a study on the topic), but it cannot account for the difficulties that my students are facing. Their L1, English, is by no means "devalorized" but they still cannot "map new L2 forms" to go beyond the descriptive level. As soon as students need to explain a more complex phenomenon they switch back to English, even though they still incorporate specific vocabulary words in French inside their English-structured thought.

▯

• I'm sorry, but I don't quite get how the groups are organized. You say that Patricia and yourself teach in French, but Karen teaches the same grade 8 in English.

• Yes, exactly, but we can't use Karen's group as a control group for language, because they don't have the same level as the other groups. There would be a strong bias.

• How does that happen? Why are they weaker?

• All right, let me explain what's the dynamics of language in this school then. At the beginning of the year, students take a placement test in French. The best students have to take science and geography in French, and students that are too weak in French form a class that takes science and geography in English. But what happens is that these students are actually weaker in all subjects, so overall, they are the weakest group, the BOBO.

• The BOBO?

• Yes, that's what they call themselves.

BOBO, langue maternelle et littérature... Bien plus qu'un résultat de test d'aptitude, bien plus qu'un professeur de français différent, c'est toute une hiérarchie sociale au sein de l'école qui est contenue et codifiée dans ces niveaux de français. Hiérarchie instaurée par l'administration, perpétuée par les enseignants, et renforcée par les j'avais lu en primaire, la manière de draguer un gars, Obispo encombrant les ondes de la radio, les canons de l'habillement féminin, tout cela s'éloignait davantage à chaque saison. Toute ma connaissance sociale était devenue inutile, je devais tout réapprendre.

Ce n'est que bien plus tard que j'ai découvert « Lost in translation », d'Eva Hoffman et que j'ai cru lire dans ses mots le récit de ma propre immigration:

" (This) radical disjoining between word and thing is a desiccating alchemy, draining the world not only of significance but of its colors, striations, nuances – its very existence. It is the loss of a living connection." (Hoffman, 1989, p.107)

Comme Eva Hoffman, il m'a fallu trouver d'autres mots pour donner un sens à mes expériences et me façonner une identité morcelée et amalgamée. J'ai cherché des mots qui sauraient décrire ma solitude quotidienne à McGill dans une langue que je comprenais de mieux en mieux mais ne parlais pas, ma solitude culturelle dans un monde glacé où rien n'évoquait en moi le moindre souvenir ; mais des mots qui sauraient aussi peindre la convergence de ces solitudes et de ces influences.

▯

"Athanase's lined, walnut-colored face was still soft with recollections when the dinner bell rang. On his way to the dining room he remembered how he had once dreamed in a vague way of bringing back something of the spirit of revolutionary France to the older, wintry, clerical Norman France of Quebec. Be he had not done it. Probably nobody could do it. On the other hand, if the spirit of France could not grow here, surely the spirit of the new world could. After all, the French in Canada were also North Americans." (MacLennan, 1945)

élèves. Nul ne saurait dire d'où vient l'appellation « BOBO », mais ce mot venu de nulle part et listé dans aucun dictionnaire est le récipiendaire d'une signification complexe et profonde. Plus qu'un assemblage aléatoire de quatre lettres, c'est une construction sociale dont le sens a été inventé et négocié par une micro-société, en l'occurrence une communauté scolaire. Si je n'étais attristée par la ségrégation contenue dans ce simple mot aux consonances enfantines, je m'émerveillerais de contempler le processus de construction du langage à l'œuvre. BOBO est un excellent exemple de la manière dont la langue construit au lieu de refléter la réalité sociale.

• Guys, I have a favor to ask. I need a couple of students to validate a questionnaire in French. It just means that you have to come for half an hour, read the questions, and tell me if they make sense or not, what I should change, and if you understand them. It's really not long, and that would help me a lot.

• What's it for, Miss?

• For my research project at McGill.

• You said it's in French?

• Yes, I need volunteers who can read French relatively well. Around 10 volunteers.

• Miss, I'd do it, but I'm just in BOBO French, so I don't think that's a good idea if I do it. You'd better ask these Littérature guys.

• Really? Amy, can you do it after school?

• Sure. I can also ask Morgan, she's in Langue Maternelle, so that's OK.

• Good, thanks. Eileen, would you mind coming as well?

• But I'm BOBO too!

• You know, I really don't mind if you don't speak French that well.

This form of language segregation is based on the same premises than racism and other "isms." It sets different standards and different expectations than for the rest of the students. It works on a deficiency model where teachers and administrators expect these BOBO students to fare poorly on exams and to have more discipline issues. The BOBO level is used as a bottom limit referential: "If a BOBO can do it, then anyone can." Sadly, this segregation

J'ai lu « Two Solitudes » par hasard, peut-être un peu à cause de son titre : le livre ne coûtait qu'un dollar dans une vente à McGill, et l'auteur portait le même nom que la bibliothèque où j'allais parfois m'asseoir. Le hasard voulut donc que MacLennan soit le premier à mettre en mots mes déchirements et à me faire entrevoir que je n'étais pas condamnée à voir mon identité annihilée. J'ai progressivement pris confiance en l'idée que vivre n'était pas ma seule option en Amérique du Nord, je pouvais aussi être. Avec un peu de temps. Et beaucoup d'efforts.

J'ai donc décidé d' « apprendre » la culture québécoise et la culture anglophone du Québec. Je n'y ai mis ni ordre ni méthode, j'ai juste tenté de recréer de manière consciente et volontaire les innombrables liens qui tissent l'identité d'une personne, des premières comptines de la petite enfance aux publicités saturées de références historico-socio-culturelles.

J'ai pioché au hasard sur les rayons de littérature anglaise et québécoise, à la recherche de noms qui sonnaient familier, j'ai passé de longues heures à lire l'histoire du Québec. J'ai marché dans les rues de Montréal, encore et encore, pour que les noms et les odeurs deviennent familiers, pour que naissent en moi ces attentes et cette connaissance de ce qui nous attend au prochain coin de rue, cette anticipation d'infimes détails qui fait que l'on se sent chez soi.

L'appropriation d'un lieu ou d'un état se fait pour moi par la lecture et l'écriture : un amalgame réinterprété des narrations littéraires d'autrui. Un élément ne fait partie de mon identité après l'avoir vécu que parce que je l'ai écrit, ou

based on the level of French proficiency is a side effect of bilingual programs and French immersion. Whoever was not able to follow science or geography in a second language was relegated in the BOBO class. In that sense, bilingual education based on the enrichment model – what one would call a valuable endeavor – is at the origin of streaming and of a form of "ableism." I am unsure of what the solution should be. Should the administration get rid of bilingual programs altogether? Should we incorporate these "BOBO" students in bilingual classes even if their level of French proficiency does not allow them to follow? And if nothing were to change, how do teachers help alleviate the stigma of being a "BOBO"?

• Anne-Sophie, c'est toi qui a Harry, Nick, Adam et Jason dans ta classe de français ?

• Non, je les ai pas. Ils sont en « Littérature » ? Parce que moi j'ai les huitièmes littérature, je suis chanceuse cette année.

• Je sais pas en quoi ils sont, je crois qu'en sciences, littérature et langue maternelle sont mélangés. Qui est-ce qui enseigne aux langues maternelles alors ?

• JP ou Damien, je suis pas sûre. Peut-être plutôt JP, parce que Damien a de la misère avec son groupe, alors il doit avoir les BOBO.

▯

"Immersion education in Canada has, from its beginning in Montreal in 1965 to the present, been powerfully promoted by parents (...). The first immersion classroom in 1965 owed much to parent initiation. Since then, the Canadian Parents for French organization has been a powerful pressure group for the recognition and dissemination, evolution and dispersion of immersion education." (Baker, 2006, pp. 305-306)

This very positive attitude toward French immersion programs depends greatly on the level of governance one is looking at. Parents and the school administration do envision French as an additional tool available to achieve success in life. They have a positive attitude toward bilingual programs, which they see as enrichment for their children and students.

In parallel, immersion programs can be perceived as a threat by Francophones who were historically the only French-English bilinguals in Canada (Heller, 1999). By giving access to this cultural and linguistic capital to Anglophones, immersion programs alienates Francophones in a certain way.

ressenti à nouveau à travers les mots de quelqu'un d'autre. J'ai donc fait la connaissance de Saint-Henri en lisant Gabrielle Roy et du Vieux-Montréal en lisant le Roman de Julie Papineau.

De fil en aiguille, au fil des années, je suis peu à peu devenue canadienne, une « hyphenated Canadian ». Je ris maintenant naturellement quand quelqu'un raconte une blague, et je suis capable de répondre aux questions de Cranium.

"But the English, working sporadically and generally for money, never planning anything, had inherited the continent by default when the politicians around the French king had decided to write off the Saint Lawrence area as so many acres of snow and ice. After that, the French who were left in Canada had seemed unable to discover any common purpose except to maintain their identity. How they had done it was a miracle. But the purpose had also been like a chain around their neck, making them cautious, conservative, static." (MacLennan, 1945)

À mon avis, les mots de MacLennan se sont malheureusement avérés... Malgré mes efforts et mes essais répétés pour faire disparaître mon accent français, je n'ai jamais réussi à me sentir acceptée au sein de la communauté québécoise francophone « pure laine ». Basée sur ma propre expérience, j'ajouterais « fermé » à « cautious, conservative, static ». J'avoue en avoir conçu du ressentiment et avoir renoncé.

La culture québécoise francophone continue certainement de modeler mon identité d'une certaine manière, mais j'ai quitté Saint-Bruno pour NDG, et refusé de travailler pour la CSDM.

▯

Je suis rentrée en éducation à McGill il y a deux ans et quelques mois, pour les simples

Some teachers teaching in French to Anglophone students wish one would stop this bilingual nonsense and revert everything back to English. Their argument is that concepts have to be watered down too much in order to address the linguistic challenges they are facing and that they are lacking time and support to develop the necessary learning materials for immersion students.

Students curse French as a mark-lowering factor and a hindrance from their understanding. Their attitude is one of opposition, reluctance and impatient endurance (they know they will eventually move up to grade levels taught in English). I realize that it is one of my responsibilities to change the attitude and atmosphere surrounding French in the classroom, but I fail to know how.

• I just want to understand why my son has a C in science, when he always had an A before.

• Well, there are several factors that might come into play. Had Sammy already taken science in French before?

• No, but...

• You know, the French aspect can be a pretty big hurdle for some students and maybe that's why...

• I don't see what you mean, my son is in Langue maternelle, he has no problem understanding it. He's good in French, that's not the issue.

• Oh, I don't mean he's not good in French, not at all. I'm sure he's excellent, but there is a big difference between being good in a French class and using French to express scientific ideas and to explain a scientific phenomenon. It's very different to have your thought structured in French in another topic, and it's sometimes difficult for some students. Even if they're excellent in their Langue maternelle class.

The situation that Sammy and my other immersion students are facing is well described by Josiane Hammers and Michel Blanc (2000) as a case where "a child has learned his highly valorised L1 for all functions, including literacy-related ones, and receives his schooling via an L2 without having much contact with people who speak that language" (p.132). This description is good characterisation of immersion programmes in Canada and in Quebec (De Mejia, 2002; Rebuffot, 1993; Swain & Johnson, 1997).

raisons qu'aucune autre université n'acceptait de créditer tous mes cours de sciences et que l'enseignement seul offrait des horaires de travail et des vacances compatibles avec un enfant en bas âge. J'ai donc commencé ce programme pour les plus mauvaises raisons possibles, sans autre attente que celle d'obtenir un emploi assez rapidement. Je m'étais habituée au désert social des années du B.Sc. et n'espérais aucun changement non plus dans ce domaine.

Well, I guess life had something different in store for me...

J'ai rencontré à McGill des personnes qui sont devenues des amis. J'ai découvert tout au fond de moi une véritable passion pour l'enseignement. Et j'ai du apprendre à parler anglais ; comprendre ne suffisait plus.

Je me souviens encore de mon premier stage. Je me suis retrouvée face à un groupe d'adolescents parlant à toute vitesse un langage bien différent de celui auquel j'étais habituée. Les élèves interagissaient et m'interpellaient sans que je sois capable de répondre assez rapidement. Mes mots s'emmêlaient, s'égaraient, et mon cerveau luttait frénétiquement pour fournir une réponse sans plus qu'une seconde ou deux de délai. Une seconde ou deux, je l'ai très rapidement compris, est une éternité quand il s'agit d'intervenir dans le dialogue d'une classe du secondaire. J'ai paniqué, je n'allais jamais y arriver ! J'ai alors résolu d'enseigner en français après la graduation.

À la fin de la première session, tous les étudiants d'éducation durent passer un test d'aptitude en anglais, pour obtenir le permis d'enseignement. Nous étions tous

Interestingly, Anne-Marie De Mejia (2002) argues that these immersion programmes are typical examples of bilingual education based on an enrichment model, a claim that is supported by Josiane Hamers and Michel Blanc's (2000) description of enrichment as "normally designed for majority-group children, (aiming) at developing an additive form of bilinguality" (p.322).

Yet, to contend that the enrichment model is framing my practice would be an over-statement. I would like it to be, but I find myself at cross-roads, trying to accommodate students whose only concern is to get an A (whatever the language might be) and my own professional conscience that would like to see French as an enrichment.

This personal dilemma is even further amplified by contradictory conclusions regarding the potential benefits of immersion. Indeed, immersion programs are supposed to develop an additive form of bilinguality, but ironically, after describing the case where "a child has learned his highly valorised L1 for all functions (...) and receives his schooling via an L2 without having much contact with people who speak that language" (p. 132), Josiane Hamers and Michel Blanc (2000) conclude that "there are neither positive nor negative consequences from his bilingual education, but he is likely to remain dominant in L1" (p. 132).

"Elitist bilingualism often serves the interests of the dominant power group and upper class membership. A knowledge of two languages may have high cultural and economic value, allowing access to privileged groups or high status positions and power. Elitist bilingualism derives from choice. Folk bilingualism is often by necessity or compulsion. A person may become bilingual in order to survive. [...] The distinction between folk and elitist bilingualism is important because it highlights the motives of children during and upon entry to bilingual schooling. [...] For one child, the motive may be to achieve high status in society. For another child, the motive may be for security and survival. For one, full commitment to bilingualism may be induced through prospective economic and social rewards. For another, commitment may be lacking due to the imposition of bilingualism and where there are no or few perceived useful advantages of bilingualism." (Baker, 1988, p. 47)

I can easily image the motives of parents upon their child's "entry to bilingual schooling": elitist pride and great expectations might best define them. However, watching my students and listening to their interactions day after day, I question their motive. It may not be "for security and survival" (even though sometimes pressure from parents un peu nerveux, après tout, il y allait de notre avenir d'éducateurs. Un étudiant particulièrement désagréable, sachant que j'étais française, me demanda :

- You really think you're gonna pass this test?
- I hope so...

Hébétée, c'est tout ce que j'ai trouvé à répondre. Bien sûr, ce soir là, je me suis mentalement repassé la scène des dizaines de fois, élaborant des réponses percutantes et cinglantes à cette espèce d'idiot condescendant. Ce soir-là, j'ai aussi pris une résolution : non, je n'allais certainement pas enseigner en français. Cela prendrait le temps et les efforts que cela prendrait, mais j'allais continuer et continuer jusqu'à ce que je maîtrise parfaitement l'anglais. I won't let go until I completely master it.

I went through the last two years with this promise to myself in mind. I'm not there yet, I haven't succeeded so far, but I have improved. And what I could never have dreamed to happen actually came true: I got a very much sought-after job in English and French. I now teach in English, and don't have a one second delay when answering students.

« Une langue prend en charge notre conscience et nos affectivités. Et à un degré plus haut, elle est ce par quoi l'homme est à même de se dépasser en accédant à une forme de création, puisque toutes nos créations, au sens large, sont un langage. [...] C'est bien au moyen de notre langue, que nous nous découvrons, que nous nous révélons, que nous parvenons à nous relier aux autres, à l'univers des vivants, à quelque transcendance à laquelle certains d'entre nous croient. » (Cheng, 2002, p. 10)

leaves us teachers to wonder about the psychological security of some children), but it is most likely neither to "achieve high status in society," if the society is meant at large. From my observations, the reason for these students to enter bilingual programs is a subtle mix of parental pressure and loath to fall into the BOBO category. What are in this case the "useful advantages of bilingualism," and do these motives promote a positive attitude toward second language acquisition? I do not know. I just feel more and more that there is a need for a different model of bilingual education: a model that might be specific to Quebec English schools but that would take into account all these variables and contradictions that I mentioned before.

• I wanted to talk to you both about our last department heads meeting. And also, I've been talking with Michael, about class averages in grade 7 and 8.

• I know, what you're gonna say, Michael already mentioned it to me. Parents find that class averages are too low, and Michael wants us to bump them up. Is that right?

• Well, sort of. Yeah, it's true that parents are expressing some concerns about it. The bottom line, Michael told me, is "how can we change the program so that kids are not failing science?"

• The answer isn't that difficult. Actually, there are two options: either we switch middle school science back to English, or we dumb it down. And honestly, we're already dumbing it down a lot. I don't wanna water the program down so much that we end up teaching nothing, just so that Michael is happy.

• No, no, it's not about dumbing down the scientific concepts... Rather, how can we simplify the language component of it, so that the French is not such a big hurdle?

• You know, we already removed as many word problems as possible, but there's no way, you need the language to learn something. And we've already talked with the French department, they have their own program to follow, so we can't really outsource anything.

• (me) And there's no way they will switch it back to English? That'd be the easiest way.

• No, or at least, not at the moment. They need some French in the curriculum, and we happen to have the most bilingual staff in science. And

J'ai découvert François Cheng lors d'un de mes retours en France. Son parcours m'a fascinée, émerveillée. Arrivé en France à la fin de l'adolescence, ne parlant pas un mot de français, il a entrepris entre le français et le chinois un dialogue qui l'a façonné tout au long de sa vie. Il fait aujourd'hui partie de l'Académie Française, haute instance littéraire regroupant les grands auteurs français.

François Cheng est le modèle que je souhaite suivre : modèle où le dialogue entre deux langues et deux cultures enrichit l'homme et l'éducateur.

J'aspire moi aussi à « me dépasser en accédant à une forme de création » en anglais.

Qui sait ? Un jour peut-être.

NOTE:

"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one's lifetime." (Twain, 1869)

Words came back through the years, lonely fragments but oddly faithful to the original quote.

As for this horrifying story of stuffed animals, I found it to be "The Landlady," in "The Umbrella Man" (Dahl, 1998). What a surprise, when looking for it, to realize that it did exist, not only as a distant remembrance in my imagination.

there's pressure from parents to maintain a high French content.

• Then, I don't really see a solution. All we can do is get rid of the more hardcore science and have a more "global awareness," "environmental science" program. That'd be in line with the QEP, and kids wouldn't be failing so much. But Michael has to understand that it's the first time these kids take real science. Of course they have a hard time, it's new and quite abstract.

• I know, and I totally understand, I'm just telling you what Michael said.

"There may be a threshold level of linguistic competence which a bilingual child must attain both in order to avoid cognitive deficits and allow the potentially beneficial aspects of becoming bilingual to influence his cognitive growth." (Cummins, in Baker, 1988, p.25)

As controversial and contested as it might be, here is probably the answer to some of my questions, as to why my students need to structure their thought in English as soon as they need to go beyond the descriptive level. Why does this not feel empowering? Maybe because Jim Cummins' statement is as large and vague as the famous Québécois conclusion "Ce qui fait que c'est ça." What is this threshold, and do we evaluate it? I doubt administrators even considered these questions when deciding to have certain subjects taught in French. Rumors run that the science department teaching staff was one of the most francophone, and that this alone was at the origin of our bilingual program in science. So much for cognitively sound reasons to teach science in French.

So what do I do next? How do I teach science without sacrificing French, and vice-versa? What balance do I need to strike in order to be fair to my students while meeting my mandate as a teacher and remaining true to myself?

Now has come the time to conclude, and I feel I offered more questions than answers to my own questions. I would like to believe that I somewhat succeeded in defining the curriculum as I live it along with my own linguistic identity, but this belief is short-lived. Endeavoring to delineate my self within the margins of paper just made me realize how manifold and multifaceted the self really is. Many more than two columns would be needed, and many more words to shape these columns.

One of my initial intents was to define myself as an educator too; here again I cannot help but feel the vanity of such a goal and appreciate the randomness of my actions as an educator. I wished to teach according to well-defined principles and to a solid philosophy of education; by requiring us to write such a philosophy, several courses at McGill lead me to believe that teaching could be clear-cut. Unfortunately, I realize

more and more that most of what I do and say in the classroom is neither thoughtful nor grounded in theory. It just happens as the product of inspiration and instinct. It springs out of that flawed and contingent person that I am. It springs out of what I am, not what I think.

NOTES

1. A pseudonym.

2. All names are pseudonyms.

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ABORIGINAL EDUCATION AS CULTURAL BROKERAGE: NEW ABORIGINAL TEACHERS REFLECT ON LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT. This paper reports on a Talking Circle of six beginning Aboriginal teachers who discussed their roles as teachers. Participants criticized teacher education programs for not preparing them to teach in ways that are respectful of Aboriginal languages and culture. They discussed the importance of coming to know themselves and their culture. The paper concludes with suggestions for decolonizing teacher preparation so that Aboriginal teachers are enabled as protectors of Aboriginal culture and brokers with Euro-Canadian culture.

FORMER LES AUTOCHTONES COMME AGENTS D'ÉCHANGE CULTUREL: COMMENT LES NOUVEAUX ENSEIGNANTS D'ORIGINE AUTOCHTONE INFLUENCENT LE LANGUAGE ET LA CULTURE EN CLASSE

RÉSUMÉ. Cet article fait le compte-rendu des révélations faites par six nouveaux enseignants d'origine autochtone au cours d'un cercle de discussion sur leur rôle d'enseignant. Les participants ont reproché aux programmes de formation des maîtres de ne pas les préparer à enseigner de manière respectueuse du langage et de la culture autochtones. Par ailleurs, ils ont souligné l'importance d'apprendre à se connaître et à explorer leur culture. En conclusion, les auteurs suggèrent des approches pour décoloniser la préparation des enseignants d'origine autochtone afin de leur permettre d'agir comme protecteurs de la culture autochtone et agents d'échange culturel avec la culture euro-canadienne.

> Native teachers began to articulate the dilemmas they face in "trying to regain both knowledge and understanding of our languages and culture" within a European model of education. As they explored ways in which Native language and content might be used in the classroom, they initially thought it feasible only to alternate Native and non-Native approaches during the school day. Not until later did they consider ways of melding the two. (Leavitt, 1995, p. 125)

Teachers of Aboriginal children encounter unique challenges in the Canadian educational system. As the opening quotation reveals, Aboriginal teachers employed in schools are situated in the borderlands between languages and cultures, and have important choices to make as they prepare Aboriginal students to

walk between two parallel yet very different worlds. The tensions experienced by these teachers are particularly acute as they feel a strong commitment to serving and protecting their students and Aboriginal communities.

Many images have been used to convey the unique role of Aboriginal educators, including navigating, negotiating, melding, synthesizing, bridging, translating, and brokering. While each image has strengths and limitations, we have framed this exploration of the perspectives of six new Aboriginal teachers in Ontario around Arlene Stair's (1995) conceptualization of Aboriginal education as cultural brokerage. Aboriginal teachers broker divergent educational goals in order to serve the interests of their communities. As the participants in our study reflected on their beliefs and experiences, they continuously grappled with how they could preserve Aboriginal languages, culture, and ways of knowing.

This paper, by giving voice to the dialogue among early career Aboriginal teachers, provides insights into the complexity of brokering language and culture. This is particularly timely as the *Ontario First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007) makes a commitment to "a holistic and integrated approach to Aboriginal student outcomes" (p. 6) that "promotes the development of a positive personal and cultural identity, as well as a sense of belonging to both Aboriginal and wider communities" (p. 8). Emerging from the insights of Aboriginal participants are possibilities for improving teacher education and professional development for Aboriginal teachers. Also, the Association of Canadian Deans of Education's (2009) Accord on Indigenous Education supports culturally appropriate pedagogy, recognizes "the demise of Indigenous languages," and advocates for their "reclamation, restoration, and revitalization."

ISSUES AND RESEARCH

> A foundational element of a high quality First Nations education system is the presence of teachers and educators who understand First Nations history, culture, intellectual traditions and language. They must also comprehend First Nations relationships with the land and creation. (Anderson, Horton & Orwick, 2004, p. 2)

The above quotation, from a paper included in *The New Agenda: A Manifesto for First Nations Education in Ontario* by the Chiefs of Ontario (2005), identifies the central role of Aboriginal teachers in preserving languages and culture. It speaks to the importance of preparing Aboriginal teachers so that they both understand their languages and culture and have the skills to teach through culture and the ability to teach Aboriginal languages through immersion.

Aboriginal education needs to be considered within the historical and social context of colonial practices designed to eradicate Aboriginal languages and

culture and facilitate assimilation into the dominant language and culture. As Prime Minster Stephen Harper (2008) conceded in a formal apology on behalf of the Parliament of Canada on June 11, 2008, residential schools served to "remove and isolate children from the influence of their families, homes, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture." He also acknowledged that "these institutions gave rise to abuse and neglect," "created a void in many lives and communities," and "undermined the ability of many to adequately parent their own children and sowed the seeds for generations to follow." While this apology acknowledged the harm done by residential schools, it did not acknowledge that unexamined racial and cultural assumptions are endemic to society and engrained in Eurocentric views of education in North America (Ladson-Billings, 1998). These assumptions, when applied to Aboriginal education, lead to normative assumptions and judgments that fail to account for "the multiple, nuanced, and historically- and geographically-located epistemologies and ontologies found in Indigenous communities" (Brayboy, 2005, p. 427) and lead to proposed solutions that are not responsive to the cultural traditions of Aboriginal students (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008).

Kirkness (1992) attributes to residential schools a legacy of cultural conflict, alienation, poor preparation for the workplace, and difficulty coping with life generally. The *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (Canada, 1996) affirms the disruptive impact of government policies on the economic and cultural foundations of Aboriginal communities. The history of encounters between Aboriginal and Euro-Canadian cultures, however, is more than a series of unfortunate events. Rather, the forces of colonization consciously set out to eradicate Indigenous culture. Colonialism has "brought complete disorder to colonized people, disconnecting them from their histories... their languages...and their ways of thinking, feeling and interacting with the world" (Smith, 1999, p. 28). In Canada, educational institutions have served the assimilationist interests of the colonizer (Binda, 2001). Even today, the undermining of Aboriginal languages and cultures still occurs through neo-colonial governance structures and teacher education practices (Bear Nicholas, 2001). The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs policies, while encouraging Aboriginal administrative control of schooling, seeks to align First Nations systems with provincial systems and make "little reference to the role of education in strengthening and supporting First Nations' languages, cultures, and knowledge" (Peters & White, 2009, p. 115).

Aboriginal people acknowledge that there are considerable challenges facing their communities, and that educational outcomes for their children are distressingly low. They are genuinely worried that the health of Aboriginal cultures continues to decline (Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2001), and that many young Aboriginal people possess little knowledge of their language and culture (Statistics Canada, 2003). Although Aboriginal leaders and scholars have long

advocated for educational experiences that identify, represent and celebrate their languages, cultures, and values, the Ontario "provincial curriculum does not allow First Nations students to learn in their own language or learn their own history in a meaningful way" (Anderson, Horton, & Orwick, 2004, p. 8). Even the *Ontario First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007), which offers a "holistic and integrated approach to improving Aboriginal student outcomes" and is more sensitive to cultural needs, leaves decision-making authority in the hands of school boards but not Aboriginal education authorities and communities.

Acoose (1995) identifies the need for healing in order for "students [to] reconnect with self, others and the true history of their peoples" (p. 20). This does not mean separating Aboriginal knowledge from Western knowledge, as integration "can counteract the effects of cultural mismatch" (Canadian Council of Learning, 2007, p. 7) that have contributed to poor academic performance. Indeed, there is also evidence that when "schools embrace programs, practices, and personnel that are informed by a combination of conventional and Aboriginal-specific sensitivities... [students] can operated successfully in two, hopefully integrated, worlds" (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003, p. 105). Bear Nicholas (2001), who emphasizes the urgency of immersion in culture and language in ensuring survival and renewal, reminds us that "it is the Native people themselves who hold the keys to their own liberation" (p. 28) and "[o]nly the people themselves can do it" (p. 28).

Nicholas Bear (2001) also cautions against neo-colonialism, which can lead to the oppressed being "easily coopted, however unconsciously, into working in the interest of the colonizer" (p. 23). In particular, he points to Native teacher education programs, which are "virtually the same training as that provided to non-Natives" (p. 23) with "the cultural content... little more than an add-on" (p. 23). Critical to breaking the bonds of colonization and neocolonization are decolonizing strategies. Smith (1999), in *Decolonizing Methodologies,* emphasizes the importance of "recovering our own stories of the past" (p. 39) which is bound to "a recovery of our language and epistemological foundations" (p. 39).

Decolonized Aboriginal teachers, with their understandings of the intricacies of balancing Euro-Canadian curriculum with Aboriginal language and culture (Archibald, Pidgeon, Janvier, Commodore & McCormick, 2002), have a critical role to play in developing culturally responsive schooling for Indigenous youth (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). It is important that accommodation or integration be on terms that ensure the preservation and protection of Aboriginal culture. As Stairs (1995) cautions, "the linguistic and curricular content of Native education can be adequately pursued only when embedded in traditional cultural values concerning ways of using language, of interacting, and of knowing" (p. 139). This makes Aboriginal teachers crucial cultural brokers negotiating in the interests of their people through the content they teach, their teaching methods, and the ways in which they balance between divergent

goals such as cultural reclamation and economic advancement (Stairs, 1995). Leavitt (1995) identifies four aspects of culture that need to be considered in brokering between Aboriginal and Western epistemologies:

- *Material Culture* refers to the content of courses;
- *Social Culture* refers to the relationship between classroom interactions and the interactions and relationships that take place within the Aboriginal community;
- *Cognitive Culture* refers to the differences in worldviews, value systems, spiritual understandings and practical knowledge between Aboriginal and Western societies;
- *Linguistic Culture* extends beyond language to the role of language in the community, such as the ways in which language is used (mainly orally in Aboriginal communities) and how it is used to maintain culture across generations.

This four-part conception of culture is useful as it marks a shift from a narrow cultural inclusion approach, focused on content, to a cultural base conceptualization that incorporates all aspects of culture into the education of Aboriginal peoples.

There is a need to understand the tensions experienced by Aboriginal teachers called upon to serve in the capacity of cultural brokers, even as they struggle with their own identities and come to know themselves as Aboriginal people. While Leavitt (1995) and Stairs (1995) studied the perceptions of experienced teachers and teacher candidates, their work is based on data collected in the late 1980s, and much has changed in the intervening decades; for example, there is Battiste's (2002) recommendation that indigenous knowledge be an integral part of Aboriginal education and there is the manifesto of the Chiefs of Ontario (2005). There is also a growing literature that is respectful of Aboriginal languages and culture, including studies of exemplary educational models (e.g., Curwen Doige, 2003; Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003). This study, by attending to the stories of experienced Aboriginal teachers, can help us better understand what it is like for them to act as brokers across languages and cultures. By learning from their stories, we can begin the process of making teacher education and ongoing professional development more responsive to the needs of the Aboriginal teachers who will serve or are serving as cultural brokers.

CONTEXT AND METHOD

Our research gives explicit attention to the voices of six beginning Aboriginal teachers in the province of Ontario (Cherubini, Kitchen, & Engemann, 2008). These six teachers were from the three Aboriginal groups in Ontario: three

Anishinabe, two Mohawk, and one Métis. Four were female and two male. Four were in their first two years of teaching, while two were in their fifth. Three taught on-reserve while three worked in provincial schools. They ranged in age from late 20's to mid-40's.

A limitation of the study is the number of participants involved, which was made smaller by inclement weather. This small group of teachers willing to travel great distances and devote a weekend to this research were particularly able and committed, and they did offer a diversity of experiences based in terms of identity, gender, and school settings. While the voices and experiences contained in the 134 pages of transcripts represent a rich resource, we recognize the need for a wider study of the experiences of Aboriginal teachers in their first years of practice.

Participants attended a Talking Circle over the course of 3-days in December 2007, at a location that had symbolic and spiritual significance. The Wildfire Research Method (Hodson, 2004), a semi-structured format that invites participants to share their experiences and observations in a Talking Circle, provided a communal and sacred research environment respectful of the traditions and cultural beliefs of Aboriginal people and the importance of a relationship with the land. The Aboriginal facilitator used general questions related to participants' experiences to guide discussion of a range of topics; for example, reasons for becoming teachers, teacher education experiences, working with Aboriginal students, community issues, and teaching language and culture. An Elder played a crucial role by modeling interconnectedness, respect, and the wisdom of the Indigenous intellectual tradition (Goulet & McLeod, 2002). This is consistent with Cajete's (2008) observation that "Indigenous educational research is best performed when an Indigenous view and purpose are represented in the conceptualization, development, and implementation of research" (p. 204). Also participating were Euro-Canadian university scholars, Aboriginal and Euro-Canadian graduate students, and an Aboriginal university staff member. The bi-epistemic research team (Cherubini, Kitchen, & Hodson, 2008) acknowledged and respected both Aboriginal and Euro-Canadian knowledge traditions in order to garner more profound understandings of Aboriginal epistemologies and new teacher experiences. The team, thus, benefited from insider and outsider knowledge, as well as the guidance of the Aboriginal research officer of the university's Aboriginal research unit (Smith, 1999).

In analyzing the data, the bi-epistemic research team borrowed tenets of grounded theory to provide "a procedure for developing categories of information, interconnecting the categories, building a 'story' that connects the categories, and ending with a discursive set of theoretical propositions" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, as cited in Creswell, 1998, p. 150). Members of the team identified emerging patterns in the data while considering individual responses as "textual wholes,

not as reflecting some reality outside the spoken words" (Hilden & Honkasalo, 2006, p. 44). Codes, categories, individual stories, and the Aboriginal context were juxtaposed and discussed by the team collectively in order to identify key themes derived from the interactions of the six participants. Aboriginal members of the team played crucial roles in providing a cultural context for statements made by participants. Also, in presenting evidence, we sought to maintain the distinctive voices and stories of the participants (Smith, 1999) while modifying details that might reveal the identities of participants. In the spirit of respectful inquiry, this paper has been reviewed by the bi-epistemic research team and quotations have been vetted by participants.

FINDINGS

The six Aboriginal participants in our study discussed a wide-range of educational issues over the course of the three-day retreat. The conversation often turned to language and culture, which were closely linked to their self-identities, cultural identities, and identities as teachers working with Aboriginal students and communities. Participants reflected on the joys and tensions they experienced as teachers and role models attempting to broker between Aboriginal and Western cultures. They sought to become more aware of their languages and culture so that they could be more effective in protecting and promoting their culture while also addressing their students' need to be prepared for the outside world. As cultural brokers, however, their first concern was serving the interests of their people.

In this section, we look at five themes that emerged from the data: (1) Teacher Education and Induction; (2) Facing the Realities of Aboriginal Students and Communities; (3) Self-Identity and Cultural Identity; (4) Teaching Languages; and (5) Teaching Culture.

Teacher education and induction

> Is it Indian education or is it educating Indians? (Louise)

The participants in our study generally found their teacher education programs to be of limited value in preparing them for teaching Aboriginal students (Kitchen, Cherubini, Trudeau, & Hodson, in press). They also received limited support and faced discrimination once they began teaching.

Three participants – Tom, Louise, and Clare – were enrolled in Native Teacher Education Programs (NTEP) in Ontario. NTEP is an intense, short-duration – e.g., two semesters over two years – program designed to prepare Aboriginal people without post-secondary education to teach the Euro-Canadian curriculum to Aboriginal students. They disagreed with the philosophies of their programs, which focused on training them to teach the Euro-Canadian curriculum in conventional ways. Tom lamented the loss of 80% of his classmates, who were "weeded out" for being unwilling or unable to adapt to the program by, for

example, "cutting-and-pasting" lesson plans. Louise, who regarded her program as assimilationist, lamented, "It's the same old system and the system's a problem in the mainstream society." Louise, who observed that Aboriginal faculty were "non-speakers... following the guidelines of the program" rather than adapting it to Aboriginal teacher candidates or students, wanted the program to educate Aboriginal students using Aboriginal educational methods. All three, along with other participants, were concerned that they were not prepared to meet the challenges of teaching in Aboriginal communities.

Jocelyn and Tanya were generally pleased with the five-year Eurocentric degree programs from which they graduated. They believed that they received a sound foundation in theory, reflection, and practice that they were able to adapt to their teaching settings. They received no preparation, however, in Aboriginal education. Drew, who was not a certified teacher, relied on his ability to speak his Native language and the "accumulated tons and tons of tricks and stories" he amassed working in Native counseling programs.

Participants received limited support once they began teaching. Jocelyn and Clare worked for administrators who were generally supportive. Clare, for example, felt that the "principal's been very helpful; he's been guiding me whenever he's available you know along the way over there." Nonetheless, she and Jocelyn were largely on their own when it came to planning their courses. This was particularly challenging as culturally appropriate resources were largely unavailable. Those working in Euro-Canadian schools often felt isolated, even marginalized. Louise received little guidance or peer support. This lack of support compounded by unreasonable expectations and judgments caused Drew to ask, "Does anybody else feel the pressure of you need to be more than a teacher? I'm in a mainstream [school] too and it's like they want me to role model and teach proper behaviour."

"They don't treat you as a teacher. You're just an Indian teacher," Drew said, reflecting on the discrimination experienced by Aboriginal teachers. Clare found Euro-Canadian teachers unwelcoming, recalling that only the custodian greeted her in the morning, while "the other staff would go quiet" when she walked into the staffroom. Louise was provided with a small and isolated workspace which made her feel like "a mushroom in a dark, damp corner." Tom, who recalled a teacher recently calling "Tomahawk Man" and telling "Wahoo" jokes, wished he had been taught "how to communicate with other teachers and shown how differently we see things than they do." Jocelyn, an award-winning high school and university student, believed that she and other certified Aboriginal teachers in her area experienced institutional discrimination when applying to teach subjects such as mathematics. When she raised these concerns with a provincial school district official, he defended board hiring practices and seemed "patronizing."

Overall, the Aboriginal teachers in our study felt poorly prepared and supported in their efforts to teach Aboriginal students. They questioned the Eurocentric assumptions underlying their education, and stressed the importance of preparing them for teaching a challenging population in ways that are sensitive to Aboriginal languages and culture.

Facing the realities of Aboriginal students and communities

> There are a lot of obstacles to Aboriginal students learning and a lot of it is environmental, in their homes. So my belief is that when they come to class they can share what's happening in their lives, as much as they feel comfortable with, and then it goes up in smoke to the Creator. (Clare)

"Educating our youth" is a "really tough job," Tom said as he reflected on his personal "life struggles" and the challenges facing Aboriginal youth and the wider Aboriginal community. All six participants recognized the immense challenges facing Aboriginal people and believed that as teachers they could have a positive impact on students' lives.

"I think that's one of the biggest challenges I face in my job is how to get kids engaged who don't see any reason whatsoever for education," commented Jocelyn. "How do you pass along... the importance of education when the community social structure is set up so that it is irrelevant what kind of education you have?" Multiple generations of colonization and poverty, Drew continued, meant that too often "their parents are all still engaged in their own [negative] behaviours and attitudes." Louise added her concern that casinos and "smoke shacks" also contributed to the devaluing of education. Drew offered an historical perspective:

> That's the generation, second of two, that didn't have the language because of residential schools and that's where the biggest obstacle is to teaching our kids.... If we can't get them embracing the language... it's really harder for the kids.... One of my students asked "Why are you putting so much pressure on me for? Why are you pressuring our generation to be the saviours? That's your role." [Others say,] "We don't want to be Indian students.... We just want to be students.... Proximity... to an urban centre has done a lot to kind of undermine language retention.... You live on welfare and [perhaps] preserve the language, or have a job yet lose everything about who and what you are. Why do we always have to make those really tough choices?

Although these challenges caused by colonization are daunting, the tenor of the discussion did not remain negative for long. Such comments were soon followed by laughter as they recalled the joys of teaching. Through sharing and healing the pain soon turned to determination and hope.

Self-identity and cultural identity

> In the last 5 years I've been taking back my language.... And doing everything I can to educate our youth. Changing the cycle is tough, so having met [my father] and getting to find out little pieces of the puzzle of who I am. Hav-

> ing people help and morally support me on that path... brought me back to my language. I started to learn the language, still have tons, tons, tons to learn. (Tom)

The sharing of personal stories revealed strong connections among personal journeys, cultural identities, and connections to community. Understanding these interconnections was viewed as critical to successful teachers able to help improve the conditions in their communities.

Louise and Clare shared similar stories of hardship and cultural deprivation. Drew, who had a troubled relationship with his father, was able to maintain his language and culture thanks to the guidance of his aunt, who taught him his language and culture and, later, helped "teach my kids who they are." Jocelyn and Tanya, who did not face the same level of hardship, have also turned towards culture in coming to know themselves and becoming effective teachers.

"I'm healing every single day," Tom said, "It's a really tough job." This healing process inspired him to "go back and get those who are left behind." Clare reflected:

> I knew that my healing journey had to begin for me to seek the balance I needed. Education was the door opener for me. The instructors.... taught me smudging, ceremonies, and medicines... We had teachings; we had songs, and drums.... I began learning about my culture at the age of 30 through meeting people and going to ceremonies. I took my children, who have been introduced to culture and have done their rites of passage.

These experiences in a culturally-sensitive early childhood education program inspired Clare to become a teacher and teach through culture. "Because our children are still hurting," her teaching focused on healing as the first step in personal development and cultural reclamation.

"I'm not an Aboriginal teacher. I'm a teacher who's Aboriginal.... I'm a math teacher," Jocelyn said. "Or I want to be," she said, recalling the institutional discrimination that prevented her from getting a mainstream teaching position. Jocelyn's supportive family and success at school motivated her to become a teacher and a role model of academic success for Aboriginal students. The experience of being denied a mathematics teaching position, however, helped her better understand the struggles of her people. In order to become an effective Aboriginal teacher on a reserve, she "put aside all [her] experience and ways of seeing education" in order to get to know her students' experiences and instill in them a commitment to education. Tanya was able to teach special education effectively without coming to terms with her Aboriginal identity, but the more she came to know herself and her culture, the more she incorporated Aboriginal understandings into her teaching. She was disappointed, however, that her colleagues were not receptive to sitting in Talking Circles to resolve problems.

The participants all believed that through teaching they could make a difference in the lives of Aboriginal students. Louise believed that Aboriginal students were "more comfortable with a Native person as their teacher." She cited the example of a "bad ass" student "known to the principal" and "late or absent for the other three classes" who came to her class and took an interest in what she was teaching. Looking to the future, Clare said, "Our students can succeed and bring something back to their communities, something back to their Nations." She then added, "One thing that I have come to accept through this circle and this weekend is that we need to build our own curriculum... in language and in culture."

Teaching languages

> Our language makes us a unique society. The government is always trying to get rid of us. So, if we cannot speak our own language they will say that we are not a unique society and that we don't need this land anymore. (Louise)

While culture takes many forms, there is little doubt that language is critical to the existence and renewal of a distinct culture. Louise began with a recognition that language makes her people unique, that language speakers see the world through different eyes and that many aspects of culture cannot easily be translated into other languages. This perspective is affirmed by the Assembly of First Nations (1992), who argue that "Native language embodies a value system about how we ought to live and relate to each other" (p. 14). Drew, when he reported on his language classes, noted the importance of words and grammar in how Aboriginal people construct meaning differently than English speakers. If Aboriginal languages disappear, so too may the relationships among families and clans embodied in language, and the ways in which Aboriginal people connect to nature and the Great Spirit (Assembly of First Nations, 1992): "Without our languages, we will cease to exist as a separate people" (p. 14).

Drew and Louise were the only two Native language teachers in our study. The others, due to their life circumstances, had little opportunity to learn their languages. Tom and Clare were actively learning their languages. Jocelyn and Tanya, who recognized the importance of language in their traditional cultures, took pride in the dimensions of culture nurtured by their families. Drew believed that he too would have lost his language if he had not returned to a remote community to live with his grandparents. Louise did not learn her language as a child, but studied it as an adult through a range of courses at colleges and universities. This sense that Native languages are vulnerable has led Aboriginal leaders to advocate for more language courses in schools and made Drew and Louise forceful advocates for Native language education.

Both Drew and Louise were passionate about preserving their linguistic culture through language teaching. Drew spoke at length about language structures and the pleasure and pressure of developing resources from scratch. Louise's

dedication to language revitalization was evident in willingness to teach the morning in the provincial school and the other half day in the band-operated middle school in the afternoon, which involved regular commuting and the poor pay of a part-time instructor. Their passion has helped them to face the significant challenges of teaching Native languages.

A major challenge was the lack of value many Aboriginal students seemed to attach to schooling. Louise, who attributed the problem to culturally-irrelevant Eurocentric curriculum and pedagogy, noted that a lack of language retention contributed to low motivation among students on reserves. Louise recalled that she had taken no Native language classes, as they were only offered in grades two years behind her. As a result, much of her generation lost their language, making revitalization a generation later more difficult. While Louise was disappointed that reserve students who had taken Native language classes throughout their schooling seemed uninterested, she was pleased that the urban high school students seemed genuinely interested in reclaiming their language.

"They're not learning [because] they're not living the language," according to Drew. "They learn the words for this week" then forget them immediately after the test. Drew's comment spoke to both his understanding of the effects of colonization and his awareness of the difficulties of trying to change student thinking while teaching within the provincial system.

One of the reasons why Native languages were poorly regarded by students may have been that timetabling and course content were decontextualized from linguistic culture. Louise described her 30-minute junior Native language periods:

> We were learning a little bit of language and Native studies, but then I had to start teaching life skills – good decision-making, etc. – instead. And then a nutrition break... sometimes I feel I am there just to make sure that they don't destroy the classroom.

Louise did her best to include poetry, drawing and Native culture into her classes but often felt thwarted by time constraints and the challenges of Aboriginal life.

Drew was discouraged by his perception that students were "failing miserably." This may have been partly because he had no formal teacher preparation, no guidance in designing formal lessons, and no experience in organizing materials in lessons around the learning, reading, and writing strands in course outlines. His lessons were primarily organized around vocabulary lists: "I do weekly tests because I break things down into units that they can understand. So they get 20 or so words a week, and then I test them on 10." These challenges were compounded by working with poorly motivated students of low socio-economic status, with a wide range of abilities and many identified special education needs.

Native language education, as Drew and Louise noted, is made particularly difficult by the realities of community life in the aftermath of colonization and the constraints placed on teachers. Perhaps, as Clare suggested, there is a need to link language to linguistic culture in more meaningful ways. As Drew suggested, the Eurocentric structures used to teach Native languages may not be effective:

> If we can't learn from our Elders and in our language, the nuance is lost. The language is a tool and there's nuance in there that talks about who we are. There's a heartfelt sense that our culture is who we are. And first thing is to get the kids hooked on it in terms of what the language is.

Teaching culture

> We're Native people teaching a non-Native curriculum to our people. We're not Native people teaching about us within our own curriculum. (Drew)

Culture and cultural identity emerged time and again as central to Aboriginal education that engaged students, connected them to their language and culture, and contributed to healing and development within Aboriginal communities. It was evident that they envisioned the teaching of Aboriginal culture as extending beyond teaching material culture to bringing to life social, cognitive and linguistic culture.

They, however, had little preparation in how to teach differently. Participants were limited by their own acculturation into the mainstream and constrained by school timetables, courses of study, and the effects of colonization on their people. They often taught material culture in Eurocentric ways, such as using the lesson templates provided in their teacher preparation programs. While receptive to teaching in ways consistent with Aboriginal knowledge and ways of living, their initial teacher education and ongoing professional development offered them few opportunities to develop alternative approaches to curriculum and pedagogy.

Clare was particularly committed to teaching through culture: "I do know some about the culture so I've been incorporating that into the class" through singing, dancing, smudging, and Talking Circles. Clare strongly believed that promoting healing and cultural pride was necessary to preparing students to learn, and that culture was a foundational element rather than content to be covered during the year. She also hoped to involve Elders in her classes: "Medicine comes in when an Elder is present and providing a safe environment for us." Part of cultural identity is thinking beyond the classroom and school to the wider community. Clare was able to make some connections in her remote reserve community:

> They do have a lot of community events. They have drums, singing and celebrate Equinox, so as a teacher.... I can take my students to any ceremony or function on that First Nation... So we are involved with the community

> even though I've only met maybe three parents since September and those are the three that are very much involved in their children's life. I've yet to meet the others, but I'm waiting and I know that eventually, before Christmas they will come to me because they're going to see and they feel a difference in the kids. They're going to want to meet the person that was involved.

Drew and Louise also made efforts at parent outreach but received only limited response back. The Elder who presided over the Talking Circle suggested that efforts to educate the wider community could have an impact on the education of youth: "The circles are important because for me as a teacher involved with adults. I teach them the culture and so, when they go home, maybe they can appreciate their children that are speaking the language a little bit better."

Jocelyn reminded everyone of the importance of working with non-Natives: "It is important to educate our non-Native educators to see that we have a very rich culture and background, and it has nothing to do with money." By coming to appreciate each other's cultures, she argued, "it would really benefit our kids and their self-esteem."

DISCUSSION

The Talking Circle discussions revealed that the new Aboriginal teachers were not well prepared for their roles as cultural brokers. Their teacher education programs taught them to teach a Euro-Canadian curriculum, often in old-fashioned Eurocentric ways, rather than to bridge cultures. These teachers resisted the colonial teacher education practices imposed on Aboriginal people (Smith, 1999). Instead, they wished for decolonized and culturally appropriate teacher education that would provide them to teach in ways that were consistent with the material, social, cognitive and linguistic culture of Aboriginal people (Leavitt, 1995). Also, they wished for stronger connections to their personal experiences and to the needs of the communities in which they were going to teach (Battiste, 2000).

As we analyzed the data, it became apparent that a fundamental transformation needs to take place in the preparation of Aboriginal teachers in order to help teachers become cultural brokers able to protect and strengthen their culture while preparing students for the wider world (Kitchen, Cherubini, Trudeau & Hodson, in press). The personal and professional stories told by participants revealed that they already possess the capacity to become effective cultural brokers. Two questions then emerged:

- How can Aboriginal teachers build on their personal experiences to become more effective as cultural brokers for their students and communities?
- How can Aboriginal and Western epistemologies be brokered in teacher education so that Aboriginal teachers are better able to teacher students how to exist within both cultures while protecting and strengthening their own?

SUGGESTIONS FOR MOVING FORWARD

Aboriginal teachers have the potential to play a crucial role in the preservation and renewal of Aboriginal languages and culture. Given the challenges facing Aboriginal peoples in the wake of colonization, it is important that teacher education programs prepare these teachers to become effective cultural brokers able to help students know and live in their culture, while also providing students with the skills needed to succeed in the wider Western culture that surrounds them. The stories and perspectives of our participants suggest that, in order to move forward, there needs to be a dramatic reconceptualization of Aboriginal teacher education. We now discuss some ways in which the preparation of Aboriginal teacher education could be improved.

Drawing on personal experience: Reflecting and healing

The personal experiences of Aboriginal teachers should form the basis for the effective preparation of Aboriginal teachers. Connelly and Clandinin (1988) coined the term *personal practical knowledge* to convey respect for teachers as "knowledgeable and knowing persons" whose knowledge resides in their "past experiences... present mind and body, and... future plans and actions" (p. 25). Participants clearly understood that knowing oneself was vitally important to effective teaching and to being responsive to the needs of Aboriginal communities. They saw themselves not as empty vessels to be filled with educational strategies, but as individuals whose experiences as Aboriginal people and learners should be honoured in their teacher education programs. One of the main purposes of teacher education should be to draw on their knowledge, skills and dispositions in authentic classroom situations (Bullough & Gitlin, 1995). The purpose of teacher education should be to nurture their abilities, honour their experiences, and respect their culture, not to weed out those who are unwilling or unable to adapt to conventional teacher education programs. This is consistent with James Banks' (2007) view that, while all students should "develop a delicate balance of cultural, national, and global identification," marginalized ethnic minorities can attain "healthy and reflective national identifications only when they have acquired healthy and reflective cultural identifications" (p. 25).

A positive example is Jocelyn's Eurocentric teacher education program that emphasized reflection and adaptive expertise. Leading North American teacher education programs have long recognized the importance of promoting reflective practice, making informed pedagogical decisions, reflecting on these decisions, and adapting to one's teaching context (Schon, 1983). There is also a growing recognition that teachers need to become adaptive experts able to make curricular choices suited to the particular individual and collective needs of their classes and communities (Bransford, Darling-Hammond & LePage, 2005). When adaptive experts "use knowledge about the social, cultural, and language backgrounds of their students, the academic achievement of students

can increase" (Banks, Cochran-Smith, Moll, Richert, Zeichner, LePage, Darling-Hammond & Duffy, 2005, p. 233) and disparities can be eliminated. Teacher education programs that prepare teachers for Aboriginal contexts, based on our study, need to draw on the material, social, cognitive, and linguistic culture in order to be more effective.

The importance of distinctly cultural knowledge is highlighted by Orr, Paul and Paul (2002), who "infuse Connelly and Clandinin's notion of the personal with the cultural" in their conception of "cultural practical knowledge" (p. 335). They argue that for many Aboriginal teachers see "their teacher knowing as inseparable from their community... which has educated them as part of a collective to work against assimilation" (p. 335) and protect their languages and cultures. For our participants, particularly those who were raised on reserves, the personal was very much connected to a larger cultural story and sense of purpose as agents of decolonization. Many felt at times like isolated cultural workers rather than as members of "indigenous teacher groups" with "the potential to transform the culture of schooling" (Lipka, 1998, p. 3).

As reflection is central to traditional Aboriginal ways of knowing, Aboriginal healing processes and education practices seem better than Eurocentric approaches to meeting personal and community needs. Aboriginal Elders often draw on personal, spiritual, or political crises to help people heal themselves by returning to traditional teachings and ceremonies (Stiegelbauer, 1996). Clare, in particular, drew on teachings and ceremonies to heal herself and to teach through culture. All participants, however, identified their inward personal journeys as critical to becoming effective teachers and relating to their students and communities. Since, as Hampton (1995) states, traditional Aboriginal education "orients itself around a spiritual centre that defines the individual as the life of the group" (p. 21), it is particularly important that Aboriginal teachers attend to their own healing in order to heal and teach their students. Indeed, participants wanted Aboriginal teacher education to be more focused on personal healing journeys within the context of Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

Grounding Aboriginal teacher education in Aboriginal ways of knowing

Participants, in order to become whole themselves and to heal their communities, turned to traditional Aboriginal knowledge. NTEP's, which favour Eurocentric training processes, largely disregarded this knowledge and, often, discarded teacher candidates best able to teach through culture (Bear Nicholas, 2001; Kitchen, Cherubini, Trudeau & Hodson, 2010). The Eurocentric degree programs that Jocelyn and Tanya attended did little to acknowledge Aboriginal knowledge, but at least did not overtly suppress tradition.

While naming colonization and its adverse impact on language and culture is important, Smith (2000) challenges "Indigenous people to engage in posi-

tive, proactive initiatives rather than resorting to reactive modes of action" (p. 210). One way for Aboriginal teachers to succeed is to become cultural brokers able to "synthesize traditional and formal teaching" (Stairs, 1995, p. 149) in themselves and their students. Aboriginal students can be successful in both cultures when decolonized teachers draw on Aboriginal pedagogy while making links to complementary Eurocentric approaches (Stairs, 1995). The teaching of languages needs to extend beyond Eurocentric strategies such as vocabulary lists, oral recitations, reading, and writing to the ways in which language is used within Aboriginal communities, as these do not accurately represent their experiences (Battiste, 2000). Aboriginal scholars and leaders are increasingly promoting traditional Aboriginal education as effective in meeting the needs of students in their communities. Battiste (2000) argues that "an act should declare community-based education as an existing Aboriginal and treaty right that must be fully complied with and supported" (p. 2003).The Medicine Wheel, which offers wisdom and explains relationships at the personal, social, national, global and cosmic levels to understanding and spirituality, is one Aboriginal pedagogical approach that has been found to be very useful in bridging self and community for Aboriginal teachers (Calliou, 1995). Talking Circles can also help students to learn through the structures of oral Aboriginal culture (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003). Elders and other community members have the potential to be powerful educational partners (Chiefs of Ontario, 2005). Regardless of the approach, as our participants and Aboriginal leaders make clear, it is crucial that language and culture be understood and experienced in their contextual complexity under the guidance of community members, not the Euro-Canadian elites (Battiste, 2000).

CONCLUSION

This research has reinforced the need for teacher education and ongoing teacher development that helps Aboriginal teachers become effective cultural brokers and protectors of their own languages and culture. As a result, we have identified ways in which the preparation of Aboriginal teachers can be reformed to better meet the needs of Aboriginal teachers, the students they serve, and the culture of Aboriginal communities. While the reform of Aboriginal teacher education and professional development will be a long and complicated process, two elements are critical. First, the personal practical knowledge of Aboriginal teachers could be better utilized if reflective practice was central to their teacher preparation programs. Even better would be programs that do this by centering reflection on traditional teachings and ceremonies. Second, Aboriginal ways of knowing and teaching should be at the heart of the program. Rather than indigenizing Eurocentric pedagogical approaches, Aboriginal teacher preparation should be centred on Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy, with Euro-Canadian content incorporated as appropriate.

Aboriginal students, teachers, and communities are more likely to prosper when their education is culturally appropriate. As a bi-epistemic team of researchers familiar with both Indigenous knowledge and the progressive school of Western thought, we find common ground in our shared commitment to teacher education that is respectful of teacher knowledge, adaptive to student needs, and sensitive to Aboriginal cultural contexts. Some lessons learned in Euro-Canadian education may prove helpful in developing such a system and providing an intellectual rationale for it. The *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007) and the manifesto of the Chiefs of Ontario (2005) gives reason to hope that Aboriginal teacher education programs can become truly Aboriginal and better serve the linguistic and cultural needs of Aboriginal students and communities. The *Aboriginal Knowledge Exchange Project Self-Study and Report* (Niessen, 2008), which reveals that a number of Western Canadian Aboriginal teacher education programs are experimenting with Indigenous ways of knowing, suggests that positive and proactive initiatives are moving forward. By working through these tensions, cultural brokers can play a constructive role in improving Aboriginal education. Also, the lessons learned from the experiences of Aboriginal cultural brokers may one day help educators interested in developing more holistic approaches to learning and living in Euro-Canadian society (Battiste, 2000).

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REFLEXIVITY OF DISCOMFORT IN INSIDER-OUTSIDER EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT. This paper discusses my position as an Arab Muslim woman researcher who is affiliated with a Western university, researching Arab Muslim Canadian women. I discuss how reflexivity has emerged as an element of my research endeavours. Various notions of reflexivity in educational research have been expressed in the literature, yet I focus on what it means to me as an insider-outsider researcher and how it characterizes my research endeavours. In this paper, I explore the complexity of occupying these multiple subjectivities.

RÉFLEXIVITÉ SUR UN INCONFORT D'OBSERVATRICE-INITIÉE DANS LE CADRE D'UNE RECHERCHE EN ÉDUCATION

RÉSUMÉ. Cet article explore ma position comme chercheure musulmane arabe affiliée à une université occidentale étudiant la vie des femmes canadiennes musulmanes arabes. J'y examine de quelle manière la réflexivité a émergé comme élément de mes projets de recherche. Bien que diverses notions de réflexivité aient été soulevées dans la littérature, je cible ce que cela signifie pour moi en tant que chercheure initiée et observatrice ainsi que de quelle manière cela teinte mes recherches. J'y analyse la complexité d'incarner ces multiples subjectivités.

INTRODUCTION

Insider-outsider research has become one of the most heated areas of debate among immigrant scholars researching their own communities. While insider-outsider research is an approach that is mostly used by ethnographers, it is nevertheless also being used by scholars from various other fields. There are many indications that being an insider-outsider can cause discomfort, especially when revealing negative aspects of one's own cultural group. However, crucial values emerge as a result of conducting insider-outsider research. Self-awareness is critical for success in conducting this kind of research. This self-awareness is closely associated with the concept of reflexivity.

Reflexivity is researching myself and reflecting on my personal beliefs and values both as a researcher and as a member of the researched group. As an insider-outsider researcher believing in the merit of reflexivity, I am aware of the fact that my reflexivity could be pushing me beyond my comfort zone as a researcher. By this I mean that reflexivity has exposed aspects of my identity that I did not reveal in my research endeavour. This is what I call "reflexivity of discomfort." I believe that reflexivity of discomfort enriched my experience in insider-outsider research, made me more aware of the value in conducting this type of research, and confirmed the importance of encouraging other researchers to follow this approach. In this paper I argue that the integration of reflexivity of discomfort into insider-outsider research is indispensable for transcending the distortions introduced by the various lenses through which researchers and research subjects view the world in general and the matters being researched in particular. As my quest in reflexivity continued, many questions surfaced regarding my understanding of reflexivity and how it would enrich my research.

In this paper I discuss my positionality as an Arab Muslim woman researcher who is affiliated with a Western university researching Arab Muslim Canadian women. I discuss how reflexivity emerged as a central element of my research endeavours and how it is intrinsic to the continuum of my insider-outsider positionality. Various notions of reflexivity in educational research have been expressed in the literature (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004; Harding, 1991; Lynch, 2000; Reinharz, 1992, 1997; Usher, 1996; Wasserfall, 1997), yet I focus on what it means to me as an insider-outsider researcher and on how reflexivity influences my research endeavours. In this paper, I explore the complexity of what it entails to occupy multiple subjectivities. I closely examine the tension and the richness embedded in the many positions that I occupy. I review my past research experiences to understand why reflexivity is important in my present understanding of research and why it is important to integrate reflexivity, particularly the reflexivity of discomfort, into qualitative research. In this paper, I consider the limitations that I have encountered while conducting insider research, while also exploring how the positions that I occupy have considerably enriched my research. Throughout the discussion I highlight how reflexivity is a source of privilege because it provides the reader with the researcher's unique perspectives on the research endeavour.

Reflexivity: What it is

Over the past two or three decades, many articles have attempted to define reflexivity and how it is employed in qualitative research. My initial reading of this literature guided me towards an understanding of reflexivity and of how it applies in educational research. My initial definition of reflexivity is that it is a metaphysical analysis of the researcher's account, one that examines the researcher's own input into the research process. It involves the researcher

observing him or herself in the act of observing, researching him or herself in the act of researching.

Put another way, employing reflexivity throughout the research process entails the researcher paying close attention to his or her involvement in all aspects of the process and being prepared to assess the impact of that involvement on the research. I agree with Lather's (1991a; 1991b) notion of reflexivity as mandating a sincere attempt to deconstruct one's own work and the motives behind it. The researcher must closely monitor him or herself in the process of determining the research problem and theoretical framework and of creating the research design. This process is governed by the researcher's values and, reciprocally, these choices help to expose the values of the researcher. For example, the researcher's decision to include or exclude certain participants or questions reveals the researcher's values, background and subjectivity. Indeed,

> One needs to document these reflexive processes, not just in general terms such as our class, gender, and ethnic background; but in a more concrete and nitty-gritty way in terms of where, how and why particular decisions are made at particular stages of conducting the research. (Mathner & Doucet, 1997, p. 138)

Gadamer (1975) argues that researchers should acknowledge their values and prejudices as a first step, being aware that they are embedded in their experience of knowledge formation and also in their epistemological values. I assert the necessity to do so in all qualitative research. This entails including the researcher's background or personal story in the analysis wherever possible.

Situating oneself in the social space from which one comes and considering the lenses through which one views one's position, as well as considering how the research topic relates to one's self, are all channeled into my understanding of reflexivity. I encourage qualitative researchers to employ this approach in order to produce research that questions its own interpretations and is reflexive about its own knowledge production. The goal of this approach is to produce improved, and less distorted, research accounts (Hertz, 1997).

According to Nixon, Walker & Clough (2003),

> Neither we nor the subjects we seek to understand are blank social slates – we are embedded within particular biographies and the communities from which we take our identities. This requires of us a deep and vigilant reflexivity in our research that is attentive to the effects of our own peripheral vision. We might begin with standpoint experiences and voices – both our own and those of others. (p. 102)

Furthermore, Leistyna (2004) argues that

> People need to use their historical location as the place to begin to reflect upon the object of knowledge and to create meaning.... My locality necessarily conditions me to ask certain questions.... However, even within the limits of my position, and under historical and cultural influences, my job as a learner is to connect it to the rest of the world. (p. 21)

The ultimate goal of reflexivity, according to Guillemin and Gillam (2004),

> has to do with improving the quality and validity of the research and recognizing the limitations of the knowledge that is produced which leads to more rigorous research. Self-reflexive in this sense, a researcher would be alert not only to issues related to knowledge creation *but also ethical issues in research*. (p. 275; emphasis added)

Many other writers, including McGraw, Zvonkovic, and Walker (2000), also relate reflexivity to ethics. They point out that "Reflexivity is a process whereby researchers place themselves and their practice under scrutiny, acknowledging the ethical dilemmas that permeate the research process and impinge on the creation of knowledge" (p. 68). Gadamer (1975) argues that, as researchers, we are always interpreting and understanding in the light of our own prejudices and that these evolve over time. He acknowledges the critical importance of a researcher's cultural and sociological position, which is a central aspect of my understanding of reflexivity. Gadamer's (1975) perception closely reflects my understanding of reflexivity as being not merely a single or universal entity but in fact as being an active process that permeates every stage of the research.

When I practice reflexivity in my research, I envision Harding's (1991) definition of strong reflexivity:

> That the objects of inquiry be conceptualized as gazing back in all their cultural particularity and that the researcher, through theory and methods, stands behind them, gazing back at his [or her] own socially situated research project in all its cultural particularity and its relationships to other projects of his [or her] culture. (p. 163)

In my doctoral research, I practiced reflexivity by continuously questioning every step that I took and every question that I designed to elicit the narratives of the interviewees. In my Master's studies, my intention was to deconstruct and reframe stereotypical Western images and myths related to Muslim women using Merryfield's (2001a & 2001b) global education principles. The development of the research themes was based on my insider-outsider perspective. In the following sections I will elaborate on my approach in using reflexivity in my qualitative work.

General information on insider-outsider research

Insider-outsider research is becoming one of the most highly debated approaches to research. It involves a researcher occupying double positions, meaning that he or she is both a member of the researched group *and* an outsider relative to that group. Anthropologists usually occupy insider-outsider positions when they choose to conduct research on their communities (such as Abu-Lughod [1990, 1998] and Subedi [2006]). Insider-outsider researcher positions are usually seen to cause some form of discomfort for the researcher: "This sense of comfort or the belonging one feels can be problematic considering how

one may be viewed as an outsider and/or an insider when one is conducting 'home' research" (Subedi, 2006, p. 546).

Hamnett, Porter, Singh and Kumar (1984) assess the advantages of providing both insider and outsider perspectives on the research endeavour, wherever possible. They believe that "Insider's research can provide insights, inner meanings, and subjective dimensions that are likely to be overlooked by outsiders. The outsider can bring comparably detached perceptions to the problem he [*sic*] investigates" (as cited in Ghazalla & Sabagh, 1986, p. 374). Hirschmann (1998) argues that "It is often difficult to gain critical purchase on a context from within the context itself; one must be often outside it at the same time that one is 'inside' it" (p. 362). This is why an insider researcher should be vigilant for "the constant need for reflexivity... insider researchers have to have ways of thinking critically about their processes, their relationships, and the quality and richness of their data and analysis" (Smith, 1999, p. 137).

In order to gain a more complete view and understand the context surrounding the "inside," one needs to step out of one's comfort zone to experience the associated and inevitable discomfort. Only by persevering in the face of discomfort can one hope to properly appreciate the insider perspective. This is an approach that I have diligently worked to apply in my research endeavours.

General discussion of how to minimize/mitigate the risks associated with insider-outsider research by using reflexivity of discomfort

"All too often, the insider/outsider question is posed too simplistically as a dichotomy between subjectivity and objectivity" (Shami, 1988, p. 115). The uncomfortable reflexivity of the insider-outsider continuum is not merely a dichotomy between two positions. Reflexivity "seeks to know while at the same time situates this knowing as tenuous.... this form of exceeding the selves enacts something far less comforting" (Pillow, 2003, p. 187).

I believe that my research raises further questions regarding gender discourses in different contexts while pushing toward the unfamiliar. I argue that important learning occurs when researchers discuss how they experience reflexivity while conducting qualitative research. The reflexivity I practice, while uncomfortable, entails responding to the text and questioning the premise of the research, which is different from reflecting on a "simple confessional-tale" (Pillow, 2003, p. 187).

Pillow (2003) emphasizes the need to practice reflexivity that pushes toward an unfamiliar or uncomfortable subject. In this view, reflexivity cannot be a simple story of subjects, subjectivity, and transcendence, nor should it entail self-indulgence. A tracing of the problematics of reflexivity calls for "a positioning of reflexivity not as clarity, honesty, or humility, but as practice of confounding disruptions" (p. 192). From the narrative presented above, I

draw an analysis of my understanding of the reflexivity of discomfort, which has multiple and intersecting facets.

As Pillow (2003) suggests, "some researchers use reflexivity as a methodological tool to better present, legitimize, or call into question the research data" (p. 176). My use of reflexivity is to better "represent *difference* and establish ethnographic authority" (p. 176; emphasis in the original). However, the critical[1] usage of reflexivity is aided by the suspicion which appears in every step of the research, which can lead one to "question the too easily and too closely to the familiar" (Amal Amireh as cited in Abdo, 2002, p. 229). Thus, reflexivity should "go beyond being a methodological exercise... it is rendering the knowing of the self or the research subjects as uncomfortable and uncontainable" (p. 187).

While there has been a tendency in research to list a researcher's identity (i.e., race, class and sexuality), I do not think that this measure is necessary in each and every research project. However, in feminist research, the researcher's identity becomes a necessary component (Hurd, 1998; Morawski, 1994). Indeed, many feminists criticize traditional research methodologies in which method and results are conceptualized as separate entities (Hurd, 1998, p. 196). Thus, the reason for the strong role of reflexivity in feminist research is that feminists refuse to put aside their experiences as women when conducting research (Morawski, 1994). Like many feminist researchers, I tackle questions that are of personal, political, and academic significance to me. There are many ways in which my personal experiences frame the politics of my chosen research topics.

Many feminist researchers (i.e., Harding, 1991; Naples, 2003; Smith, 1987; Lather, 1996; Wasserfall, 1997) are particularly interested in researcher reflexivity and the reality of the female researcher. Feminist research and critical approaches to research practice have considered reflexivity as a methodological tool that is not only acceptable, but also desirable. Nevertheless, most feminist researchers do not employ the reflexivity of discomfort as a lens in their research practices. Instead, some feminist researchers cultivate the misconstruction of "know-it-all" research. I encourage feminist researchers to introduce reflexivity as a methodological tool that not only brings to light the researcher's subjectivities but also challenges the researcher. This form of reflexivity is needed in all research because it enriches the research and hence the field of knowledge. It highlights the tensions, contradictions, power imbalances and limits in the research. I agree with Pillow (2003) that qualitative researchers and feminist researchers would benefit more from "messy examples... examples that may not always be successful, examples that do not seek a comfortable, transcendent end-point but leave us in the uncomfortable realities of doing engaged qualitative research" (p. 193). This informs my awareness that, "our interrogation, revelations, and vulnerabilities in a feminists' praxis generate intriguing insights and creations" (Villenas, 2000, p. 76).

How reflexivity in general and reflexivity of discomfort in particular were applied in my insider-outsider research on Arab Muslim women in Canada

• *Overview of my Master's research*

From my multifaceted perspective, I have found that many Western anthropologists and scholarly works tend to uncritically incorporate the marginal position and personality of Middle Eastern Arab Muslim women. In my Master's research, I explored Muslim women's representations within Western[2] academic discourses and I also examined common misperceptions regarding Muslim women that are embedded in Western media and scholarly literature. My work focused on deconstructing these negative depictions of Muslim women by employing both my "insider knowledge" as well as my deep understanding of Islamic teachings. My analysis was also informed by my understanding of global-education principles, particularly Merryfield's theory of global education (Merryfield, 2001a, 2001b; Merryfield & Subedi, 2000).

In my research, I used Merryfield's (2001a) global-education theories to deconstruct negative images of Muslim women. She suggests that teachers expose their students to Edward Said's ideas on Orientalism and the ways in which Europeans have constructed "the Orient" in writing and art. Students should be able to identify exotic images of the Middle East in popular media, entertainment, and textbooks, as well as to compare these images with the visuals and stories found on websites and in personal stories shared by indigenous insiders.

During the analysis stage of my Master's thesis, I discussed how my position as a Muslim woman has influenced my research and how the research has affected me both personally and academically. In particular, I employed a reflexive process while developing and writing my research findings. My Master's research, entitled *Bringing a global education perspective to understand "The Other": A case study of Western myths of Muslim women*, led me to question my own world views. I was interested in exploring Westerners' perceptions of Muslim women, both as individuals and as part of the Muslim community. My findings gave me the opportunity to see Muslim women's positions from the perspectives of others.

In my analysis, I concluded that many of the sexist traditions that are practiced in Arab Muslim societies are incorrectly shrouded as sacred. I also concluded that certain stereotypical Western images have some basis in the ways in which Islam is practiced in some predominantly Muslim countries. As an insider, I note that classical jurisprudential law is based on the conservative interpretation of the Muslim Holy text, The *Quran*, and that this interpretation is institutionalized in most Islamic societies under *Sharia* law. Many aspects of these conservative male interpretations are discriminatory towards women, yet they are presented as though that are the only authentic Islamic perspectives on women's issues. A skewed selection of prominent Arab Muslim discussions of

religion and culture seems to be highlighted in Western Orientalist writings and in Western media and these are mistakenly presented as being intrinsic to Islamic values and teachings to women. For instance, the African tribal practice of female circumcision is rarely referred to as being a tribal custom, but is usually attributed to the teachings of Islam (Jansen, 1998; Jawad, 1998; Robertson & James, 2002; Slack, 1988).

• *A deeper reflection on being an insider-outsider researcher*

While growing up as a Muslim in the Islamic society of Saudi Arabia, I had opportunities to explore and analyze, from an insider perspective, Islamic teachings from the *Quran*[3] and *Sunna* as well as Arab Muslim cultural traditions and to assess their implications for women. On the other hand, I have also engaged in analysis as an outsider who left Saudi Arabia as a young woman to live in Canada, a country with a comparatively small Muslim minority. My brief return visits to the Middle East have brought my attention to an area of great interest: gender discourse in Arab Muslim society. During these visits, my interactions with female friends and family members, and my observations of how gender ideologies are regulated, have caused me to reflect upon my personal experience. I consider myself both an insider and an outsider. My insider position grants me access to Muslim women's perspectives, not least because I have experienced many of the same things as other Muslim women. My insider position highlights the complexity of Arab Muslim Canadian women's lives. My reflexive, insider-outsider position as a Muslim woman living in the West guides and informs this research endeavour.

As a student, I consider myself an insider in Western academic discourse, whilst I am also an outsider in relation to the discourse surrounding Islam and Muslims, particularly Muslim women. While I am an insider in the Muslim community in Canada, I am also an outsider with regard to my professional interests and participation in a Western academy. I have lived in Canada since the spring of 1998 and, even though I can communicate fluently in English and therefore feel like an insider, I am also an outsider and a minority figure who is not immersed in mainstream Caucasian society. Moreover, my outsider status has been brought into relief through the ways in which Muslim women are often represented in Western academic discourses. Having read Western feminist and Orientalist literature has led me to question why Muslim women, particularly those from the Middle East, are mentioned "as merely objects rather than actors, as a victim of an honor crime, [as] a divorced woman, [as] the 'sexually threatened wife,' or [as] the 'self sacrificing mother'" (Shami, 1988, p. 117). These stereotyped images are prevalent in both Western popular opinion and Western popular culture. I was intrigued by these generalized images of oppressed Muslim women within Orientalist literature. For me, these images have "blurred the distinctions between the varieties of positions occupied by Middle Eastern Muslim women" (pp. 117-118).

Being raised in and exposed to different cultures can be enriching as the personal dislocation provides a more well-rounded view and many other advantages. When one is on the margins of mainstream society, one can better appreciate what has been previously taken for granted. I wholeheartedly agree with Moghissi (1999) that

> Being away from "home" sometimes may be the only way one can look at "home" critically, dispassionately and with reason. Indeed, as Said (2000, p. 365) argues, "in a secular and contingent" world, homes are always provisional. Borders and barriers, which enclose us within safety of familiar territory, can also become prisons, and are often defended beyond reason or necessity. (p. 216)

My perspectives in this research as an insider are coloured by my exposure to gender discourse on Arab Muslim societies and by having been educated in its complexities. Indeed, my shifting and multifaceted position as an insider-outsider has informed my awareness of the divergent perspectives and dialogues that have taken place among Arab Muslim women as they seek to construct their identities within multiple dominant discourses.

I am aware of my privileged insider position, which cautions me "not to simplify any or all of the factors [affecting Arab Muslim women's lives] into clichés, such as the Arab woman's total oppression under Islam" (Abdo, 2002, p. 229). I am also aware of an insider's limitations – an area which will be discussed later.

I argue that having "insider knowledge" of Arab culture and Islam has made me conscious of the larger socio-historical context in which these women are living. Being an insider has made me aware during interviews of how and when to ask questions, when to interrupt and clarify, and how to interpret the answers provided by my research participants. As an Arab Muslim woman, my lens has been "honed and shaped in the West [particularly in Canada] where I have been exposed to a largely Western model of feminism" (Abdo, 2002, p. 229). This exposure has opened doors for me in researching Arab Muslim feminist ideologies. In Saudi Arabia, feminist theories, books, and publications of Arab Muslim feminist scholars and researchers were not accessible to me. I am keenly aware of the fact that "inappropriate Western feminist paradigms are often applied to the Arab world, even by Arab women scholars themselves" (p. 229). This includes the Western colonial discourse which some Western feminists use to "devalue local cultures by presuming that there is only one path for emancipating women [which is by] adopting Western Models" (Abu-Lughod, 1998, p. 14).

My subjectivities are multiple, fluid, and not easily disentangled and, thus, the position that I occupy as a researcher has likened my merited engagement in qualitative research to a reflexive odyssey. As hooks (1984) states, "We looked from the outside in and from the inside out. We focused our attention on the center as well as on the margin. We understood both" (p. 9).

As a scholar researching my own people, I cannot escape my experiences of "marginalization and dislocation...and I cannot escape the privilege" (Villenas, 2000, p.75). This certainly applies to me because I cannot ignore the marginalization of Arab Muslims in the Canadian context nor the privilege of being a member of the researched group. As an insider researcher, I need to bring to light my privileged position and associated responsibilities.

• *A deeper reflection on insider-outsider*

As a researcher I gaze backwards in three distinctive ways: first, analyzing from my position as a member of the group; second, analyzing in light of my position as an outsider; and, third, analyzing with due consideration for the impact of my study on the people being studied. In essence, I am as a researcher taking responsibility for my own account and putting myself in a position that enables me to see from all angles.

My interest in reflecting upon my insider-outsider position in part stems from the fact that I do not consider social-science research to be "value free." Researchers do not approach a research topic in a vacuum but, rather, each researcher has a distinctive agenda in seeking answers to his or her research question(s). Any researcher who poses a question and seeks an answer has a partially insider position with regard to the research topic (Usher, 1996). A social scientist is not an observer running an experiment, but rather is implicated in the scene. By this I mean that the researcher in the social sciences is exploring a topic that is of interest to her or him and is thus an insider to it. In qualitative research, there is no detached, objective position from which to study human beings. The researcher is a self-interpreting being who is already in the world, as is the subject (Sandelowski, 1986).

Ribbens sees boundaries between outside voices and the inside, self-authentic voice, as more permeable and contingent. Thus, seeking to interview Arab Muslim women as authentic voices taking advantage of me being an Arab Muslim woman reflected my reflexivity as an insider-outsider researcher. "Some voices may literally be expressed by others around me, 'out there' in my current life, but some voices may also be voices from my past, which are, 'out there' but which I have incorporated and reshaped, and now echo in my mind, even below my conscious awareness" (Ribbens, 1998, p. 29).

Sometimes one is not conscious of one's own thoughts as an insider. An outsider's perspective is often needed to truly expose one's own thoughts. Harding (1991) also supports the connection between the researcher's insider-outsider positions. She says,

> It is not enough to be only on the "outside" – to be immersed only in "women's work" – because the relation between this work and "ruling work" is not visible from only one side of this division of human activity. Instead, it is when one works on both sides that there emerges the possibility of seeing

> the relation between dominant activities and beliefs and those that arise on the "outside." (p. 132)

Furthermore, as an insider researcher I attempt to investigate and revisit "questions like who is writing about whom, whose terms define the discourse, and even, who translates whose concepts and whose language bend to the other" (Abo-Lughod, 1989, p. 270).

Another matter of great significance is being an insider providing the context given the crucial role that context plays in the interpretation and explanation of the interview narrative. The meaning of what the participants say is always "contextually grounded – inherently and irremediably" (Mishler, 1979, p. 3). In order to understand the meaning of an individual's response to the narrative that she or he is providing, the researcher must have an understanding of the context from which both the interview and the interviewee have come (Brown, Tappan, Gilligan, Miller & Argyris, 1989, p. 143), as well as the context in which the researcher has been immersed. In my opinion, such understandings cannot be fully obtained unless the researcher is an insider, specifically given the complex, intertwined nature of Islam and Arab Muslim cultural traditions.[4]

Additionally, "I am creating a self, how I want to be known by them" (Riessman, 1993, p. 11). Before any interview, I would be excited but careful in terms of the way in which I presented myself. I intentionally avoided wearing black since it may appear to signify power. I wanted to present myself as being as much like my participants as possible. I wore my *hijab* in a way that most Arab Muslim women[5] do. Stone (1962) and Galliher (1983) observe that in our manner of dress we create a presentation of self. By wearing my *hijab* in the way that I did, I was asserting the fact that I was one of them.

• *My Doctoral research*

In my doctoral research, entitled *Quilted narratives of Arab Muslim women's tapestry: Intersecting educational experiences and gender perceptions,* I explored Arab Muslim women's gender perceptions and the factors that may have influenced their views of their roles as women. More specifically, I explored the gender perceptions of nine Arab Muslim women who had immigrated to Canada. My analysis focused on whether their perceptions had changed as a result of having experienced two different cultures – their own culture and Canadian culture. I invited Arab Muslim women to reflect on their education and their perceptions of gender at various periods prior to their arrival in Canada and after having attended Canadian institution of higher education.

The experiences of Arab Muslim women in Canada are clearly distinct from those of Arab Muslim women in other Western countries and in European countries in particular. Muslim women in Europe are excluded from employment and from public life if they choose to adhere to the *hijab*, which is

an important aspect of the identity of many Muslim women, including the women whom I interviewed in my study. The *hijab* is well known as a focus of controversy in France. Also in Holland and in other European nations, Muslim women are not included unless they are stripped of their identity (scarves, language, names and so forth). The experience of Canadian Muslim women is unique in that in Canada Arab Muslim women are active members of society. For example, a significant number are becoming faculty members and deans in science and engineering faculties in some universities, a trend that does not exist in other Western nations with high Muslim populations. In saying this, I am not trying to deny cases of institutional racism, especially in contexts where Muslim women are denied access to certain sports because of adherence to the *hijab*.[6] On the other hand, Canada's multicultural policies make it illegal to discriminate against Muslim women because of their faith. In short, Canadian Muslim women's experiences are unique and deserve particular attention.

I emphasize that I approached my doctoral research topic with great difficulty. Not only am I a researcher personally tangled in the topic, but I am also a member of the researched group. As an insider, I clearly have a strong, personal interest in this topic and its possible and probable outcomes. Conducting this research has heightened my awareness of the possible challenges and/or the negative implications of being an insider researcher. As an advocate of equity and social justice, my intention is not to uncritically glorify Arab Muslim societies, cultural traditions or the practices of Canadian immigrants, but rather to decisively pinpoint gender discourse in Arab Muslim culture and in the Canadian context.

As an insider, I have experienced the same gender biases that other Arab Muslim women have experienced. My observations of how gender ideologies are regulated in many Arab Muslim countries has caused me to reflect upon my own personal position. This insider position allows me to understand women's realities in the Muslim world. For instance, my research participants narrated how the honour of both men and women in Arab Muslim societies is hermeneutically inherent in the behaviour of women – this fact alone being proof of the necessity for engaging in reflexivity. By listening to and getting to know the women whom I interviewed, I have gained a new understanding of issues that I did not fully appreciate beforehand, despite identifying with the researched group. The participants' stories had a profound impact on my personal perspective. A few personal lessons were learned, not as a researcher, but as a woman listening to other women with whom I share a religion, a common language, and Arabic cultural traditions. The intersecting influences of political, social, economic, and patriarchal forces, as well as immigration issues, generated more conflicting realties for women than those offered by Islam. Almost all of the women interviewed were inclined to challenge and resist oppression and gender apartheid, and refused to live passively.

Throughout my doctoral research, it was my hope that the personal narratives of Arab Muslim women would provide an alternative perspective to dominant views in Western discourses on Muslim women. My insider knowledge of Western academic discourse has made me aware that

> The prevailing images of Arab Muslim women in the occidental world seems to shift between dual paradigms, either between the images of salient beast of burden, or that of a capricious princess, the half naked... or the shapeless figure of woman behind the veil. (Mehdid, 1993, p. 21)

My exploration of Arab Muslim women's gender perceptions has three distinct components: first, I analyze from my position as a member of the group; second, I analyze in light of my position as an outsider; and, third, I analyze with consideration for the impact of my study on the people being studied. I add a fourth component here, which is the process of gazing at the readers through the text and engaging them in the questioning process. In other words, as a researcher, I take responsibility for my position and consider myself in various positions to engage multiple viewpoints. This frequently results in feelings of discomfort for me as a researcher; I will later explain how I employed a similar paradigm in my understanding of reflexivity.

I acknowledge that being an Arab Muslim woman living in a Western country and doing research on Arab Muslim women for a Western university may also create discomfort or tension for certain readers. This tension may exist in part due to "rampant Islamphobia, which makes many individuals and institutions within the Muslim community wary of the gaze of outside scrutiny" (Zine, 2003, p. 122). People of Muslim and Arabic origin are apprehensive of how the West views them and research performed by them.

Many Arab Muslims believe that Western media have exploited Islam, Arabs, and Muslims – and Muslim women in particular. Edward Said in *Covering Islam* (1993) and *Orientalism* (1978) critiques the ways in which Islam, Muslims, Arabs and the "Orient" are portrayed with negative exaggeration which in turn leads many Muslims to question Western views of Islam and of its adherents. People of Muslim and Arab nations are suspicious of all representational practices in Western societies, including research performed by Muslims situated in the West. In both cultures, according to Ruba[7/8] who is introduced below, there "are stories that we don't hear about: The women who have been successful, the women who have been great mothers, and the women who have been great doctors. But we hear about the women who are oppressed or abused." However, in all of this, she emphasized that "The spotlight is only on Muslim Middle Eastern women, but, when it happens in North American society, we feel blessed that we are women living in the West. No... I think women here are facing the same abuse and Islam should not be exploited as a source of Muslim women's struggles."

The nine Arab Muslim women whom I interviewed told me their stories in ways that may have taken a different form had they been interviewed by a Western Caucasian researcher. I am not merely representing their experiences; I am also mirroring the social and cultural contexts of the gender discourses in question. I wonder if I was able to understand the implicit and explicit meanings of the participants' words due to my insider status, and our shared culture and language? Did my insider knowledge inform me of when to stop the interview and when to not intervene in what are considered culturally private matters? Being an Arab Muslim woman, I wondered if I understood the women's "pauses, inflections, emphases, unfinished sentences, and short periods [of silence]" (Riessman, 1993, p. 12). Silence, for instance, provided me with the occasion to speak and intervene, thereby eliciting more stories. Riessman (1993) explains "Something said in a whisper, after a long pause, has a different importance than the same words said loudly, without a pause" (p. 20).

The challenge of discussing these Arab Muslim women's narratives was overwhelming. Not only was it challenging to convey the richness of these stories, but being an insider to the women's experiences added to the complexity of my research. Nevertheless, it would have been very challenging to understand some of the most salient issues embedded in the participants' narratives had I not been familiar with the context (Brown, et al, 1989).

As an insider researcher, theorist, Arab Muslim woman, and narrator, I felt a tremendous amount of pressure when one of the participants emphasized how happy she was to participate in the research.[9] Initially, I was grateful for her appreciation, yet I was also unsure of whether she held expectations of how she would be presented in the research. The women who participated in the research generously gave me their time and I did not wish to disappoint them. Amia Lieblich (1996) has confronted similar issues as an insider researcher, such as the question of forming a bond with the research participants.

Another limiting aspect is that it became apparent that some of the women were striving to form a mutually respectful and empathetic friendship with me. I was excited by their offer of friendship and felt that they did not view our relationship through a dichotomous researcher-participant lens. Some of the women requested that I call them regularly or come back for a friendly visit. I understood that they felt the need to talk with me about personal matters and life struggles. Unfortunately, I was not able to form that kind of relationship with them for professional reasons. As a graduate student with family responsibilities juggling personal and professional commitments, it was unrealistic.

I expected that some of the participants would respond conservatively to some of my questions. It is possible that a few participants gave responses that they believed were either consciously or unconsciously reflections of the acceptable viewpoint in Arabic culture, rather than being reflections of their own personal

views. It is also possible that they provided me with answers that they assumed I wanted to hear. Jack Douglas (1976) asserts that people have devised immensely complex ways to avoid saying exactly what they see or grasp.

Being an insider may influence how an interviewee chooses to conform to societal and cultural norms in her answers to certain questions. This may be due to individual conservatism that dictates the answers that are acceptable according to societal standards. For instance, it could be that the negative connotation behind women mingling with non-relative men in Arab Muslim culture induced many of the participants in my study to deny any contact with male colleagues in their schools or workplaces. Peter Berger (1963) observes that there is a human tendency to conform to society in order to be accepted by particular groups: "What lies at the bottom of this apparently inevitable pressure towards consensus is probably a profound human desire to be accepted, presumably by whatever group is around to do the accepting" (p. 72).

Another issue I faced as an insider researcher was the idea that many Arab Muslims perceive Western education as being more than what one learns – they see it as a way of thinking. I was concerned about being seen as a representative of a dominant Western discourse that perceives Muslim women as the "other." Western academic institutions, of which I am a part, have historically taken this stance.[9] A few of these women expressed a concern by asking what I planned to do with the responses to the questions and why I chose those particular questions. Some of the participants wondered what I was trying to prove. I understood their apprehension, taking into account how my position as a reflexive researcher led me to expose and interrupt the representations of the "other" – something of which I am a part.

As previously mentioned, I had to confront the difficult issue of power as a researcher exploring other people's lives – in general, and as an insider. I chose to be reflexive in an attempt to investigate the power embedded in my research and to strive to eliminate it. Being part of the community or having racial commonalities with the subjects of one's research does not automatically make the research egalitarian (Pillow, 2003, p. 182). It is impossible to eliminate power disparities between the researcher and the researched. Yet, it was essential that I address the balance of priorities: the accountability of defining my research objectives, situating my assumptions and the decision of how to deal with potentially controversial issues pertinent to the research. For instance, while exploring gender discourses in two contexts through Arab Muslim women's eyes, I retained the power to frame all secondary data available on the topic according to my own views.

I understood that reflexivity would help me to investigate the power associated with researching my own people. I believed that reflexivity would help me to acknowledge my biases and to become "vigilantly subjective" (DeLuca, 1999). I alleged that being "self-reflexive" in conducting my research would

help me to be mindful of my subjectivity. In qualitative research literature, one of the most noticeable benefits in the "use of reflexivity is increased attention to researcher subjectivity in the research process" (Pillow, 2003, p. 176). Influenced by this notion, I followed certain protocols such as giving the participants the option to read their manuscripts. I believed that I was sharing my power as the researcher with the participants. Giving the participants the choice to read and/or change their narratives reflected my awareness of the risks in imposing meaning on the participants' views of their gender roles and expectations. I realize that this is an ethical research protocol. I also believe that recognizing power dynamics, and balancing them, is integral to the conduct of ethical research.

My reflexive insider-outsider continuum and my multiple subjectivities grant me a critical view of the research process. This rationale constitutes one aspect of my understanding of reflexivity. For instance, before asking the Arab Muslim women questions, I would pause to think about how they would perceive these questions and the purpose of my research. Before meeting the research participants, I asked myself: Will they have a sense of comfort, or discomfort, because I speak the same language and have the same cultural heritage? Is the fact that I need their participation in order to conduct my research balancing the power between us? Are they aware of the power differences between the researcher and the researched? Would the power imbalance be greater or lesser if I were an outsider who did not speak the language and did not know about the culture? How do they feel about the fact that I am conducting this research for a Western audience? Would I be receptive if my participants refused to narrate their experiences? Am I perpetuating stereotypes about Arab Muslim societies by focusing on gender perceptions of the participants rather than by focusing on their race and class? Is my research only exploratory, as opposed to transformative?

I considered these questions repeatedly throughout the entire research process, to the extent that I was never at ease while conducting, writing, or presenting the research.

In my thesis, I chose to focus on the narratives of a participant named Ruba because hers are reflective of my reflexivity. Ruba's inconsistencies and contradictory viewpoints, and my analysis of them, exemplify the reflexivity of discomfort. When I asked Ruba about gender discourses in Arab Muslim societies, she provided the following assessment:

> Why is it an abuse when a woman has a cover on her head... it becomes an apparent physical abuse, and we'll put the spotlight on it because she's a Muslim woman, while we turn a blind sight on whatever happens in our American and Canadian, and North American society, we feel blessed that we are women living in the West.... I think women are facing, when it comes to abuse, they're facing the same abuse. Actually, I think it's even more in the West... When I grew up in Arab Muslim society, I never heard of anybody

> beating their wives, or beating their daughters. But over here I hear it all the time. I never heard of rape there, but over here on campus there's always things and incidents of rape. So to me, when I am in the West I see it more. I'm sure it exists over there, but my own personal experience, I have not seen it over there. ... Funny, because here men and women would be working for the same jobs but they do not get paid the same.

While listening to Ruba's analysis of women's abuse in Eastern and Western societies, I found myself disagreeing with her point of view. I wondered whether the way in which I stated my question caused Ruba to answer the way that she did. How had she received my question? How did she view me? Was she questioning my position as an Arab Muslim woman like herself? Or was she questioning my intentions in conducting this research? Was she questioning my faith and my cultural authenticity? Indeed, Ruba was one of the participants who openly questioned my intentions in conducting research on the gender perceptions of Arab Muslim Canadian women. She said:

> I don't know, what do people mean by "a woman's role in society" or gender discourses? I believe that people who do their research on gender issues only want to be looked at as sophisticated people; they want to have a good-looking, fashionable resumé, to show that they care about popular issues these days.

In the same breath, when I asked her about equality between men and women, she laughingly narrated her memories of an engineering professor:

> he made a comment in the class while he was talking about his education in England at Oxford University. He proudly said "back in the good old days before females were allowed into engineering." And I thought that remark was kind of weird... we were only two girls, me and another one. He said it in a very subtle way... I was so surprised that he made that kind of remark or comment.... This is a professor who is white, middle class with jeans and long hair..., so he's supposed to be the hip and cool guy, but still his mentality was a little bit different.... Another incident was in the engineering lab while I was assisting a male instructor... he was uncomfortable answering my [casual] question.... I realized that he was avoiding eye to eye contact... later he told me that he thinks that women hinder the progress of things... he thinks they're a distraction.... These two incidents did not bother me. It surprised me, and actually I expected it.... There are a lot of free sentiments about equality out there, but I don't think a lot of people believe [in] it... But there was always a push to get more females into engineering... which I found very strange.[10]

Ruba thought that persuading girls to enter engineering was "strange" because it should be left for the girls' choices. She narrated:

> It was an event at the engineering school, an all-day professional day for girls, where girls visit from high school and inquire about engineering and women's position in engineering.... I remember that I participated and just to be honest and truthful, not for the cause of women because I'm not like that. I'm not trying to raise awareness of women's issues or anything like

> that. I'm absolutely actually not interested in that, but to me it was an extra curricular and I needed it as a credit.

She persisted, "It's very sad when we get into this competition of trying to actually do everything because men do it.... If you want to explore something try it, but don't do it just for the sake that men are doing it." During this conversation with Ruba, I became curious to know why Ruba found that encouraging women to enter engineering is "strange." At the time, she was among a small gender minority in the Faculty of Engineering as only two to three girls were enrolled in this Faculty of Engineering of one of Canada's most prominent universities in the late 1980s.

Ruba's statements about the strangeness of encouraging women to pursue engineering were thought-provoking. She did not acknowledge the urgency of supporting women's goals and her comments suggest that she is opposed to feminism. She does not perceive that there are "women's issues" and she rejected the binaries of male-female and sex-gender. She suggests that this way of thinking could lead to competition between the sexes, which she perceives as unhealthy and unnecessary. This view reflects the notion that women and men are essentially different and suited for different activities and professions (Bjorklund & Olsson, 2005, para. 2). According to Hessini (1994), some Muslim women in Middle Eastern societies view that equality between the sexes destabilizes and dehumanizes women and undermines collaborative relations between men and women. This perspective was clearly demonstrated by Ruba's comments.

I chose to discuss this part of the research in my research report and openly shared it with my colleagues. Ruba's narrative stayed with me for a long time and led me to ask myself the question: Had I been I influenced by a Western focus on, and interest in, Arab Muslim societies' gender discourses? A question I am left with is: Does my background as an Arab Muslim woman heighten my awareness of gender discourses that emphasize unjust practices toward women in Canadian and Middle Eastern societies?

Throughout the interview, Ruba argued that "Women are the weaker sex and men are stronger because of their body figure... that's why men are protectors of women." As an opponent of complete equality between the sexes, Ruba argued that the sexes complement one another. Her comment does not only reflect her opposition to feminism but is also indicative of her contradictory opinions if one accepts the premise that, as an engineering student, she is in a field that is primarily occupied by men. She mentioned another point that provoked my discomfort:

> School was very competitive because students' names were announced on the radio with their grades sometimes.... it was more so for the girls than the boys.... I think the expectation of the boys is that the boys can handle themselves, but we want our girls to be better.

Ruba's comment implies that Muslim girls' identities are constructed around schooling and that it is more important for girls to prove themselves. Yet, is Ruba implying that girls are out of control and need to protect themselves through education? I wonder why Ruba thought that girls are expected to improve in school. Are girls expected to excel in school to overcompensate for not being born male? In Ruba's statement "the boys can handle themselves," there seemed to be an insensitive tone. This is one of many implicit cues prevalent in contemporary gender discourses in Arab Muslim societies as girls' academic achievement has recently become the focal point of theorists' and educators' attention in Middle Eastern school boards. I posit that because boys are given opportunities to lead outside the school setting, girls are more motivated to focus their attention on, and excel in, school due to the perception that education is a way to attain status and respect in society. For instance, there exists a "glass ceiling" that prevents women from becoming political leaders in most Arab Muslim societies. The proportion of women compared to men who obtain post-graduate degrees in Arab Muslim societies suggests that women are hoping that education can act as a "springboard" (Hertz-Lazarowitz & Shapira, 2005) to status and leadership. Yet, are their societies able to negotiate cultural traditions, which exclusively assign leadership positions to males?

While Ruba did not acknowledge that some aspects of Arab Muslim customs still dominate and constrain women's achievements, she did challenge her parents' idea of a traditional marriage. She explained that one cannot truly know whether one likes a person by meeting them only once: "There's no dating *per se*, so people get introduced in the family environment, in a house environment... there's more to you than just sitting with that person whom you've never met in your life, and then deciding if you like him or not." This does in fact limit women's choices in Arab culture. Although Ruba believes that women do not have much power in choosing their partners, some of her narratives contradict this belief.

Throughout the research, I constantly questioned Ruba's narratives. I asked myself why some Arab Muslims and Westerners do not perceive that there are women's issues, and why they overlook the importance of supporting women's causes. Was Ruba denying something? Was she overlooking her femaleness? Or was she discounting the fact that she is an engineer now as a result of other women's struggles? Perhaps she is unaware of the early first wave of feminism in the West and East – as, for example, in Egypt. Today, Middle Eastern women in Arab Muslim countries are pushing the boundaries to become politically active within their societies. It is possible that Ruba and other women who disclaim the existence of women's issues are attempting to relieve themselves of their responsibility towards other women.

Referring to equality between the sexes in terms of gender roles, Ruba asserted: "To start with, women and men are different: I don't think we're physically compatible... Men are physically different... Emotionally, we are different... Men

can do things better than women and women can do other things better than men." However, drawing on her personal experiences, she emphasized that interactions with intelligent men in the family and in the work place were unlike her encounters with women who, according to Ruba, tended to be emotional and manipulative. She also concluded, "Men have proven to be wiser because they tend to be calm and unemotional when trying to reason."

A female's physical ability appears to be a key point in Ruba's gender perception and in her assertion of women's weakness. She overemphasized that "Women being a weaker sex... she is in a form and a shape biologically that is different than men, so that's why it is not recommended that she travel or live alone... This is what I believe in." This made me wonder why Ruba chose to be an engineer. She rationalized her comments by taking the conversation in another direction:

> what I'm talking about is not just the man as a financial provider, but, being a man, it is his responsibility to take care of the household, the security of that household [and] the safety of people. And for me... at the end of the day is that the man's to be questioned.... for that safety, welfare, and well-being of the family. ... Like in any kind of an institution or an organization, there have to be people who share the burden of responsibility. There are people who we question at the end of the day. When we have that structure in an organization, we do not question it. We do not question why we have a supervisor... somebody who... all of the blame goes on to him.... Men's superiority in the family is for women's protection.

Ruba's analyses kept her from discussing her perceptions as a female engineer of the implications of male-female biological distinctions and the alleged superiority of men. Ruba emphatically drew an analogy between the man as the head of the household or the supervisor of a company. The conviction with which she stated her beliefs implied an unwillingness to question these affirmed perceptions. The biological difference between the sexes seems to be an easier justification of women's inferiority. Woman as the "weaker sex" is an ideology rooted culturally and historically in this kind of gender analysis.

Ruba continued to contradict herself when she claimed that in both Canada and the Arab Muslim world, women are able to do what they want. She argued:

> To me there is no issue for women... I did not face anything.... so I'm not gonna go support something I'm not part of. I was never treated unjustly. I don't know anything about woman's abuse... Also, I always think it's a matter of personal choice. If you wanna be an engineer, be an engineer.... I think what we need to do is make... students aware of the options they have in terms of careers and education, and what that entails... and what they have to do to get through.... I never prescribe myself to the idea: we need to have more women in a certain field. I think we need to have better people in certain fields to serve the field.... I do not accept that we need to get more males into nursing school – I don't see the connection between the gender and the career, or the education.... As a Muslim woman, I know

> what my rights are. I'm a free woman. I have all my rights and nobody has taken that away from me and nobody can question that. It's not something I fight for at all.

While interviewing Ruba, I was challenged not only as a researcher but also as an insider Arab Muslim woman. As I noted earlier, I continuously reflected on my questions to Ruba and my interpretations of her narratives. However, I argue that, even though Ruba's interview prompted uncomfortable reflexivity, whenever I am asked about challenging experiences that I have had as a researcher I mention her narratives as the most interesting components of my research. My inclusion and analysis of Ruba's contradictions illustrate the reflexivity of discomfort. This differs from reflexivity that is merely a "telling tale or narcissistic text" (Pillow, 2003, p. 176).

Ruba's tone and how it caught my attention is another aspect of the reflexivity of discomfort. Ruba overemphasized her refusal to acknowledge or define any issue of gender discourses or any women's issues in Arab Muslim societies, thereby denying many women's lived realities. She clearly felt uncomfortable and exhibited a lack of confidence in me and in my research endeavour, thus questioning my insider status. Ruba consistently questioned the aim of research that involved gender or culture in Arab Muslim societies. As El-Solh (1988) states, "I became aware that there are many more dimensions – advantageous as well as restrictive – to my researcher role in my own Arab Muslim community than I had at first been conscious of" (p. 93).

Another aspect of uncomfortable reflexivity is related to the idea of critiquing one's own biased cultural traditions and customs, which can clearly cause tension. Critiquing one's own culture can be seen as inviting others to question one's loyalty. I used to feel compelled to defend my Arab Muslim cultural traditions. Now I am cognizant of the ways in which other Arab Muslims may perceive my critique, particularly given the fact that I am working from a Western location at a time when relations between the West and the Arab Muslim world are at their worst. Nonetheless, both my Islamic values and my Western education have made me "unapologetic in criticizing and condemning any patriarchal, antidemocratic aspects of any culture, especially the ones we know firsthand" (Tohidi, 1998, p. 289). I assert that remaining silent around institutional and/or systematic oppressive structures will only serve to sustain gender discourses and unequal access to educational opportunities in both the East and West.

My reflexivity of discomfort is related to my concern that I might unintentionally participate in generating stereotypical images of Arab Muslim societies, cultural traditions and/or religious practices in the Arab Muslim community in Canada. I had to find a balance in approaching my research inquiries, goals, objectives and outcomes.

I have felt that, in doing research based on my own culture, I have scrutinized women's lived experiences. This was a weighty realization and an uncomfortable experience. In many ways, criticizing gender discourses in my culture was like walking in an unfamiliar land. For instance, even as insider researcher, I was not aware of all of the issues that would emerge from my participants' narratives. I observed that certain aspects of these Arab Muslim women's gender perceptions may reproduce or reinforce biases, racism, and stereotypes about Islam, Muslims, and Arab culture. Another aspect of unfamiliarity pertains to how readers would perceive my research and the participants' perceptions of gender discourses.[7] I am fully aware that some of the discussions in my research may cast negative light on traditional Arabic views, customs, and treatment of women, thereby contributing to perpetuate stereotypical images of oppressed women. Yet, I make it clear that it is not my intention to cover the culture with a blanket of either condemnation or approval. I believe that every culture has imperfections and virtues and that it is the privilege of its people to critique their own culture. This pertains to the Arab Muslim female participants and to myself as the researcher. As both insiders and outsiders, we may have the privilege of seeing the advantages and shortcomings of the cultures with which we identify. This opens up new possibilities for constructing a better world for ourselves and for others.

Being self-reflexive throughout the research process pushed me toward the unfamiliar and brought me to a new level of self-discovery. This new level revealed an aspect of my identity that previously lay beneath the surface. Self-reflexivity seeks to "reveal the self, what is hidden inside, just as it tries to see the other.... The written word for me became an act of rebellion against injustice exercised in the name of religion, or morals, or love" (El Saadawi, 1999, pp. 292-293).

Reflexivity is especially an act of rebellion for me because I was brought up to believe that a "well behaved" woman should neither disturb nor critique her cultural traditions. Through the research process, I have come to understand that reflexivity means placing a critical lens, shaped by insider-outsider perceptions, on my own culture. As Chaudhry (2000) asserts, "Reflexivity is my bid to contextualize the research project within those aspects of myself that are for the most part denied voice in mainstream academic discourse" (p. 109).

As I look back on my research, I explore what it means to be self-reflexive. Was I representing the narratives of my research participants or was I representing my narrative of their narratives? Being vigilant about the limits of representing others has helped me to continue questioning the limits of my insider knowledge. I could not embody all the women whom I represented nor could I claim that my being self-reflexive allows me to speak in their voices and see through their eyes. My reflexivity is critical in that it exposes the difficult and often "uncomfortable task of leaving what is unfamiliar, unfamiliar" (Pillow, 2003, p. 177).

I have come to realize that being reflexive means acknowledging both the complexity and the limits of my research. In reference to lessons learned during the research process, I argue that understandings of others' perspectives cannot be fully obtained even when the researcher is an insider.[8] In this respect, I have much to learn about my native culture and its people. For example, some Arab Muslim women's satisfaction with the status quo with respect to gender apartheid in the Arab Muslim cultural tradition is worth exploring. Atkinson (1998) states that "telling and listening to life stories is a powerful experience" (p.3). I acknowledge that it is a privilege to conduct research within my own cultural group, but I must also acknowledge that potential limitations may emerge from such a position.

> Occupying a fluid insider-outsider position during these research processes enabled me to tap into these women's lives, worlds, and perspectives. Now, in retrospect, I can also understand that I was hearing women's stories through several layers of identification, not the least of which were my own complicated feelings. (Luttrel, 2000, p. 514)

CONCLUSION

Performing insider-outsider research and, by implication, being a member in the researched group makes it indispensable to be reflexive in relation to one's values and beliefs even though this may push the researcher into a zone of discomfort. In this paper I have considered how reflexivity of discomfort is indispensable for transcending distortions when conducting insider-outsider research.

When I conducted my Master's research, reflexivity was a major, albeit unintended, part of the research process. After I had completed my writing I realized that the process of research (i.e., collecting the data, analyzing the information and so forth) had profoundly impacted my personal perspective. It challenged me to realize that the stereotypical images of Arab Muslims are not entirely groundless. In other words, some of the stereotypes perpetuated in Western discourses reflect some aspects of how Islam is actually interpreted and hence practiced in the Muslim world. However, I also acknowledge that these stereotypes involve exaggerations of women's realities.

Over the course of my doctoral research, I became aware of the reflexive insider-outsider position that I occupied, which led me to reflect on the insider-outsider continuum. Reflexivity and my insider-outsider position added a layer of complexity to my research. I believe that being self-reflexive is an

> exercise in sustaining multiple and sometimes opposing emotions, keeping alive contradictory ways of theorizing the world, and seeking compatibility, not necessarily consensus. Being reflexive means expanding rather than narrowing the psychic, social, cultural, political fields of analysis (Luttrel, 2000, p. 516).

When I revisit my earlier question – "Am I representing the narrative of my research participants or was I representing my narrative of their narratives?" – I am led to the conclusion that my reflexive research endeavour is unique in that it provides the research participants' narratives as well as mine. This makes reflexive research a source of privileged knowledge. I argue that my background and history have heightened my awareness of the gender discourses that are intertwined with long established unjust cultural practices towards women in Canada and in Arab Middle Eastern societies.

This research odyssey has led me to continue my search for answers around reflexivity, its meanings and how it is practiced. I am aware that the work I do at every stage of my life is not static. This includes my definitions, understandings, explorations, and the ways in which I practice reflexivity. This is due to the fact that I will continue to grow as a person and as an academic. Changing or modifying my views around reflexivity is a part of this growth.

I believe, in the words of Abu-Lughod (1990), "that moving back and forth between the many worlds I inhabit is a movement within one complex and historically and politically determined world" (p. 27, as cited in Chaudhry, 1997, p. 451). Reflexivity also allowed me to look back into Arab Muslim culture and Canadian culture with a lens shaped by my reflexive insider-outsider experience.

Reflexivity has helped me to carefully scrutinize my biases and question my insider-outsider prejudices. Reflexivity has pushed me, the participants. and possibly my readers toward the unfamiliar, something that I call reflexivity of discomfort.

In brief, reflexivity is not only a way of thinking critically about the whole research process, the quality and richness of the data, the analysis and the limits, but also about the realization that there is "no easy story to tell, nor for the reader to hear, but a whirling of voices, figures, and histories" (Chaudhry, 2000, p.108). Reflexivity means deconstructing what could be taken for granted. In this way, reflexivity enriches educational research and reveals our thoughts and limits, first as human beings and second as researchers.

NOTES

1. By "critical," I refer to Usher's (1996) definition of being able to detect and unmask researchers' "beliefs and practices" (p. 22).
2. In many Western writings, including some scholarly writings, Muslim women have typically been constructed as one of the most oppressed groups of women in the world (Cayer, 1996, p. 2). Also, the image of Islam as the fount of unmitigated oppression of women, as the foundation of a gender system that categorically denies women equal rights and subjugates them to men, recurs in the movies, magazines, and books of our popular culture as well as in much academic discourse: "the complexities, not only of the situation of women in the Arab world, but also of the historical and political forces that have shaped our own views of the issues" (Khalidi & Tucker, 1996, p. 9).

3. I believe that the *Quran* has historically been interpreted by conservative male Muslim scholars who advocated conservative male chauvinist interpretations. More recent analyses incorporate a women's perspective, such as Amina Wadud's (1999) reading of the *Quranic* texts.
4. Particularly because of the complexity of the Arab Muslim religion and cultural traditions intertwined in these contexts.
5. There are different ways to wear the scarf; some ways are more common than others and some ways are especially known to be worn by women from Gulf nations.
6. "Nepean, near Ottawa, team quits soccer event after girl told to take off hijab."
7. Ruba is an engineer who earned her M.Sc. as a computer analyst. She arrived in Canada in 1994. Ruba chose not to disclose her age.
8. A pseudonym for one of the women I interviewed for my research.
9. When the participants would thank me for my efforts, I wondered what they were expecting of me. Some of them expressed appreciation toward me regarding my research, irrespective of whether they saw any outcome to it.
10. This took place where she completed her Bachelor of Engineering.

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ENGAGING THE CANADIAN DIASPORA: YOUTH SOCIAL IDENTITIES IN A CANADIAN BORDER CITY[1]

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ABSTRACT. This paper is based on qualitative interviews undertaken with immigrant youth of African descent in Windsor, Ontario; it describes their sojourner lives across geographic borders and their final settlement in Windsor. The paper also offers narrations of the activities that enabled them to formulate friendships and the barriers and facilitators to the development of friendships across races. Critical findings reported in this paper reveal the ways that youth use resources in their travels to construct and negotiate their identities and to formulate new friendships. An important resource used by the majority of the youth was that of an imagined homeland, which consequently impacted on how they viewed and acted on the racial boundary critical in the formation of friendships in the Diaspora.

INTÉGRER LA DIASPORA CANADIENNE: LES IDENTITÉS SOCIALES DES JEUNES ÉTABLIS DANS UNE VILLE CANADIENNE FRONTALIÈRE[1]

RÉSUMÉ. Inspiré d'entrevues qualitatives faites auprès de jeunes de descendance africaine établis à Windsor en Ontario, cet article décrit leur périple migratoire à travers les frontières jusqu'à leur établissement en Ontario. Il relate également ce qui les a aidés à bâtir des liens amicaux ainsi que les obstacles et les éléments facilitateurs au développement d'amitiés interraciales. Des résultats importants soulevés dans cet article expliquent les manières dont les jeunes utilisent les ressources au cours du voyage migratoire pour construire et négocier leurs identités et établir de nouvelles amitiés. Il explore comment la majorité des jeunes créent un concept imaginaire de leur mère-patrie, influençant ainsi la façon dont ils perçoivent et agissent sur les frontières raciales fondamentales à la création d'amitiés au sein de la diaspora.

INTRODUCTION

Background to the larger study

This paper discusses data drawn from a larger study, *Intergenerational Links and the Civic Participation of Youth from African Communities* (Dlamini & Anucha, 2005), undertaken with youth between the ages of 16 and 24 whose families migrated to Canada between 1995 and 2005. The study was conceptualized

with awareness that over the past decade many of the people emigrating from the African continent arrive in Canada with diverse experiences of hardship caused by wars, poverty, and related problems. As a result of these experiences, ideas of how and when to participate in their new communities are narrowly understood, and their knowledge of governance is often informed by their negative experiences with repressive regimes from their countries of origin. Therefore, the study examined youth understanding of civic participation as well as the patterns of interaction that currently exist between youth and those with whom they relate.

Another component addressed in the study emanated from the realization that despite multicultural and other diversity-based policies, minority youth in general, and those of African descent in particular, still face barriers such as racial discrimination that limit their access to social and economic opportunities. Yet there are very few community programs that address the particularities and special requirements of youth from war-torn continental Africa. In fact, the tendency of many government programs has been to group all Black children together and to develop youth-related strategies and policies in ways that assume uniformity of experience. This study broke away from this trend to homogeneity in an effort to examine the unique experiences of these African youth and to begin to address how they can be meaningfully engaged in their new homeland, while at the same time taking into consideration how their previous experiences in their original homelands come to bear on their current undertakings.

In *Intergenerational Links and the Civic Participation of Youth from African Communities,* we asked the questions: How do youth from African communities imagine themselves as members of the local communities (e.g., their neighbourhood or even the city of Windsor) beyond the confines of familiar national boundaries, that is, their countries of origin? With what people and groups do these youth most closely identify upon settling in the new Canadian space? What role do their images of Africa and their experiences there play in the processes of new identity formation and community engagement? What social and political gains are associated with these identities and engagements? What are the local conditions that help shape identification as cultural histories and cultural politics? Youth answers to these questions were diverse, and illuminated the politics of identification and civic engagement, which moved from the use of homeland and cultural and personal histories to an adaptation of the political experience of migration plus the desire to incorporate social and cultural practices that are seen to be Canadian.

In *Intergenerational Links and the Civic Participation of Youth from African Communities,* we investigated ways that civic participation is linked to the development and deployment of both social capital (Bourdieu 1986; Putman, 1993, 2000)[2] and youth identity. We were also interested in learning why some interactions

produced social capital for youth and others did not. We soon realized that the production and utilization of social capital is strongly linked to youth social identities; that is, who they are as young people is central to how they are able to develop social capital and to access the resources and sites in which social capital is created and mobilized. As such, the purpose of this paper is to use identity-defining data to look closely at how recently immigrated African youth identities are constructed and negotiated within the Canadian context; that is, we discuss the data that explains how youth construct and negotiate their identities in the new Canadian space and how such constructions shape the relations they form with other youth both within and across ethnic boundaries. We frame our discussion through using the dialectical concepts of identity and diaspora.

Engaging the Canadian Diaspora: Youth and the construction of identity

In order to understand the notion of *diaspora*, it is critical to explore the socio-historical origins of the term. Today, *diaspora* is often understood as a dispersion of any people across countries away from their original homelands. Until recently, however, this concept was often only associated with those whose scattering was a result of a historical trauma, such as the Holocaust or slavery. This link to the negative tradition of "forcible dispersion" (Cohen, 1996) and its various consequences came as a result of using the term *diaspora* to describe the Jewish experiences of expulsion from Israel, a history of exile that can be traced to 600 BCE. Although this traumatic tradition of diaspora has also been shared by other groups (including the African Diaspora), over time, the term *diaspora* has evolved beyond the "victim tradition" (Cohen, 1996) to also refer to any kind of migration that places a group of people away from the place where they had originally settled for generations. To transcend the first, negative tradition is to acknowledge the diversity of experiences as people disperse from a homeland to new places. Whatever definition emerges, *diaspora* suggests a bond of locality, culture, and common ancestry, which extends beyond the narrow boundaries of a group's country of origin. In this vein, it is now common to refer to the African Diaspora, Polish Diaspora, and so on.

Vertovec (1999) also offers a useful framework for examining diaspora as a social form, a type of consciousness, and a mode of cultural production. For Vertovec, to appreciate the process of diaspora, it is critical to acknowledge how its members continue to identify with and relate to a group despite dispersal, to examine the ways in which the diasporic community members frame their experiences and sense of identity through their transnationality, and to discuss the ways in which globalization reforms social and cultural phenomena. Rather than focusing on its definition, however, we are more concerned in this paper about the processes of diaspora. We are interested in demonstrating how groups – more specifically, youth – foster or otherwise cultivate those political and social connections that appeal to the "roots" or

the "homeland" in their narratives of who they are. Our examination builds on and develops Vertovec's second meaning of *diaspora* (acknowledging how its members continue to identify with and relate to a group despite dispersal); as well, the work is in accordance with Massaquoi's assertion that "Diaspora is an environment that fosters the invention of tradition, ethnicity, kinship, and other identity markers. It is a place where multiple African communities become a monolithic entity and ethnic differences are replaced with ethnic pride" (2004, p. 140). To us, like differential identities as defined by the quote that begins this paper, the diaspora is as much created by past and ephemeral events as it is dependent on future and as yet unknown circumstances. As such, it is critical to explore how youth learn to navigate this environment in ways that either creates distance and disconnection from or engagement with and a reconnection to the "imagined" homeland. By coupling processes of the diaspora with process of identity construction and negotiation it is possible to present a useful framework for understanding the strategic nature of discourses that circulate within and across psychological and social borders that situate African Canadian immigrant youth in marginal ways. The goal of this paper was to further this discussion.

There are vast amounts of literature that offer different definitions of identity within migrant communities; in this paper, however, we have focused on the definition provided in the works of Stuart Hall (1990, 1996). Like the concept diaspora, identity is a multidimensional term that embodies complex and fluid processes within any given historical period. Hall defines identity as fragmented, discursive, and contextual, stating that identities "are about questions of using the resources of history, language, and culture in the process of becoming, rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we came from' so much as what we might become, how we have been represented, and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves" (1996, p. 4). We use this definition to begin to understand the resources youth use to "become" engaged citizens in their new Canadian space, as well as how these resources interact with their past experiences in the countries in which they have lived. A key understanding here is that identities are always in a process of being constructed, and since they are never complete, they temporarily attach into discourses. Put differently, because identities are constructed within and not outside discourses, they need to be understood as being produced in specific historical and institutional contexts and sites.

Definitions of identity in this paper also follow Walcott's (2003) description of complexities of Canadian Black identity as an "absented presence…[located] between the U.S. and the Caribbean…a bubbling brew of desires for elsewhere, disappointment in the nation and the pleasures of exile" (2003, p. 27) – an identity that carries particular histories of resistance and domination. Walcott makes clear that while Canadian Black identity is informed historically by

distinction from and connection to the American Black identity, diaspora identification with elsewhere (in our case, the "homeland") also plays a key role in the process of creating Canadian Black identity.

Integral to the discussion of Canadian Black identity is also an exploration of both racialized identity and difference. To understand racialized identity, one must make the important distinction between "being black" (i.e., given a racial identity) and "becoming black" (i.e., relating to the racialized identity in a politically engendered way) (Dei, 1997). For our study, the notion of *becoming* black is critical to understanding how immigrant youths' identities are shaped; this process acknowledges meanings ascribed to social, cultural, and historical constructions of being black in a racialized society to access how youth negotiate constructions of race gender, sexuality, and class (Dei & James, 1998). Difference, meanwhile, is complex, fluid, and relational; its construction is informed by how individuals' characteristics relate to the norms of the society or community (James, 2000) and ultimately, is a site of power (Dei & James, 1998). While difference is fundamental to our very existence, it is also a means to divide social groups. For youth in particular, an understanding of difference allows for the development of "a 'resistant' identity and to link such politicised identity to social practice" (Dei & James, 1998, p. 93).

Within the larger study, in defining who they are, youth articulated multiple ways that point to how they see themselves and how they believe others outside their community see them, which ultimately informs how they understand what the new homeland has to offer. The new homeland presented here is Windsor, a Canadian border city located directly south of Detroit, Michigan. Windsor has a population of about 300,000; in 2002, Statistics Canada identified Windsor as the fastest growing city in Ontario, after Toronto[3] (Statistics Canada, 2005). Identified as the third most common settlement site in the province of Ontario, Windsor has experienced the largest percentage increase since 1996 in visible minority residents in Ontario (People for Education, 2005). Important for our discussion here is that Windsor's racial diversity is often compared with that of Detroit, a city with a well-documented history of racial conflict that climaxed with the race riots of 1943 and 1967 and initiated the so-called "white flight" to the suburbs (Fasenfest, Booza, & Metzger, 2004; Sugrue, 1995). Such overt incidences of racial conflict are considered remote from or even unimaginable in the psyches of Windsor residents. In the local southern Ontario region, historical narratives of slaves escaping to Canada and settling around Windsor play a key role in mainstream Canadian self-definition as a sanctuary from American slavery and racial discrimination, a notion that oversimplifies the complexity of the lived experience of Black immigrants, both then and now (Walcott, 2003).

This border location and favourable comparison with Detroit in terms of race relations are important for our discussion in that they act to mask the

discourses of racism and exclusion, consequently making it difficult for African youth to articulate their experiences of feeling excluded from the Canadian mainstream. The predominantly mainstream youth population, for instance, considers acts of racism inconsequential or trivial as this is something that is generally associated with "across the border." In the following section, an overview of Canadian immigrant youth studies is provided. These studies are sparse, thus pointing to the need for current work similar to the study we undertook.

Overview of Canadian immigrant youth studies

In general, research on African youth migration and settlement processes in the Canadian context is sparse. Youth studies of the past decade tend to focus on examining the problems faced by newcomer youth rather than on examining their processes of "becoming" Canadian. Some of the identified problems are specific to certain populations while others are not. For example, a study of Ethiopian newcomer youth in Toronto indicates that because of the need to support themselves, youth get trapped in jobs instead of pursuing their studies; suffer because of inadequate housing and health services, cultural incongruence, language, unfamiliarity with school systems, and discrimination; and are mainly under-employed (Beyene, 2000).

Other problems faced by immigrant youth in general relate to cognitive and emotional changes due to the absence of familiar language, culture, and community. Immigrant children and adolescents experience a cultural shock that causes emotional maladjustment. Many newcomers suffer from anxiety over the loss of familiar things (James, 1997). Kilbride, Anisef, Baichman-Anisef, and Khattar (2001) further state that language proficiency difficulties comprise one of the major struggles newcomer youth face in attempting to adapt and integrate into Canadian society. Among other things, these language proficiency issues exacerbate educational difficulties, create family difficulties, reduce employment opportunities, produce low self-esteem, and increase discrimination.

Seat (1997) states that, generally speaking, there have been a number of usual and highly intensive problems regarding developmental issues associated with the difficult processes of growth and independence for all adolescents. Accordingly, immigrant and refugee newcomer youth need to start a new socialization process, which naturally is a difficult task in a new place/country. In addition, they are required to meet new academic challenges: they have to learn a new school structure and fulfill parent/teacher expectations. They also have to gain acceptance into new peer groups, and develop new kinds of social competence. These challenges are also discussed by Kilbride et al. (2001), who argue that as newcomer youth negotiate between the new society and the culture that they once called home, they are confronted with a number of tensions that play out in different spheres (i.e., school, family, friends and peers, and the labour market). At other times, the tensions are a reflection of what immi-

grant youth often feel when they are pulled in opposite directions, between seemingly irreconcilable cultural standards or value systems and a desire to fit in. Exacerbating these issues is the discrimination that newcomer youth often perceive as being directed toward them, which further complicates and challenges their integration into Canada.

The issues of settlement and adaptation become even more complicated when one takes into consideration that newcomer youth from different ethnic groups, religions, genders, and cultural background have diverse experiences and, hence, different concerns and needs. As a result, the already complex difficulties facing adolescents, such as doing well in school, forging healthy relationships with family members and friends, developing a sense of belonging, and acquiring rewarding employment opportunities, become even more challenging when coupled with the settlement issues that are experienced by immigrant youth (Kilbride et al., 2001).

Other recent Canadian immigrant youth studies suggest the need to pay more attention to institutional barriers that limit healthy settlement processes and to how such concepts as diversity and multiculturalism result in marginalizing and exclusionary rather than empowering and inclusive practices. For example, in his discussion of what he terms a "Caribbean fragment in Toronto," Premdas (2004) argues against the policy of inclusion that has a hidden agenda towards assimilation: norms and values that are in tune with those of the dominant core of society are tolerated while "incompatible practices [are] jettisoned but with expectations of general compliance to the overarching mores and norms of the dominant society" (2004, p. 545). Premdas further argues that the host communities are unwilling to change their society to accommodate culturally diverse groups as they settle in the Canada (see also Bannerji, 2000; Rex, 1995; Walcott, 2003).

In this paper, we build on this literature on critical youth studies, emphasizing the importance of examining the intersection between youth resources of self-identification and their resources and processes for developing social relationships. We believe that within these resources and processes lay the reasons for youth feelings of exclusion from the dominant core of society, which ultimately leads to lack of civic involvement. We begin our discussion by describing the methodology we used in the larger study and the analysis of the current work, and conclude with an examination of the data on youth identity construction and negotiation that is informed by related literature on diaspora engagements.

Methodology

The larger study, *Intergenerational Links and the Civic Participation of Youth from African Communities,* employed a multi-layered, qualitative methodology consisting of three interrelated and overlapping stages: a community forum to engage key youth stakeholders; profiling of organizations to determine what

spaces youth could access and their activities therein; and individual interviews/family interviews/youth forum. Throughout the study, we ensured that youth were actively engaged in all stages; that is, we ensured that youth were not just subjects to be "studied," but were involved in the research process as interviewers, planners, and facilitators of youth-related activities. The data in this paper are drawn from the third stage of the larger study, which consisted of in-depth interviews conducted with African youth aged 16 to 24 who had migrated to Canada over the past decade.

The selection of interview participants was purposive (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996; Ristock & Grieger, 1996), focusing on African youth, 16 to 24 years old, who had migrated to Canada over the past five years. We also conducted six paired interviews with youth and their parents/guardians in order to examine intergenerational relations.[4] Before beginning the interviewing, we worked with the youth interviewers to familiarize them with the research protocol. We also worked with these youth to unpack their personal positioning and to interrogate the meaning and process of cultural sensitivity in interviewing, elements that are crucial in conducting research respectfully (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Two of the youth interviewers were also recent immigrants to Canada and could speak the native languages of the majority of the youth interviewees, and the third youth was first-generation African-Canadian. A life history approach was used for the interviews because it allows for the location of youth life stories within a broader context (Goodson, 1992) and also allows for both youth and interviewers to "contemplate the effects of our actions, and to alter the directions of our lives" (Richardson, 1990, p. 117). Finally, to tease out strategies for youth cross ethnic engagements, we conducted a youth forum with a dozen youth with whom we had conducted in-depth interviews, which had, upon analysis, provided us with rich data that indicated a critical understanding and interrogation of youth diaspora negotiations.

Overall, 41 participants were interviewed: Ethiopia, 8; Ghana, 1; Kenya, 1; Nigeria, 2; Liberia, 1; Rwanda, 12; Somalia, 10; and Sudan, 6. To examine how youth from African communities define themselves, we designed interrelated questions, which, when presented, opened up conversation about self-identification between the interviewees and interviewers. With the first set of questions, we were interested, first and foremost, in knowing how these youth would describe themselves to strangers interested in getting to know who they are as young people. Another set of questions had to do with peer relations; that is, we asked youth questions about their choice of friends and whether or not they made social relations outside their racial and linguistic groupings. Appendix A offers the interviewer guiding questions.

The interviews lasted about an hour and half each. The transcripts were read multiple times by the researchers, and the textual data (i.e., participants' responses to the qualitative question) were explored inductively through using

thematic analysis. Meaning units (i.e., responses) were inductively tagged for common themes and placed into more general conceptual categories reflecting features that youth used to define who they were. This process was ongoing and required multiple instances of open coding before the final categories were achieved. Both researchers reviewed the coding; when we disagreed about where to place a response, a discussion took place until a consensus was reached. All necessary precautions were taken to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the qualitative data (Lincoln, 1995; Seale, 1999).

Thematic analysis of the in-depth interview data initially revealed that the youth used multiple means to define who they are, including geographic origin, cultural background, religion, migration experiences, personal values and behaviour, and educational goals and successes to date. All of these markers were used either singly or in combination with others, thus creating complex, fluid and sometimes ambiguous ways of self-identification, informing of how youth participated in their communities as well as their ways of forming relations within or across cultural and racial boundaries. As a result of these complex intersections, we soon realized that a much richer and sophisticated description of processes of identity construction and negotiation, which in turn led to the formation of peer relations and community engagements, could be reached by acknowledging the critical connection between geographic origin (i.e., the homeland) and each of the other markers we had identified. The analysis of these intersections ultimately indicated feelings of either belonging to or exclusion from the dominant core Windsor community, feelings that, in some instances, produced a sense of ambivalence for youth. Thus, our final markers of identity and diaspora contingencies included: A) multiple travels, B) connections to the homeland (including connections to the homeland, maintaining culture through the homeland, cultural integration and the history of dominance and resistance, need to share, and distancing from the homeland), C) identifying and navigating the homeland, and D) negotiating friendships. In the following results section, participants' responses are offered to demonstrate these markers of identity; pseudonyms have been used to protect the participants' confidentiality.

MARKERS OF IDENTITY & DIASPORA CONTINGENCIES

A. Multiple travels

In tracking migrant trends, we discovered that the majority of participants had travelled through three or more different countries before immigrating to Canada, and that Windsor was not necessarily the first settlement city once they arrived here. Therefore, it is not surprising that when asked how they would

identify themselves to strangers, many of these youth used their travel stories as pivotal markers of their identities. While travel stories began in a particular country, one that we may call the place of birth, many of these youth had spent almost half their lives travelling before finally settling in Windsor. For example, while only one participant identified Kenya as his country of birth, in telling their stories of identity, six youth mentioned that they had lived in Kenya at some point in their lives; however, five of the six participants did not identify themselves as Kenyans, partly because they had travelled so extensively and also because they were born outside Kenya. For many participants, living in these different countries was not temporary; rather, these were lengthy stays averaging about four years. Such travel patterns indicate that before arriving in Windsor, these young people had experiences of making lives for themselves in places outside their country of birth, places that we may refer to as "zones of comfort." The following two excerpts exemplify youth sojourner life outside Canada, while the third is an example of a sojourner life that combines Africa and North American travels before final settlement in Windsor:

> *Desta*: I was born in Somalia, in Mogadishu. There was a war there and when the war began, my family left from Somalia to Yemen. We lived in Yemen for five years and started going to school from the beginning [the first grade]. Then we lived there [in Yemen] for almost five years, then we left Yemen for Syria. In Syria we were in elementary school for one year. Then we left for Lebanon. There we completed elementary school and went to high school. We were in Lebanon for almost eight years. We lived in Lebanon [in] many different places. All along we travelled, looking for a way to live in a place that would accept us. Then the government of Canada helped us to come to Canada.
>
> *Jelani*: Yeah, I was born in Sudan, and then when I was young, because there's a war in Sudan, my family decided to move to Ethiopia. We moved to Ethiopia and we were there as refugees in a camp. And then we stayed for seven years in Ethiopia and we decide to move to Canada with immigration. So we moved here in Canada and now we live in Canada.
>
> *Kamaria*: Well, I was born in Rwanda. I lived there about ten years but when I was there, I used to go to live in other countries back and forth, like go to Congo a lot, because of the war, you know. And so, I came here in Canada when I was about eleven years old. And well, before I was in U.S.A. and then I came here one year after because I didn't like it there because my family wanted me to speak French and go to French school and they don't have it there. So we came here. I was in Kingston [Ontario] before and then we didn't really like it there so we came here in Windsor. It's been now five year since I'm here. And so now I'm, I like it here. It's better than everywhere I went in Canada.

> It's small but I like it here but now I'm in grade eleven and after high school I want to be a nurse if I [can] and go to university. I don't know where but, yeah. That's it.

For all youth in this study, the settlement in Windsor came as a relief from these travels and allowed them some form of political stability as well as a way of establishing themselves, creating social networks, and of existing in a space that enabled families to live meaningfully. Additionally, as the quote below indicates, even when compared with other diverse cities in Canada, Windsor is a positive place to live, and has a somewhat more active African community that embraces and allows newcomers from the continent to establish a sense of self and belonging:

> *Imani*: I think it's good, the African community is good. They have some sort of union. They have, they hold events and what not. And when I went to Montreal recently the, there, when I compare their, their communities to here, it's not the same. Here is more, everybody's more connected than, and everybody's, I think they're friendlier towards one another than there. Specifically the Rwandese community.

The following section examines the resources that youth tapped into in order to create a sense of belonging to the Windsor place as well as construct and negotiate their identities. A key role identified in the study is the way that the "homeland" was evoked as a resources youth used to create and navigate space, identity, and friendships.

B. The homeland

(i) Connections to the homeland

The data indicate that a significant resource of identification has to do with notions of the "original home," or the homeland; furthermore, association with these places informs youth development of relations between themselves and others. For some youth immigrants to Canada, the dialectic relationship between place and self provides a strong sense of who they are. The data in the study indicate that the youth are connected to their homeland in their new space, through kinship, culture, politics, and other identity markers. The following two quotes illustrate combinations of kinship, culture, and politics as important ways of connecting to the homeland and of establishing a sense of identity and friendship with others.

> *Wekesa*: For me, like you know, in my extra times I would love to get together with my friends, with Ethiopian friends. Talk about the country and know, like you know, listen to the news and stuff like that. And we talk about what we have to do for helping people, Ethiopian children to know about their culture, teaching the language, and teaching their culture as well as teaching about other cultures they have to respect and stuff like that. To me that's fun.

> *Imani*: I have a lot of African friends also. And we also like to share like life experiences and stories and stuff and kind of throw points back on each other and, you know, we get good criticisms from each other. And that helps us, – that helps me a lot, helps because they go through a lot of the same things I do because they also have African parents. And it's easier that way.
>
> *Sanaa*: Yeah, a lot of, a lot of people that I meet that, especially females that are Ethiopian – we have a lot of, like we relate in a lot of things because we can talk about. Like even, even though I might not remember a lot of back home, they can tell me stories and how their parents treat them now that they're in Canada because it's very similar to how my parents treat me at home, being a female, or whatever the case may be.

(ii) Maintaining culture through the homeland

There is also data that speaks to the way youth used the homeland as a reference for maintaining culture and building a sense of community and self as illustrated below:

> *Sefu*: Well, because participating in our community, it gives me an idea of who I am but also I find that it gives you a sense of being, who you are, because you feel the, you are, you identify yourself with a certain group who share same beliefs, maybe same background. So that also could give you a sense of identity.
>
> *Zuberi*: The difference is the Rwandese community, I love it because that is where I was born and my personal interest is to maintain my culture, to practice my culture, to know where I come from and never forget.
>
> *Kamaria*: There are things, I wouldn't change anything from my past because I had a good life in the past and I don't regret anything from it. I liked everything I went through before, all the country I visit, from Africa till I came here. So I really, I don't think I would change anything.

(iii) Cultural integration and the history of dominance and resistance

Data also indicate that youth were interested in integrating what they had learnt in the homeland and in the new culture. For some youth, however, integrating the two cultures was coupled with the need to educate others – mainly the core group of white youth about Africa. As well, understanding the history of resistance and dominance seemed critical to some youths' identities:

> *Tendaji*: The only effect that I got is that whatever, whatever good that you learn, you know, whatever experience you had from the communities in Somalia or Kenya, you took that and you came here or you came to Canada and you could take a benefit from each year. You take a benefit from each year. You see the good of everything and you compare and

> you try to make a great, a great community from that. You see the effect from this and that and you see the benefit from the Somali community in Somalia or Kenya, you see all that benefit and you try to put that together and try to make a good community in this country, whatever you are.

And

> *Tendaji*: I don't feel that there's any racism or anything like that but history does have an effect on everybody. History has an effect on us. So, you know, me being black and African, I feel that I have to try extra hard. And I don't have to try hard but I try extra hard to make, to make not only myself look good or be a benefit to the community but also encourage all of the African and black people to try hard, you know. In the past, people have looked down on the black people in Africa so sometimes this nature of mine or this thinking stays in the mind of the people. Not everybody, I can't speak for everybody. But, of course, you have percentage in which people do think like that. So, you eliminate this mentality and this way of thinking by you yourself trying hard and by you yourself showing that you're dedicated and you're hard worker. And this, at times, changes the mind of people a lot. And also encourages all those other people who are black and African to try harder.

> *Imani:* In my early years, something that probably changed me or helped me to see life differently would probably be genocide that happened in Rwanda. I was probably, you know, taught, taught me not to take things for granted, or people for granted.

(iv) The need to share

The comments emphasized in the following section show how the youth wanted to proudly share their culture with others so that individuals in the new community would understand their identities and /or experiences. As well, this sharing was also so that African youth could learn from and share in the new culture too.

> *Mchumba*: Because sometimes, like I share my story, my experiences from back home and they're always saying to me, "Oh my gosh, how could you go through all that?" And that's healthy because my friends I have wanted to know like how . . .

> *Abeni*: Some people are very misunderstood about the African culture. But I feel, like when I give them the information and they go like, "Oh my God, is that how it is?" I feel like happy and content that they actually know about the African culture now. *They know the real story about the African culture.*

> *Adogoke*: Kind of relationship, like I've learned to understand more of their background. Everybody I hang out with, like, different African groups, different racial groups, whatever, I learn more and more about their background. *I'm really interested in learning, you know, them telling me more about it too.* So that's the kind of relationship, you know, I have more of an understanding of the thinking of different ethnic and different people around me.
>
> *Wekesa*: I define myself or I would like *other people to know about myself which about my culture and my country, the history and my background because most people don't have knowledge and any historical things* because whatever they see from most commercials, and could be negative or positive, things from other people which they don't have real, any information, so I would love to tell other people that my culture, most important, which is my background.
>
> *Wekesa*: These things are very important to me because that identifies myself which is my background, you know, presents myself. *So I would love to tell them because I want them to know like, you know, how, or what kind of culture do I have and I'm not a person like just with no background or no history.* So my history presents myself and my people. (emphasis added)

(v) Distancing from the homeland

These quotes show how the youth could also distance themselves from the homeland in an attempt to integrate into the new culture

> *Akinyi:* I don't really care about my background. I know I'm Ethiopian, I'm black, I'm whatever, but I don't think, I don't think that, like I don't always think that they're going to be a racial, I mean racist to me. I don't, I just think positive. I don't care whether racist, whether they're racist or not. Because it's just stupid, I don't know.
>
> *Zuberi*: Not really, know, because I try, my experiences in Rwanda, they was in Rwanda so when I moved here I tried to leave it back, like bad stuff that happened to me, I tried to leave it back so I could become a whole new person in Canada.

C. Identifying and navigating the homeland

While the information above suggests youth eagerness to connect to and use the homeland as a powerful resource for nurturing identities and friendships, an important question to consider is how, in the midst of all the travels undertaken, were youth able to identify/name their homelands? As previously stated, the data illustrate that the majority of participants in the study had lived in more than one country before settling in Windsor, yet individual youth invoked a country as an important locale informing their constructions of

self and others. Data indicate that a system of selection and omission existed in the way youth used the countries they had lived in, in efforts to construct identities and friendships.

Adegoke, for example, was born in Liberia where, at age six, he lost his father to the civil war. Thereafter, he lived in the Ivory Coast with his grandmother for a couple of years; with his mother and grandmother, he eventually settled in Ghana for four years before migrating to Canada at age twelve. Adegoke identifies himself as *African*, uses phrases such as "in *Africa* they strive for you to do your best [school] work" and "people are more helpful in *Africa* than Canada". He has four close friends – two from "the country I am from, that's *Ghana*," one from the *Congo*, and another from *Lebanon*. He is very active in the community because of a family trend of community service in Africa, especially on the part of his grandmother, who, during the war, took in many strangers and cared for and fed the poor, the dying, and the disenfranchised. He is also a strong athlete and volunteers in a community centre, teaching younger children learn how to play basketball. He situates what he does within his cultural upbringing and because "when I came here, I didn't follow the lead of the people down here. I kind of worked my own way and continued what I did in *Africa*."

Adegoke's positioning and use of the African continent in many ways answers the question: What does it mean to be an African living in Canada? By identifying more with Africa than with any one country in which he lived, this participant has reconstructed for himself an idealized image and history of living in Africa, which in some ways appeals to the political conditions of being Black in Canada.

What is further revealing is that Adegoke refers to Ghana as his home country, when, in fact, he was born and lived a third of his life in Liberia. Adegoke appears to be caught up in a situation where, on the one hand, his African origin positions him as different from the youth from the core dominant group of White Canadians, which he considers as a source of strength for who he is, while on the other hand, some parts of this Africa, in this case, Liberia, if invoked in conversations, would subject him to questions responses to which may position him marginally (as someone whose origins can be associated with violent "backward" political regimes). Adegoke's sojourner life began as a result of the seven-year civil war,[5] which killed his father and sent him, his mother, and his grandmother into exile. For this participant, the civil war makes Liberia a controversial place to invoke as a marker of social identity. Ghana, however, is seen as a place of sanctuary from which he can recreate narratives of survival, cultural metaphors, and valued traditions and practices.[6]

Further analysis of Adegoke's narrative reveals a rupture in the use of geography as a powerful resource of identity. The continent is sometimes presented as one unified entity in which countries like Congo, Ivory Coast, and Lebanon[7]

are all collapsed under the name "Africa," and it is from this entity "Africa" that the participant can invoke positive cultural experiences as well as create a network of close diaspora friendships. All that is African is nostalgically presented; Africa becomes a symbol of unity and strength where different countries become monolithic, and ethnic differences are replaced by nostalgic gratifications. Such a rupture in the use of geography is in tune with Clifford (1994) when he asserts that diaspora groups maintain sentimental links to the "homeland," while at the same time creating identities that are more than just an extension of this homeland. In this regard, the homeland is as real as it is imaginary.

While on the surface, participant Adegoke's selective use of countries appears to be odd, in essence, the data in this study demonstrate idiosyncratic uses of geography by youth in the construction of their identities. Akinyi was born in Ethiopia, but because of the war she moved at age fourteen to London, England, where she lived for about four years before migrating to Canada at age eighteen. She identifies herself as Ethiopian, states that she developed a sense of self and community when she was in England where she "used to go to church, too, and we used to be involved in [the] Ethiopian community, the youth group, because there's a lot of people in London, England. There's a lot of Ethiopians, so it's more a bigger community." Chiumbo was born in Somalia, but when he was six, the civil war broke out, and he and his family left for Zimbabwe where they remained for about a year before migrating to Ottawa. Several years later, the family settled in Windsor. He identifies himself as Somali even when he states: "I don't remember very much about it [Somalia] or that transition from Somalia to Zimbabwe. I was about six, five years going six." His family settled in Ottawa because of other family members who were already established and working there, "and it was easier to be around our relatives or an already established Somali community."

To Akinyi, England is limited in its usefulness for self-identification beyond the associations she developed within the Ethiopian community while living there. Ethiopia, on the other hand, provides her with a way of defining herself as well as offering a sense of community and belonging. In a similar fashion, for Chiumbo, references to Somalia enabled his family a state of being accepted in a foreign space because, upon settling in Canada, other families had regrouped and created a diaspora-country-based community. Chiumbo may be identifying himself as Somali simply because he was born in Somalia and because he lives in a predominantly Somali community in Canada. Such use of geography to construct identities occurs despite or, as others will argue, because of the devastating wars that caused the displacement of the participants and their families. To both these participants, by providing strategies for the formation of diaspora relations and identities, the geographic locale where they were born represents, to borrow from Massaquoi, "an idealized womb of nurturance and safety" (2004, p. 143).

D. Negotiating friendships

The data in this study reveal that geographic places of origin also informed the processes of establishing relationships with other youth. When asked who their friends were, the backgrounds of these friends, and their reasons for choosing to develop these friendships, 17 of the 30 youth interviewed clearly identified people from the African continent as their close friends; the others said they had "all kinds of friends" ..."Canadian-born friend"; of these, two identified their friends by race as White. The following quotations are examples of typical responses to the question: How would you define your friends?

> *Zuberi*: In Canada, I have friends from other communities like Congo, and those are second generation. Those from Rwanda, some are second generation. And the ones, the ones that are from Canada, they're first generation.[8] I met them at school, you know, and we go to school together.
>
> *Kirabo*: ...Well, most of my friends, most of them are from Africa and most of them are from Sudan. The ones that are...my friends, their parents are from Sudan, some of them are Nubian, some are from Zaire and Zanzibar. Some of my friends are from [Detroit,] Michigan, and some of them are from Denko and most of my close friends that I have here, they're from Zanzibar, but they don't live here. They live in Michigan.

We were also interested in knowing how youth would define the friendships they had with these friends, why they chose to nurture these friendships, and the kinds of activities they did together. There were many activities that youth said they engaged in with each other, ranging from sports to movies to just hanging out. Twelve of the 17 youth with African friends identified commonality of culture and values as the central reason for choosing the friends they chose. At the same time, lack of knowledge of the "other" culture limited the development of cross-ethnic relationships, as demonstrated by the following quotations:

> *Adisa*: Well, I've made a lot of friends. A lot of my friends that I've met were through some of the community organizations I've gone to since I came here in Canada.
>
> Q: How do you define your relationship with them?
>
> A: Well my relationships with them are closer like *because we do share the same culture,* the same values. So we tend to relate to each other better than I would a person, a Canadian-born [White] person.
>
> Q: Do you find it easy to make friends with people like you?
>
> A: Yes, I find it easy because, like I just said, *we share the same values, they're like me*, so they understand the feelings I have at certain times and they understand what I'm going through because they're in the same

> situation.... Well, I don't find it easy to make friends of people of other races because at time, a lot of times, I find it hard to relate with them. *They do not understand my culture.*
>
> *Zuberi*: [In terms of having non-African friends] not really, because I do not know how their culture is. I don't know what type of people they are.... but when I see a Rwandan kid like me, it's easier. I am just part of them right away because I know where he is from and *I know his culture and background.*
>
> *Adisa*: Well a lot of youths from other racial groups, let's say White Canadian youths, *their values are totally different* because the very few White friends I've had around here, I go to their houses and I see the way they insult their parents. I know that I cannot do that. [There is pretty much a] much different context here. They do not have regard for their elders, and back home in Nigeria, we're taught to have respect for your elders.[9] So in that context, it's different.
>
> *Imani*: I feel it is easier to befriend people who are from the same race as I am because we have some things in common and we share the same appearance and the same problems. Also, other races from other countries besides Canada and America are easier to befriend because they have the same views about this country and America.

Those youth who stated specifically having White friends mentioned openness as key to creating cross-ethnic relationships. At the same time, however, of these two participants, one youth denied the existence of differences while simultaneously pointing at openness as key to facilitating the creation of these relations:

> *Anan*: Yeah, I find it easy to make friends with people from other races. I am open. I don't see them being any different than me. So it is easy to create friendships with them.

Conclusion

The results of our analysis indicate multiple markers used by youth to construct and negotiate their identities, consequently, diaspora contingencies. Three key resources were used by youth to identify themselves as well as to begin to be engaged with each other and with those from the mainstream. The first resource youth used was multiple travels, whereby they wanted others to engage them through conversations about the travel experiences they have. Another resource that was used by youth was the common history and politics resulting in experiences of loss.[10] A third resource used was the homeland. We discovered that the homeland was used in multiple ways depending on, for example, who the youth wanted to engage with and the reasons for this engagement. As indicated in the previous section, overall, the homeland was

a source used to maintain homeland culture, enhance integration between old and new culture, deal with the history of dominance and resistance, and to share with and teach others.

These data illustrate that these common markers/resources – geography (the homeland), culture – were all used by youth to construct and negotiate identities, as well as to create and navigate friendships. The uses of these resources, however, had their own complexities and ambiguities. The first complexity results from the way in which the African continent, the homeland, is understood in the new home, Canada. First, as demonstrated in literature (see, for example, Dlamini, 1995; Sorenson, 1990) and as articulated by the participants, the majority of core Canadians are either ignorant or misinformed about the African continent. In the media, for example, images of starving African children are dominant, and in general, Africa is most often presented as a backward, underdeveloped place worth the civilizing mission. Additionally, the recent wars, such as the Rwandan genocide, have sealed the image of Africa as backward and barbaric. Media images that are focused on a starving and dying population because of droughts and diseases such as the rampaging HIV/AIDS adds to the already tainted African image. Such presentations of the African continent present ambiguities for those youth who want to identify themselves and create friendships by making reference to the homeland. For some youth, this ambiguity is addressed by distancing themselves from the homeland in attempts to integrate into the new culture. Others deal with this ambiguous space by selecting countries in Africa that have somewhat positive global associations (e.g. Ghana), from whom they can draw memories of survival and triumph; still, others recreate a nostalgic past of this conflicted space. Such variations in use of and addressing the ambiguities inherent within the associations with Africa force us to ask the question: What does this appeal to the "roots" and the "home" country of origin mean within the Canadian context?

The appeal to the "roots" or the homeland means that the youth are recognized as possessing a "culture," or, to paraphrase one participant, that they too, have *a background and a history.* For these youth, the importance of history and background has greater significance than just where they've come from. As Hall (1996) asserts, contextualizing these experiences allows the youth to understand their culture in the process of becoming, of who they might be, and of how they can be understood by others in this new space. Connecting to and identifying with the homeland, in the process of becoming Canadian, becomes important because of Canada's emphasis on diversity and culture. On the one hand, to these youth, to become Canadian means an individual must be able to identify with a particular cultural group – even if the location of the origins of that group (in this case Africa) creates challenges for new comers; consequently, youth are forced to re-contextualize, reinvent, and re-vision what the continent looks like under the circumstances they find themselves in.

The importance of the return to the homeland in the creation of Canada's diasporic identities cannot be overemphasised. It is not simply a recollection of the homeland and its histories (Clifford, 1994; King, 1998; Panossian, 1998a, 1998b); rather, it is sometimes about a "re-creation" of the (nostalgic) homeland as well as about constructing ways of becoming part of the diaspora within defined national boundaries (Canada) and accepted local Windsor practices. Notable, also, within this selective use of geography and space is that some youth have created their self-identity through reference to Africa (like Adegoke), while others have created their self-identity through reference to a microcosm of their country of origin in Canada (like Chiumbo). In other words, some youth use Africa as their reference point, while others use their homeland-based community within the diaspora. Yet, even within these differences in how they reference their homeland, for youth, to be associated with Africa supports an unchanging form of life that triumphs over changes, travels, and dislocations. Conversely, however, the way that identity relates to place is, to borrow from Rashakrishnan (1996), the expression of a shifting equilibrium, a product of fortuitous travels and re-contextualization.

What this use of geography also suggests is that space/land/country is socially constructed – an ambiguous entity. Africa's location is changed in that it gets re-created, redefined through youth travels; Africa becomes part of the developed world as it is part of developing areas; it becomes not only just land but also stories, histories, and culture. Such uses concur with Said's (1978) description of the Orient that is not merely there:

> Just as the Occident itself is not just there either. We must take seriously Vico's great observation that men make their own history – that what they can know is what they have made – and extend it to geography; as both geographical and cultural entities – to say nothing of historical entities – such locales, regions, geographical sectors as "Orient" and "Occident" are man-made. (p 321)

Just as the two geographical entities, the Occident and the Orient, in Said's terms, "support and to an extent reflect each other," so are these post-migration identities constituted in difference rather than intrinsically. For youth, their identities can be said to be formulated through their difference from the local, and it is in this relationship that identities come into being, both as a distancing from the Canadian mainstream and as a means of self-assertion. To speak of post-migration identities in Said's terms is to invoke certain ways of thinking about travelling, place, loss, and culture as well as the interrelationship among these experiences. Identities as constructed by these youth are never outside of their experiences; therefore, discourses of identity construction are always located within the struggle for control of these shifting experiences. If taken in this sense, for these youth, identities – that is, what gets articulated as experience and used in constructing and negotiating these identities – becomes, to borrow from Foucault, a "field of struggle."

Challenges in youth creation of identity existed as youth demonstrated a desire to maintain and teach others about their culture. Teaching and sharing with others a culture has great significance considering the diversity-emphasizing climate of the Canadian space they have entered. Whereas the youth have articulated the need for acceptance and celebration of their differences so that individuals in the new community would understand their experiences; and they could simultaneously learn from others and share in the new culture, the dominant society is often unwilling to accommodate norms and values that are not aligned with its own (Premdas, 2004). For immigrant youth attempting to integrate their culture within their new Canadian surroundings and yet are confronted by practices enhancing a forced assimilation, creates a cultural dissonance; consequently several youth resort in distancing themselves from the homeland in an attempt to integrate into the new culture. These challenges of cultural dissonance and perceived forced assimilation are also discussed by Kilbride et al. (2001), who argue that as newcomer youth negotiate between the new society and the culture that they once called home, they are confronted with a number of tensions that play out in different spheres (i.e., school, family, friends and peers, and the labour market). At other times, the tensions are a reflection of what immigrant youth often feel when they are pulled in opposite directions, between seemingly irreconcilable cultural standards or value systems and a desire to fit in. Exacerbating these issues is the racial discrimination (Dei, 1997) that newcomer youth often perceive as being directed toward them, which further complicates and challenges their integration into Canada.

Difference also acts as an important signifier in how African youth see themselves in relation to White youth from the core Canadian society, consequently shaping how they narrate their experiences of loss as well as how they form relations with other youth. For some youth, the relationship between self and place conjured memories of violent and traumatic experiences that position them as different from and/or inferior to the dominant core group of White Canadian youth. For other youth, however, the telling of these stories of loss can be a strategic practice[11] with pedagogical and transformative potential (Dlamini, 2006). For this set of youth, these stories can be used to educate others about who they are and about their countries of origin, as well as being used to position them in positive ways within the dominant community, since, through these stories, they are perceived as strong, courageous survivors, which ultimately alleviates feelings of inferiority (as exemplified by Mchumba). In addition, many youth demonstrated an understanding of the history of resistance and dominance within their own identity, a process that Walcott (2003) has identified as critical to the Canadian Black identity.

Culture and "looks" (as racial appearance, i.e., skin colour) also become part of how youth proclaim their identities and of how and why they develop social relationships. Commonality of culture and values as well as similar looks

enhanced the creation of social relationships, while cultural differences led to reluctance towards that establishment. These uses of culture and looks call for an examination of the meaning in the interconnection between these axes of differentiation. We must ask the questions: What is the meaning and significance of the focus on cultural and appearance differences for African youth living in Canada? Why do these young people want to establish a distance between themselves and the core group of White Canadians? What is the primary goal for these youth – self-assertion or distancing? Such questions suggest the need to further study youth patterns of identity construction in reality to their White peers and how schools, governments, social agencies, etc. will respond to these reasons for self-assertion that is coupled with distancing.

Such diverse ways of constructing and negotiating identities is instructive at several levels. First, it teaches about the fraudulent nature of stable locations and, perhaps, place-based identities; that is, it demonstrates the importance of not assuming the necessity of a stable homeland for constructing identity. Not only are identities fluid, always in the process of construction and reincarnation, so, too, are the resources (such as a home and land) used in these discursive processes. Second, the diverse way of using resources in history points to the need for more studies that examine the process of constructing identity from the perspective of multiple and intersecting identifications, rather than those perspectives that are based on the assumption that youth tend to categorize themselves along a single, externally imposed dimension – in this case, simply being Black. Third, these varied ways of constructing and negotiating identities speak to how youth must negotiate between identities across space and time (Bhatia & Ram, 2001) in ways that shape their processes and practices of identification in the new homeland. And finally we are instructed that for African youth, difference, as an important signifier, can be as inclusively illuminating as it can be exclusively alienating.

NOTES

1. We wish to acknowledge and thank the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council for providing the funding for the research study from which the data we used is based.

2. Social capital refers to features of social organization and networks, including norms, trust, information channels, and support that facilitate individual and group benefits (Bourdieu, 1986; Putman, 1993, 2000).

3. This growth feature is beginning to change because of debilitating economies leading to high unemployment rates. As such, anecdotal information shows significant emigrating activity of Windsor residents going "out west," in particular Alberta, where the economy is said to be at its peak.

4. In paired interviews we were interested in understanding ways that youth develop interpersonal relations with their parents, elders, and other senior members in the community. Some studies suggest that there exist challenging family relations and intergenerational conflict amongst immigrants resulting from the difference in the ways that first and second generation minority youth negotiate family relations and deal with their own culture in relation to Canadian mainstream culture (see, for example, Sharir's 2002 study of first and second generation youth

of Chinese background, which concluded that the first generation overwhelmingly supported integration and assimilation into mainstream Canadian culture while the second generation supported acculturation strategies).

5. The Liberian civil war began when the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, led by the well known, now infamous Charles Taylor, staged a coup and took over the government in December 1989. Over 150, 000 Liberians are reported to have been killed, including the participant's father, and another 1 million were displaced.
6. There is a competing argument here in that it is possible that the participant could not use Liberia as a marker of identity because he was only 6 when he left. What would be interesting would be to hear about someone who left a war-torn country as a young teen and sojourned in different countries after that before coming to Canada. Such participants in our study did not refer to these countries as their "homelands," many spoke of them as countries they lived in – as if temporarily on their way elsewhere. What would be further interesting to do is, in a future examination, to explore the relationship between age and the development of social identity.
7. The inclusion of Lebanon in this context suggest that, like identity, geography is politically poignant.
8. This respondent is referring to African friends, either those kids born here of immigrant parents or kids who immigrated themselves.
9. The concept of respect for people older than you, especially teachers, was cited by many youth as a fundamentally different value that was amiss amongst their peers. Lack of respect in this context also includes any acts of talking back, which within many African communities is considered impolite ultimately posing implications for pedagogical practices that facilitate debates as central to learning (for a full discussion, see Dlamini, 2005).
10. Another Rwandan born participant had lost hearing in one of his ears during the war, and, like one other participant, did not like to talk about his disability because it positioned him as negatively different.
11. Simon, Rosenburg and Eppert (2000) argue that this invoking can be located in "a political justice-based redressing of mass violence such as the holocaust and historical genocides such as those of Rwanda and Bosnia" (p. 16).

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE

A. Introduction to study and completion of Consent Forms.

B. We would like to begin this interview by asking you to share your life story. There is no predetermined format – however, you may find it helpful to think of dividing your life in terms of early years, middle years and later years. You are free to share and provide as much detail as you want. We are interested in hearing from you what events, experiences, people or factors in your life story contribute to who you are today in the community. We may ask for more detail where necessary and you are free to further elaborate if you feel comfortable or able to do so.

Are you agreeing to participate in this taped interview?

Thank you.

C. Individual Identity

1. *How would you identify yourself, in addition to age and gender?*
2. *What are the things you would use to define to a stranger who you are and the things that are important to know about yourself?*
3. *Why are these things important to mention about yourself?*

D. Community Identity

1. *What is your understanding/interpretation of the word community? What does it mean to you?*
2. *Do you consider yourself to be a member of any specific community/group?*

a. If so, how long have you considered yourself a member of this community?

3. *What makes you a member of this community as opposed to any others that you might be a part of?*

E. Community Involvement

1. *What community organizations and activities do you take part in? What do you do there?*
2. *What do you do for fun?*
3. *Have your parents encouraged you to participate in any community organizations?*

a. Which ones?

b. What do you do in these organizations?

c. How do you feel about the activities/things you do in these organizations?

d. What are things that your parents have discouraged you from participating in?

4. *What else has encouraged you to participate in specific community organizations?*
5. *Are there things that discourage your from participating and/or doing this in the community?*

F. Outcomes of participations

1. What do you get out of participating in your community?
2. Has participating in community organizations ever had any effect on your social or job opportunities? How?

3. Have there been things that have made you not want to participate in community organizations?
4. Has there been anything that happened to you or your friends that has made you not interested in doing things in the community?

a. Can you describe in detail what that was?

5. If you are still in high school, how have you fulfilled your 40-hour volunteer requirement?

    a. What do you do in addition to your 40-hour requirements?

G. Contextual issues and socio-cultural processes:

1. In what ways did you or your family participate in community organizations in your country of origin?

    If the participant was born in another country:

    a. What differences have you noticed between the community organizations you took part in your country of origin, or another country you lived in, and in Canada?

    b. How would you say that experiences in your country of origin, or another country you lived in, affected your participation in community organizations in Canada?

    c. How would you say that experiences in your country of origin, or another country you lived in, have affected how your family participated in community organizations in Canada?

2. Have you experienced treatment from an individual/group that you consider to be unfair in Canada?

    a. Has it affected your participation in the broader community?

3. Were there any organizations or individuals who helped you or your family to get involved in community organizations after you arrived in Canada?

H. Interpersonal relations

1. What kinds of activities do you typically take part in with other youths in the community?
2. What kinds of relationships have you formed with other youths through community participation?
3. Do you find it easy to make friends with people like you?

    a. Can you give examples of where your friends or their parents are originally from?

4. Do you find it easy to make friends with people from other races? Give examples of these friends and the things you would ordinarily do with them.
5. In organizations that you've participated in where individuals from a number of ethnic groups meet, do you find people to be friendly across groups?

6. Are there any ways in which being black/ or African descent has shaped the way you have participated in certain groups?

    a. What are they?

I. Intergenerational Links

1. What do you consider to be "good" or "bad" behaviour for youth?
2. Is your view of good behaviour similar to or different from that of your parents/guardians?

    a. In what ways?

3. How are your values and beliefs different from, or similar to those of your parents?
4. How are your values and beliefs different from or similar to those of youth associates from other racial groups?
5. In what ways do your values and beliefs affect your choice of community participation?

Thank you for completing the questionnaire with me. Your input is valued.

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QUAND LA RECHERCHE EN ÉDUCATION AUX SCIENCES SE PROPOSE D'EXAMINER LE POINT DE VUE D'ÉTUDIANTS SUR LES RÔLES ET CAPACITÉS DES ACTEURS SOCIAUX CONCERNÉS PAR LES CONTROVERSES SOCIOTECHNIQUES

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RÉSUMÉ. Dans cet article, nous problématisons l'appropriation de controverses sociotechniques par le biais de l'utilisation d'outils théoriques développés dans le domaine des *science & technology studies*. Nous présentons d'abord les notions de représentation délégative et de traduction ainsi que trois modèles d'interactions des citoyens avec les scientifiques. Puis nous interprétons le point de vue d'étudiants de niveau collégial sur les capacités et rôles des citoyens concernés par la controverse autour de la téléphonie cellulaire de même que sur l'objet de la controverse, la constitution des collectifs de recherche et la diffusion des savoirs.

WHEN RESEARCH IN EDUCATION CONSIDERS THE VIEWS OF STUDENTS ON THE ROLES AND CAPABILITIES OF SOCIAL ACTORS AFFECTED BY SOCIOTECHNICAL CONTROVERSIES

ABSTRACT. In this article we examine the appropriation of sociotechnical controversies through the use of theoretic tools developed in the field of science and technology. We begin by introducing the concepts of delegated representation and of translation, as well as three models of interactions between laymen and scientists. We then interpret the views of college students on the capabilities and the roles of laymen affected by the debate surrounding wireless communication as well as on the controversy regarding the setup of joint research groups and the dissemination of knowledge.

> [T]here is now an expanding array of overt engagements between science and citizens. Along with the recognition of the ways in which scientific discourses and notions of human agency and citizenship have for long been tacitly interwined and mutual, the proliferating encounters force us to break down established analytical categories to recognize new synergies between expert and lay knowledge, new linkages between local and global processes, new relationships between state and non-governmental action, new networks of international activism, and a variety of hybrid forms of public and private control and ownership that frequently transcend national boundaries. (Leach, Scoones & Wynne, 2005, p. 3)

> Formal education should help students prepare for active participation in modern democracies. Science education, in particular, should assume increasingly more prominent roles in citizenship. It can no longer remain common school practice for civic issues to be handled only within the confines of social studies classrooms. [...] educators must leverage science learning experiences as vehicles for equipping tomorrow's consumers, voters, watch dogs, and decision-makers. (Sadler, Barab & Scott, 2007, p. 373-4)

INTRODUCTION

Nombre de chercheurs œuvrant dans le champ de l'éducation aux sciences se préoccupent de documenter la façon dont les étudiants s'approprient des controverses sociotechniques actuelles, cela, à dessein d'informer les éducateurs de sciences intéressés à former des personnes aptes à gérer et à négocier, au quotidien, des situations problématiques relatives aux technosciences et à s'engager dans des voies d'action dont sont au nombre des possibles la participation aux débats sociotechniques et la prise de décision éclairées (Fourez, 1997; Lee & Roth, 2003). C'est ainsi que sont menées, depuis plusieurs années maintenant, des travaux qui s'intéressent particulièrement aux capacités argumentatives des jeunes (Bader, 2003; Grace & Ratcliffe, 2002; Zohar et Nemet, 2002) et aux liens entre les conceptions des sciences entretenues par les jeunes et la prise de décision (Sadler, Chambers & Zeidler, 2004; Zeidler, Walker, Ackett & Simons, 2002). Ces études font voir, par exemple, qu'en dépit de la difficulté à expliquer les désaccords entre scientifiques autrement qu'en leur attribuant des intérêts personnels ou en évoquant le manque de preuves, les jeunes se montrent capables, dans le contexte de leur éducation aux sciences, d'investiguer des controverses sociotechniques actuelles et d'interroger la fiabilité de certains énoncés scientifiques qui leur sont relatifs (Kolstoe et al., 2006).

Des travaux européens francophones sont aussi réalisés par Simonneaux et Simonneaux ainsi que par Albe sur l'appropriation estudiantine de questions sociotechniques problématiques. Ces questions sont désignées par l'expression « questions scientifiques socialement vives » (QSSV) parce qu'elles sont suscitent des débats à la fois dans la société, dans les savoirs de référence et dans les savoirs scolaires[1] (Albe, 2005, 2006, 2008; Simonneaux, 2001; Simonneaux & Simonneaux, 2005). Les travaux des Simonneaux et d'Albe mettent à l'épreuve des dispositifs didactiques (tels que les débats en classe et jeux de rôles) et, dans cette foulée, circonscrivent certains de leurs effets sur les capacités argumentatives des jeunes. Par exemple et plus spécifiquement, Simonneaux (2006) porte à l'attention des lecteurs certains des facteurs à considérer si l'on souhaite favoriser en classe le développement d'une opinion qui permette aux jeunes de débattre des biotechnologies et de leurs répercussions environnementales possibles. Dans un ordre d'idées similaire, Albe (2005, 2006, 2008) identifie

la façon dont les étudiants, dans le contexte de jeux de rôles, interprètent des résultats de recherche, cernent l'objet d'accords ou de désaccords entre les scientifiques et construisent leurs arguments relativement à la controverse autour de la téléphonie cellulaire.

La question de l'appropriation estudiantine de controverses sociotechniques (et de QSSV) est primordiale : les dernières décennies de recherche dans le domaine des études sur la politique des sciences et des techniques, qu'on évoque dans la littérature francophone par l'expression anglaise *science & technologie studies* (Latour, 2008; Pestre, 2006), nous ont permis de constater, d'une part, que la mise en forme des savoirs scientifiques (dans les laboratoires et hors d'eux) produit des risques et des incertitudes[2] qui concernent à la fois les scientifiques, l'industrie, les gouvernements et les citoyens et citoyennes. La recherche a permis de faire voir, d'autre part, qu'une asymétrie signe la légitimité attribuée aux différents acteurs concernés par les risques et incertitudes eu égard à leur participation aux débats publics et processus politiques de prises de décisions : les citoyens ordinaires et activistes, en effet, se situent plus souvent qu'autrement au sein de rapports inégalitaires avec les représentants politiques et scientifiques (Bucchi & Neresini, 2008; Callon, Lascoumes et Barthe, 2001; Hess, Bregman, Campbell & Martin, 2008; Latour, 2004; Pestre, 2006). Pourtant, les actions et discours témoignent de capacités à saisir les dimensions technoscientifiques des controverses sociotechniques et à influencer les agendas politiques et scientifiques.

C'est du moins ce que reflètent les cas documentés où des citoyens ont non seulement contribué aux discussions avec les « experts » (Roqueplo, 1997) mais ont influencé significativement le cours et l'issue des événements notamment en s'engageant dans le processus de la production des savoirs légitimes (Callon *et al.*, 2001; Epstein, 1996, 2008; Sismondo, 2008; Wynne, 1996). Comme le soulignent Leach, Scoones et Wynne (2005), dans l'extrait situé en exergue de cet article, la participation de citoyens ordinaires ou activistes (engagés dans des mouvements sociaux qui s'arriment aux domaines de la santé, de l'environnement, de l'énergie, de la sécurité alimentaire ou de l'armement, par exemple) préfigure l'émergence de nouveaux rapports entre science et société, entre producteurs de savoirs et ceux qui sont censés « en bénéficier ». Dans cette mesure, pensons-nous, il est primordial de s'intéresser, dans la recherche en éducation aux sciences comme dans l'enseignement des sciences, à la façon dont les jeunes envisagent la participation des scientifiques mais aussi des citoyens, des gouvernements et des industries au cours et à la gestion des controverses sociotechniques. S'intéresser à la façon dont les jeunes envisagent les rôles et capacités des différents acteurs sociaux concernés par les questions sociotechniques controversées nous semble utile à la fois pour comprendre le point de vue des étudiants et orienter une éducation aux sciences qui invite les jeunes à se considérer comme des interlocuteurs légitimes et compétents

et à s'engager – individuellement et collectivement – dans la gestion des controverses sociotechniques actuelles.

Dans cet article, nous développons un discours où la problématisation de l'appropriation estudiantine des controverses sociotechniques est réalisée par le biais de la convocation d'outils théoriques privilégiés dans le domaine des *science & technology studies*. L'idée est double. Elle est de proposer des outils théoriques utiles pour approfondir la compréhension de l'appropriation estudiantine de controverses sociotechniques amorcée dans le champ de l'éducation aux sciences et d'illustrer l'intérêt de s'attarder au point de vue des jeunes sur les rôles et capacités des acteurs citoyens, scientifiques, gouvernementaux et industriels. Ainsi, dans un premier temps, nous présentons les notions de représentation délégative et de Traduction et détaillons trois modèles d'interactions des citoyens avec les scientifiques (modèle du déficit, modèle du débat public et modèle de la co-production de savoir). Dans un deuxième moment, nous présentons certains des résultats d'une étude menée au niveau collégial lors de laquelle nous nous sommes intéressée à la façon dont des étudiants inscrits au programme d'études de sciences de la nature s'approprient et décrivent, sur un période de quinze semaine, la controverse autour de la téléphonie cellulaire. Nous nous proposons de relater les résultats de cette étude en illustrant la façon dont les étudiants abordent les dimensions des capacités et rôles citoyens et se prononcent sur la définition de ce qui fait problème, la constitution des collectifs de recherche et la diffusion/utilisation des savoirs produits. Enfin, nous clôturons cet article en éclairant l'intérêt grandissant (Duschl, Erduran, Grandy & Rudolph, 2008), dans le champ de la recherche en éducation aux sciences, pour les apports que sont susceptibles de constituer les outils théoriques et les résultats de recherche produits dans le domaine de *science & technology studies*.

Logique de représentation délégative et attribution de rôles aux acteurs sociaux

Dans *Agir dans un monde incertain, essai sur la démocratie technique*, Callon, Lascoumes et Barthe (2001) s'emploient à interpréter la façon dont est généralement effectuée la gestion des controverses sociotechniques et à proposer des voies de gestion de controverses qui ne fassent pas l'économie de la participation citoyenne aux débats, à la production des savoirs légitimes et à la représentation des intérêts en jeu.

Ce que disent les auteurs, notamment, c'est que la logique de représentation politique délégative qui structure la gestion actuelle de la plupart des controverses sociotechniques qui traversent nos sociétés mène à l'existence de deux couples unis par un partage asymétrique de rôles de représentation et de rôles de production des savoirs légitimes : le couple profane/scientifique et le couple citoyen ordinaire/représentant politique. Au sein de cette logique, les scientifiques et les politiciens (les représentants) se voient attribués le droit de parler au nom de ceux qu'ils représentent et la capacité de produire les savoirs

légitimes. Dans la perspective de cette gestion des controverses sociotechniques, de plus, le rôle d'éclairer les citoyens profanes à l'égard des problématiques sociotechniques est attribué aux scientifiques. Les rôles de participer aux débats, de représenter les intérêts des citoyens ordinaires et d'orienter leurs conduites sont attribués aux représentants politiques. Aux citoyens et aux profanes, enfin, sont attribués un déficit informationnel et les rôles tranquilles d'être informés et d'adopter des conduites inspirées des recommandations formulées par des représentants politiques et scientifiques. Au sein d'une telle logique, donc, les profanes et les citoyens ordinaires (ou, dit autrement, les représentés) sont assujettis au « double monopole » de la production des savoirs légitimes et de la représentation politique et se voient délestés de leur droit de parole (des « titre à intervenir », Stengers, 2006) ainsi que de la capacité de produire des savoirs légitimes.

Ce que disent aussi Callon et ses collègues, c'est que dans les cas, nombreux, où les débordements, les risques et les incertitudes qu'il s'agit de prendre en charge concernent les citoyens et profanes, la gestion délégative des controverses sociotechniques n'est plus souhaitable. La gestion délégative fait l'économie de la participation citoyenne aux débats et aux processus de prises de décision. C'est une des raisons pour lesquelles les auteurs suggèrent d'enrichir les institutions représentatives actuelles par l'instauration de procédures dites « dialogiques » à dessein de rétablir la parité des rôles de représentation entre les acteurs sociaux scientifiques, politiques et citoyens.[3]

La notion de Traduction (traduction 1, traduction 2, traduction 3)

C'est par le biais de la notion de Traduction (avec un T majuscule) que Callon *et al.* (2001) ciblent trois « points d'entrée des profanes dans le processus de production des connaissances scientifiques ». Cette notion, jusqu'alors utilisée par Licoppe (1996) pour raconter l'histoire de la mise à l'écart des citoyens (« ou l'histoire de la recherche confinée »), se scinde en trois moments : la « traduction 1 », la « traduction 2 » et la « traduction 3 ».

La « traduction 1 » réfère au moment de la production des savoirs où le « grand monde » (celui dans lequel nous vivons) est réduit sous la forme d'un « petit monde » pour être introduit dans le laboratoire. C'est lors de la traduction 1, au « moment où les chercheurs sont sur le point de s'enfermer dans leur laboratoire », que des définitions du problème sont formulées, des décisions prises et des alliances diverses formées. La « traduction 2 » est le moment où un collectif de recherche est constitué (d'humains – chercheurs, techniciens, étudiants des cycles supérieurs –, mais aussi de non humains – matériel, protocole, inscriptions, financement, etc.) et où les modalités protocolaires et expérimentales sont déterminées. La « traduction 3 » est le moment du retour dans le « grand monde » des savoirs produits en laboratoire. C'est le moment où l'on se préoccupera des conditions d'existence des produits sociotechniques et des risques et incertitudes qui leur sont relatifs, où l'on tentera, autrement

dit, de formuler des réponses aux questions « Les savoirs et les machines survivront-ils hors du laboratoire? Dans quelles conditions ? ».

Trois modèles décrits par Callon (1999) pour cadrer les interactions des citoyens avec les scientifiques

• *Le modèle du déficit*

Le modèle de l'éducation publique, auquel il devenu courant de référer par l'expression « modèle du déficit », correspond au type de gestion des controverses sociotechniques le plus répandu (Bucchi & Neresini, 2008). Il est sévèrement critiqué en raison de ses implications normatives et épistémologiques (Sturgis & Allum, 2004). Il s'articule à la prémisse selon laquelle seuls les scientifiques seraient capables de saisir la complexité des enjeux technoscientifiques relatifs aux controverses sociotechniques (Callon, 1999). En conséquence, il mène à un double partage des droits de parole et des rôles de production des savoirs légitimes entre les citoyens et les scientifiques : c'est aux scientifiques que reviendraient les rôles de définir ce qui fait problème, de déterminer la constitution des collectifs de recherche, de produire et de diffuser les savoirs scientifiques (Callon *et al.,* 2001; Irwin, 2001). Les échanges entre scientifiques et citoyens qui prévalent dans ce modèle sont unidirectionnels : les chercheurs informent un public considéré déficitaire de savoirs pertinents pour éclairer les questions à l'étude.

• *Le modèle du débat public*

Le modèle du débat public refait le jeu des droits de parole entre les scientifiques et les citoyens qui interagissent dans des espaces publics de discussions (référendums, enquêtes, conférences citoyennes, etc.). Aussi, les citoyens ne parlent pas nécessairement d'une même voix et forment des sous-groupes dont les points de vue sont différents (ces groupes sont dit « groupes concernés »). Les savoirs des citoyens, bien que différents de ceux des scientifiques, sont estimés susceptibles d'enrichir et de complexifier la problématisation des enjeux sociotechniques. À l'instar du modèle du déficit, le modèle du débat public procède à une attribution asymétrique des rôles de production des savoirs scientifiques : la production des savoirs scientifiques demeure la chasse-gardée des scientifiques.

• *Le modèle de la co-production de savoir*

Le modèle de la co-production de savoir se caractérise par l'idée selon laquelle les citoyens ont une expérience pertinente de la situation d'intérêt et sont suffisamment compétents pour participer à la définition de ce qui fait problème mais aussi, à la constitution des collectifs de recherche et à la production des savoirs scientifiques mis à contribution dans les débats. Ce modèle permet de réduire, voire de surmonter, l'écart qui sépare les profanes des spécialistes et de dépasser le jeu de rôles qui tend à prévaloir entre le citoyen et ses représen-

tants légitimes. Ce modèle peut être illustré par l'engagement d'associations de malades dans l'élaboration de récits de vie, dans le repérage de cas singuliers et atypiques ou dans la documentation photographique (pour une illustration récente et étayée de ce type de participation citoyenne à la production et à la dissémination des savoirs scientifiques, voir Callon et Rabeharisoa, 2008 et Epstein, 2008).

LE POINT DE VUE D'ÉTUDIANTS DE NIVEAU COLLÉGIAL SUR LES RÔLES DES ACTEURS SOCIAUX CONCERNÉS PAR LA CONTROVERSE AUTOUR DE LA TÉLÉPHONIE CELLULAIRE

Dans le cadre d'un projet de recherche sur l'alphabétisation technoscientifique, nous avons mené une étude sur la façon dont un groupe de trois étudiants de niveau collégial, inscrit au programme d'études préuniversitaires en sciences de la nature, décrit l'objet, le cours et la gestion de la controverse autour de la téléphonie cellulaire et attribue des rôles aux acteurs scientifiques, industriels, citoyens et gouvernementaux (Pouliot, 2007, 2008).

CONTEXTE, APPROCHE MÉTHODOLOGIQUE ET PARTICIPANTS

Contexte

Cette étude s'est inscrite dans un projet qui entretenait les visées de permettre à des étudiants de niveau collégial de s'approprier les tenants et aboutissants de controverses sociotechniques actuelles et de se structurer comme des personnes capables de se prononcer sur les enjeux sociotechniques de ces controverses. Le projet a engagé la participation, à l'hiver 2004, de deux groupes-classes (subdivisés en groupes de trois personnes) du cours « *Intégration* » du programme d'études de sciences de la nature. Tous les groupes ont travaillé à élucider les enjeux d'une controverse sociotechnique.

Le dispositif didactique des « îlots de rationalité interdisciplinaire » (IRI) a été employé (Maingain, Dufour, & Fourez, 2002). Sommairement, ce dispositif consiste en une démarche d'élaboration d'une représentation de la controverse sociotechnique qui tiennent compte des enjeux sociaux, éthiques, économiques, historiques et scientifiques. Dans le contexte de ce dispositif didactique, un texte d'une page présentant la controverse a été remis en début d'investigation à chaque groupe de trois étudiants. Les groupes se sont ensuite affairés à se documenter en trouvant des écrits dans des revues à caractère scientifique et sur Internet. Ils ont aussi tenu un journal de bord dans lequel ils ont détaillé pas à pas leur investigation de la controverse.

Approche méthodologique

L'approche méthodologique que nous avons privilégiée s'arrime à la tradition de l'analyse de cas (Stake, 1995). La décision d'emprunter la voie de l'analyse

de cas a été motivée par l'idée selon laquelle il est pertinent de documenter en profondeur un cas précis dans la mesure où l'on souhaite documenter et analyser une question (un processus ou une situation) jusqu'alors peu étayée en recherche (Yin, 1994). En ce qui concerne cette étude, nous l'avons dit, il s'agissait de procurer des éléments pour mener plus loin les réflexions récentes en didactique des sciences au sujet de la façon dont des étudiants décrivent l'objet, le cours et la gestion de la controverse autour de la téléphonie cellulaire et attribuent des rôles aux acteurs scientifiques, industriels, citoyens et gouvernementaux.

Participants

Nous avons suivi deux groupes dans leur investigation d'une controverse sociotechnique. Toutes deux se sont montrées intéressées à participer au projet et peu intimidées par les outils méthodologiques. Ainsi, nous avons enregistré l'ensemble des discussions des deux groupes et avons procédé à des entretiens collectifs non structurés (*open-ended*) lors desquels les groupes ont précisé leur point de vue (Kvale, 1995). L'ensemble des enregistrements a été transcrit sous forme de verbatim.

Cet article documente le point de vue du groupe penché sur la controverse autour de la téléphonie cellulaire (J, 19 ans et 7 mois; R, 27 ans et 2 mois et S, 19 ans). La raison qui sous-tend cette décision est la suivante : le groupe intéressé à la controverse sur la manipulation des cellules souches a presque exclusivement communiqué par le biais du clavardage (« *chat* »), et cela, même lorsque les membres étaient dans la même salle de cours (cette salle était munie d'une dizaine d'ordinateurs). Il a été plus aisé de « saisir » sur bande sonore les interactions discursives du groupe engagé dans l'investigation de la controverse autour de la nocivité du téléphone cellulaire. Celui-ci, en effet a discuté de la controverse en simultané et par le biais d'interaction orales.

RÉSULTATS

Les résultats de cette étude offrent un regard complémentaire à ceux proposés jusqu'à maintenant dans le champ de l'éducation aux sciences, sur l'appropriation estudiantine de controverses sociotechniques (Aikenhead, 2006; Sadler, 2004; Zeidler et al. 2005). Nous appuyons les résultats présentés dans les prochaines pages par quelques échanges entre les membres du groupe (pour le détail de l'analyse des procédés discursifs, consulter Pouliot (2007, 2008).

Logique de représentation et attribution estudiantine des rôles aux acteurs sociaux

L'attribution estudiantine de rôles de production de savoirs légitimes et de représentation politique aux acteurs scientifiques, gouvernementaux et citoyens concernés par la controverse autour de la téléphonie cellulaire s'inscrit dans une logique qui trouve une forte parenté avec le système de représentation

délégative décrit par Callon *et al.* (2001). Le groupe d'étudiants procède à une distribution asymétrique de rôles de production de savoirs légitimes et de rôles de représentation politique. En effet, il attribue aux scientifiques les rôles de faire de la recherche au sujet des effets des ondes émises par les téléphones cellulaires et de statuer quant à leur dangerosité. Entre autres, il mentionne que les recherches « doivent absolument se poursuivre » et ajoute, en exerçant une certaine critique, que ces recherches « ne doivent être en aucun cas financées par l'industrie elle-même, afin que les résultats n'aient été aucunement modifiés ou influencés ».

Le groupe attribue au gouvernement les rôles de sensibiliser les citoyens aux risques et incertitudes relatifs à l'utilisation du téléphone cellulaire, de protéger les usagers contre les effets potentiellement nocifs des ondes et d'orienter (de force, suggère-t-il) la conduite de l'industrie de la téléphonie cellulaire. Voici un exemple de la façon dont le groupe s'exprime à ce sujet :

> J : [Bien] le gouvernement devrait forcer les compagnies à... avertir.
>
> R : Le gouvernement a embarqué dans la campagne antitabac. Je ne vois pas pourquoi il ne devrait pas embarquer dans informer le monde qui utilise les cellulaires. Veut veut pas c'est un de ses devoirs envers la citoyenneté, envers les citoyens. [...]
>
> J : C'est ça il faudrait que ce soit le gouvernement.

Le groupe, enfin, attribue aux citoyens les rôles d'être informés et de faire un usage restreint du téléphone cellulaire (Pouliot, 2007, 2008). Ce dernier aspect est explicitement évoqué dans cette intervention de J :

> [...] pour l'instant on ne peut pas dire personne ne prend son cellulaire. Ça me semble inconcevable un peu de dire « demain matin on part des campagnes pour abolir le cellulaire ». Je ne penserais pas que ça marche. *Faudrait que le monde fasse attention, qu'il essaie de ne pas parler cinq heures par jour.*

L'utilité de la notion de Traduction

La notion de Traduction constitue un outil théorique intéressant pour interpréter le point de vue du groupe en ce qu'elle permet d'examiner la façon dont le groupe envisage l'objet de la controverse (traduction 1), la constitution des collectifs de recherche (traduction 2) et la diffusion des savoirs pertinents (traduction 3). Rappelons-le, ces aspects sont identifiés par Callon *et al.* (2001) comme des lieux potentiels d'insertion citoyenne dans la production des savoirs scientifiques.

Dans le cas de cette étude, la notion de Traduction offre l'opportunité de voir que le groupe décrit l'objet de la controverse (ce qui fait problème; traduction 1), problématise l'utilisation en recherche de protocoles variés et, en ce sens, propose d'utiliser un protocole unique (traduction 2) et, enfin, suggère de protéger les utilisateurs de téléphones cellulaires et d'informer les citoyens de

l'état de la question (traduction 3). La figure 1 met en exergue certaines des descriptions mises en forme par le groupe (Pouliot, 2007, 2008).

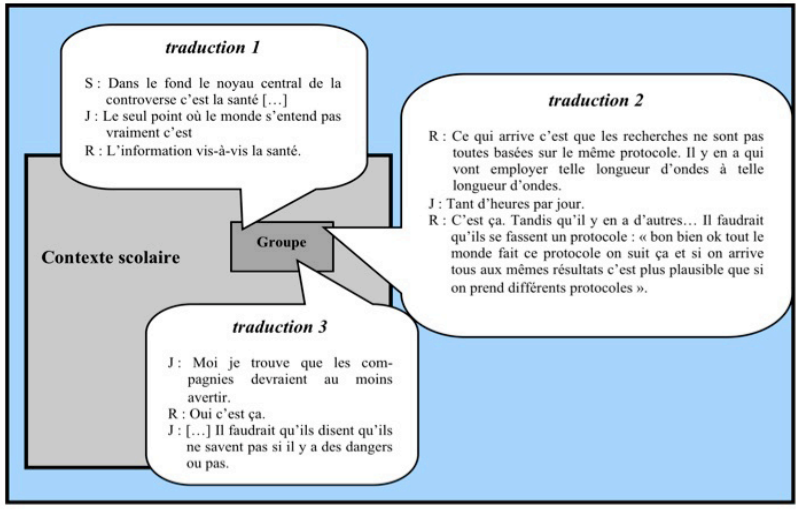

FIGURE 1. Interprétation du point de vue du groupe sur la controverse autour de la téléphonie cellulaire par le biais de la notion de Traduction : le groupe se prononce sur l'objet de la controverse (ce qui fait problème; traduction 1), la constitution des collectifs (traduction 2) et la diffusion des savoirs (traduction 3).

La question de la participation citoyenne aux débats

La mobilisation des modèles du déficit, du débat public et de la co-production de savoirs décrits par Callon (1999) permet de constater que les descriptions mises en forme par le groupe au sujet des relations entre les citoyens et les scientifiques s'arriment à la logique du modèle du déficit. Le groupe n'attribue pas aux citoyens – qu'il considère profanes- le rôle de participer à la définition des problèmes, à l'examen des voies d'action à privilégier (Jasanoff, 2004) et à la production des savoirs susceptibles d'être mis a contribution dans les débats. Pour lui, les citoyens concernés par la controverse autour de la téléphonie cellulaire sont déficitaires de savoirs pertinents et de capacités de compréhension. L'extrait qui suit illustre que pour S, R et J les citoyens ne sont autorisés à contribuer aux discussions qu'à l'aune de leur connaissance de la controverse.

> J : Parce qu'il y a beaucoup de monde qui [ne] peuvent pas participer à des débats. Quand tu sais pas c'est quoi [la controverse] tu [ne] peux pas participer, t'es pas renseigné.

R : Oui, tu [n]'es pas au courant.

J : Si t'es pas au courant, tu peux pas.

S : Malgré qu'il y en a qui le font pareil.

C : Qu'est-ce que tu veux dire ?

S : Mettons dans des forums. Mettons que ce serait pas des forums contrôlés, n'importe qui peut y aller, n'importe qui peut déblatérer n'importe quoi. Si jamais ça vient accessible un forum, parce que d'habitude c'est dans une salle, mais un forum sur Internet va falloir qu'ils contrôlent, je ne sais pas...

J : Moi je dis que faudrait pas qu'ils contrôlent mais que tout le monde puisse avoir accès à tout ce qu'il faut savoir.

S : Oui qu'ils aient l'information mais qu'en même temps il y ait quelqu'un qui s'assure que ce qu'il dit c'est fondé.

R : La compétence.

S : Oui c'est ça, la crédibilité de la personne qui va parler.

Discussion

Issus de la recherche et des réflexions menées dans le domaine des *science & technology studies*, les notions de représentation délégative et de Traduction, de même que les modèles d'interactions des citoyens avec les scientifiques (principalement le modèle du déficit), offrent l'opportunité d'examiner l'appropriation estudiantine de controverses sociotechniques sous un angle jusqu'à maintenant inédit en éducation aux sciences. À ce jour, en effet, les études ont documenté les valeurs mobilisées par les jeunes, les contenus disciplinaires utilisés, l'argumentation déployée et les représentations de la nature et de la socialité des sciences entretenues plutôt que les rôles et capacités attribués aux différents acteurs concernés par les controverses sociotechniques actuelles. Dans cet ordre d'idées, ce que cette étude illustre, d'une part, c'est que le groupe d'étudiants se montre capable de se prononcer sur les moments de la controverse identifiés par Callon *et al.* (2001) comme des lieux d'introduction citoyenne dans la gestion des controverses sociotechniques et dans la production des savoirs légitimes et d'autre part, que le groupe leste les citoyens de déficits (de savoirs et de capacité de compréhension) et leur accorde la part congrue de l'action. Cela dit, on comprendra que l'intérêt de cette étude n'est pas de poser un regard normatif ou dépréciatif sur le point de vue des étudiants : des recherches ont bien fait voir que le modèle du déficit signe les discours médiatiques dominants (Bucchi, 1998; Cook, Pieri & Robins, 2004), des sondages d'opinion (Kallerud & Ramberg, 2002; Peters, 2000) et même des discussions où des participants – eux-mêmes citoyens ordinaires – abordent la question des avenues de recherche en génétique (Kerr et al., 2007) ou la gestion de la controverse autour de fièvre aphteuse (Wright & Nerlich, 2006). De notre point de vue, l'un des intérêts principaux de cette

étude est plutôt de faire voir que si le point de vue du groupe sur les capacités de compréhension des citoyens et les rôles dans la gestion des controverses n'est pas « étonnant », il est suffisamment explicite et inquiétant, en revanche, pour que l'on s'y attarde dans le champ de l'éducation aux sciences et que l'on mène des recherches qui visent à approfondir notre compréhension de la position des jeunes sur la gestion des controverses. Le modèle déficitaire d'interactions des citoyens avec les scientifiques n'invite ni à l'attribution de légitimité aux savoirs et expériences des citoyens ordinaires (ou activistes) ni à la mise en symétrie des participations aux débats publiques. On l'imagine bien, de surcroît, le modèle du déficit disqualifie l'idée d'une contribution citoyenne à la production des savoirs scientifiques.

Conclusion

L'une des prémisses qui sous-tend cet article est la suivante : les recherches menées dans le domaine *des science & technology studies* peuvent contribuer de façon importante aux réflexions qui se tiennent actuellement en éducation aux sciences. La mise à contribution d'outils théoriques et de résultats de recherche qui y sont produits dans la recherche en éducation aux sciences ouvre de prometteuses perspectives, au point, d'ailleurs, que la revue internationale *Science Education* y ait consacré un numéro spécial et intitule dorénavant une section « science studies and science education » (Duschl, Erduran, Grandy & Rudolph, 2008). Nous avons proposé, dans les pages précédentes, que la relation entre ces deux champs de réflexion peut se nouer dans une problématisation de l'appropriation estudiantine de controverses sociotechniques attentive à l'attribution de rôles et de capacités aux acteurs concernés par les controverses et aux points de vue estudiantins sur la formulation des problèmes, la constitution des collectif et la diffusion de résultats de recherche.

Il nous apparaît que des études en éducation aux sciences qui se saisiront de travaux et problématiques touchant la question de la participation citoyenne à la gestion de controverses sociotechniques offriront l'opportunité d'éclairer, dans leurs ressorts argumentaires (comment les jeunes défendent-ils leurs points de vue et contrecarrent-ils des versions alternatives?[4] et identitaires (comment voient-ils les citoyens et comment envisagent-ils leur propre participation aux débats et à la production de savoirs légitimes?[5] les façons dont les jeunes se représentent les contributions des citoyens et la légitimité des savoirs que ces derniers élaborent et convoquent alors qu'ils s'engagent dans le cours et la gestion de controverses sociotechniques (sida, xénotransplantation, téléphones cellulaires, OGM, énergie nucléaire, etc.). Au chapitre de l'enseignement des sciences, de telles recherches participeront à préciser des dispositifs didactiques offrant aux étudiants la possibilité de s'initier à des pratiques de prises de position et de parole. En ce sens, le travail d'exploration que nous proposons dans le domaine de la recherche en éducation aux sciences se décline dans les termes de la responsabilité éducative mais aussi sociale.

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NOTES

1. L'ouvrage *L'école à l'épreuve de l'actualité –Enseigner les questions vives* (coordonné par Alain Legardez et Laurence Simonneaux, 2006) témoigne à la fois de la croissance internationale des notions de « questions socialement vives » (QSV) et de « questions scientifiques socialement vives » (QSSV) et de l'intérêt pour des approches d'enseignement et d'apprentissage de ces questions. Parallèlement à une illustration critique des travaux réalisés sur les questions « scientifiques » et « sociales » socialement vives, les différentes contributions mettent en exergue des points de repère théoriques qui permettent de mener plus loin les réflexions actuelles sur l'enseignement et la didactique des QSV et des QSSV.
2. Les incertitudes et les risques sont entendus par définition (et avec Callon *et al.*, 2001) respectivement comme des retombées inconnues et indéfinissables (p. 40) et des conséquences envisageables et définissables en amont d'événements susceptibles de se produire (pp. 37-38).
3. Les auteurs visitent l'exemple des forums hybrides, espaces ouverts aux dialogues entre les différents acteurs concernés par les controverses sociotechniques.
4. Bader (2003) et Larochelle et Désautels (2001) se sont penchés sur les ressources et stratégies discursives utilisées par des étudiants du secondaire et du collégial dans le contexte d'une délibération autour d'une vignette qui présente, sous la forme d'une conversation entre deux chercheurs, deux positions contrastées à l'égard de controverses sociotechniques. Les analyses de discours, effectuée à partir de Billig (1996) et Potter (1996), illustrent que les étudiants ont des capacités discursives incontournables. Elles illustrent aussi que la rhétorique réaliste qu'ils déploient les mènent à n'envisager que difficilement l'existence de désaccords entre scientifiques. Bader (2003) propose, dans cette perspective, d'insérer, dans l'éducation formelle aux sciences, des dispositifs didactiques qui mettraient en évidence la dimension sociale de la production des savoirs scientifiques et permettraient aux jeunes de s'expliquer les origines des controverses sociotechniques sous l'angle du cours habituel des pratiques scientifiques.
5. Si dans le champ de l'éducation aux sciences des préoccupations parentes à ces questions émaillent la notion d'alphabétisation technoscientifique, celles-ci n'ont pas été abordées de manière frontale dans la recherche. À notre connaissance, aucune étude ne s'est attardée, dans le champ de l'éducation aux sciences, à colliger les points de vue estudiantins sur les rôles des différents acteurs sociaux concernés par les controverses sociotechniques.

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CURRICULUM INTEGRATION: OPPORTUNITIES TO MAXIMIZE ASSESSMENT *AS, OF,* AND *FOR* LEARNING

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ABSTRACT. Curriculum integration, focusing on multidisciplinary tasks/projects relevant to the real-world, lends itself to authentic assessment practices. However, attempting to incorporate assessment *of, for*, and *as* learning can be challenging. Using data from two mixed method case studies (*n*=52, *n*=27) which tracked middle school student learning throughout separate integrated units, we analyzed the types of assessments used by teachers and the relationship of assessment to student learning. Results and implications for teacher practice are explored.

L'INTÉGRATION DES DIVERS ÉLÉMENTS DU CURRICULUM : DES OPPORTUNITÉS POUR MAXIMISER L'ÉVALUATION *COMME, DE,* ET *POUR* L'APPRENTISSAGE[1]

RÉSUMÉ. L'intégration des divers éléments des programmes, s'articulant autour de tâches et projets multidisciplinaires s'ancrant dans la « vraie vie », rend possible des pratiques d'évaluation authentiques. Cependant, tenter d'intégrer des mécanismes d'évaluation comme mode d'apprentissage, de et pour l'apprentissage peut se révéler un défi. Pour rédiger cet article, les auteurs se sont basés sur des données issues de deux études de cas mixtes (n=52, n=27) ayant suivi les apprentissages de jeunes étudiants du secondaire au sein de groupe distincts. Ils ont analysé les méthodes d'évaluations préconisées par les enseignants et les relations existant entre l'évaluation et les apprentissages des étudiants. Les résultats et leurs implications pour les pratiques enseignantes sont détaillés.

Terms such as integration, interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and transdisciplinary are related topics that are often viewed as interchangeable by teachers and researchers even though they represent different concepts (Adler & Flihan, 1997; Drake, 1998; Relan & Kimpston, 1993). This has resulted in some confusion regarding these concepts, their application in the classroom, and research findings in relation to student learning. Consequently, research is currently underway attempting to better define the concepts (see Applebee, Adler, & Flihan, 2007) and link these definitions to teacher practice. Unfortunately, this research is not focused on the effects of these practices on student learning,

an area lacking in empirical research (Berlin & Lee, 2005; Hargreaves, Earl, & Ryan, 1996; Hargreaves & Moore, 2000). To address this gap, our current research project focuses on tracking student learning in relation to specific teacher practices during integrated units. This paper focuses specifically on the relationship between student learning, integration, and assessment.

1. How do teachers implementing an integrated unit assess their students?
2. How effective are these assessments in both tracking and assisting student learning?
3. What can we learn from the assessment of student learning in integrated settings that can be applied to teaching practices in general?

Given the ambiguity in the field, our definition of curriculum integration needs to be made clear. In addition, our view of assessment and its relationship to integration also requires exploration.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Integration

While multidisciplinary, integration, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary represent different concepts, consistent across all of these concepts is the understanding that there is an *intermingling* of knowledge and skills across discipline and subject areas (Relan & Kimpston, 1993); however, the type of intermingling, the degree of intermingling, and the purpose of this intermingling varies. Often these concepts are placed on a continuum (Adler & Flihan, 1997; Applebee et al., 2007; Wineburg & Grossman, 2000). On the one end, *multidisciplinary* activities, also known as correlated activities (Adler & Flihan, 1997; Applebee et al., 2007), are concerned with how different disciplines (e.g., mathematics, science, geography, etc.) can complement one-another. The discipline content remains separate and is usually taught in parallel.

When planning involves examining how different disciplines complement each other, this is usually referred to as an *interdisciplinary* unit (Applebee et al., 2007 refer to this as *sharing*). Planning still begins with the different disciplines, with content being pulled around a common theme. Emphasis is placed on identifying the connections between the different disciplines and these connections are made explicit to students. In most cases, the emphasis is on specific curriculum content; teachers start planning with separate subject areas and they assess each subject area independently. The focus questions for teachers planning interdisciplinary units would be: what theme will link these curricula together, or what curricula can we link to this theme?

In contrast, a *transdisciplinary* or *restructured* unit typically starts with a question or project and asks: what do students need to know or be able to do to

answer this question or complete this project? The separation, identification, or linking to different disciplines is not the focus; the focus is the problem or project. *Transdisciplinary* units usually focus on real-world or real-life contexts to shape their questions or projects. In many transdisciplinary units, students generate the key questions under investigation (Beane 1997, 2005). This type of integration is democratic in nature, providing opportunities for students to question, explore, and actively participate in their immediate and global communities. In the fullest sense, this definition of integration represents a completely restructured curriculum.

The problem then arises when the word *integration* is used to refer to different points on the continuum. Beane's (1997, 2005) use of integration specifically refers to a complete restructuring of the curriculum. In contrast, Drake (1998) uses integration as a global term to describe all types of inter-, trans-, and meta-disciplinary mixing. Wineburg and Grossman (2000) took the opposite approach and avoid use of the term *integrated* anywhere in their edited book, choosing instead to have all contributing authors discuss the use of interdisciplinary curriculum in its various forms. In 1997, Adler and Flihan's literature review used integration as a term common to both shared and restructured curriculum; however, by 2007, Applebee et al. recognized that the word *integration* was being used in classrooms to describe all levels of curriculum work, from predisciplinary (referring to strict adherence to discipline boundaries) to restructured.

This progressive expansion of the term *integration* demonstrates both an increase in the use of the term, but also a broadening of its meaning to the point of meaninglessness. As a result, even though integration is referenced and encouraged in both national and international documents (e.g., American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1993; BC Ministry of Education, 1996; Curriculum Council of Western Australia, 1998; National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 1995, 2000; National Research Council, 1996; Ontario Ministry of Education, 1998; PEI Ministry of Education, 2003-2004), it still remains difficult to determine any empirical effects on student learning given the variation to which it is implemented, understood, and defined. This point makes it critical for researchers to define their use of the word integration in relation to their research study.

To this end, we defined integration as a restructuring of curricula to enable the completion of a final project. In each case, teachers decided on the unit, determined the objectives, and planned the final project. In each case, teachers were responsible for working with and assessing specific curricula outlined by the Ontario Ministry of Education; these curricula are organized by subject areas. Consequently, the lines of each discipline remained a focus for the teachers involved; however, typical of most problem- or product-orientated integrated units (Drake, 1998), the assessments were complex and performance

based rather than traditional. Unfortunately, a review of research literature looking at the implementation of a range of integrated units demonstrates a lack of detail and information regarding assessment (Adler & Flihan, 1997). As a result, this paper aims to analyze the strengths and challenges associated with assessments of student learning in an integrated unit.

Assessment of student learning

The emphasis that shared integration places on evaluating meaningful performance tasks, regardless of discipline-specific knowledge, and the application of knowledge and skills to a problem or issue can result in many assessment challenges. Teachers often need to adapt curriculum learning outcomes to the problem or issue under investigation and develop their own rubrics and benchmarks to track students' application, rather than regurgitation, of knowledge (Drake, 1998). Earl (2003) refers to this as *understanding* or "knowledge in action" (p. 33). Recognizing the complexity involved when assessing a student's level of understanding in relation to a number of curriculum objectives, we searched for an assessment model that took a number of factors into consideration. Our search for an expansive assessment model from which we could effectively analyze student learning throughout an integrated unit led us to the assessment *for, of,* and *as* learning model.

When discussing assessment, Black and William (1998) assert that "a focus on standards and accountability that ignores the processes of teaching and learning in classrooms will not provide the direction that teachers need in their quest to improve" (p. 139). Recognizing that assessment is an important means for affecting instruction, not simply reporting student progress, is pivotal to advancing student success and understanding (Gronlund & Cameron, 2004, p. 11). In addition, a meta-review of research looking at classroom assessment revealed that "innovations that include strengthening the practice of formative assessment produce significant and often substantial learning gains" (Black & William, 1998). Elaborating on formative assessment in future studies, Black, Harrison, Lee, et al. (2004) observed substantial learning gains when teacher assessment practices included self-assessment opportunities, sharing criteria with students, and peer assessment. Consequently, it is not surprising that assessment that provides direction for teaching provides balanced opportunities for summative, formative, and student self-assessment (Burke, 2005).

Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind, published by the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol (WNCP), provides a model for classroom assessment (WNCP, 2006). It includes a manual resource focused on "classroom assessment, not large-scale assessment... It is designed to provide a framework for thinking as teachers, administrators, and professional developers work together over time in developing and using assessment in their classrooms to differentiate and facilitate learning for all students" (WNCP, 2006, p. vii). *Rethinking Classroom Assessment* views achievement broadly; the authors advocate

for assessment practices that monitor daily classroom activities to improve student motivation (measured by work habits, persistence, and enthusiasm), support student academic performance, and provide increased opportunities to differentiate instructional and assessment practices so as to reach individual learner needs. The framework is structured around three different purposes in relation to assessment: assessment *as* learning, assessment *for* learning, and assessment *of* learning.

Assessment *as* learning focuses on teaching students how to assess themselves and others. Included under assessment *as* learning activities would be self-assessment, peer assessment, and sharing criteria with students. The focus for assessment *as* learning is enabling students to be critical evaluators of their own work; it requires an explicit understanding of the criteria for each assignment, enabling students to be able to identify whether they have met the shared criteria or not. Assessment *for* learning is most closely associated with formative assessment practices. The purpose of assessment *for* learning is an on-going assessment of student work and understanding to enable the teacher to modify and alter daily lesson plans and student activities. Assessment *of* learning, also referred to as summative assessment, represents a final assessment used to evaluate and rank a student. This assessment *of* learning is usually found in student report cards and is communicated to parents, other teachers, administrators, and the community at large.

To maximize assessment practices, *Rethinking Classroom Assessment* provides the following three guidelines: (a) utilize assessment practices that relate to all three purposes, (b) ensure congruence between the types of assessment tools and records and the assessment purpose, and (c) utilize tools and records that are valid and reliable. Utilizing the model provided by assessment *as, for,* and *of* learning, we examined student learning from two separate case studies involving teachers and students working through integrated units.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This dialectical (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989), mixed-methods study utilized teacher and student interviews, student pre- and post-tests, classroom observations, audio recordings of student group work, student motivation surveys, and the analysis of text materials to provide a variety of qualitative (thick descriptions) and quantitative (e.g., frequency counts, survey results) data. Given the domination of separate qualitative or quantitative studies in research literature, we felt it would be valuable to unpack what we mean by a *dialectical, mixed-methods* study; contrary to popular belief, mixed-methods is not simply a matter of gathering both qualitative and quantitative data.

Traditionally, qualitative and quantitative methods were considered separate paradigms: qualitative methods aimed to provide thick descriptions of events while quantitative data aimed to establish cause and effect (Creswell & Plano

Clark, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Given these separate purposes, many researchers, to this day, believe that qualitative and quantitative data should (or can) not be mixed. In contrast, *paradigmatic* mixed-method researchers argue that, while there are philosophical differences associated with different methods, these "assumptions are logically independent and therefore can be mixed and matched" (Greene & Caracelli, 1997, p. 8). Consequently, differences in paradigmatic assumptions become irrelevant – matching appropriate methods to specific research questions and contextual variables (e.g., time constraints, accessibility, etc.) are all that matter. Within the past 20 years, an alternative mixed-methods position has emerged amongst numerous researchers.

The *dialectical* approach to mixed methods argues that there are paradigmatic differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods and researchers need to be aware of these differences so as to effectively tack back-and-forth between different methods. By deliberately using these different paradigms, we are able to envision new discoveries and understandings of our data (Greene & Caracelli, 1997). Given that our research questions attempted to both describe pedagogy (in relation to assessment) and link it to student learning, we required both thick descriptions as well as attempts to establish causal linkages. Consequently, we utilized a mixed-methods approach to gather both; however, we remained aware of the paradigmatic assumptions linked to our methods. Throughout our study, ensuring that we did not make causal attributions based solely on qualitative data was one of our greatest challenges. Our solution to this problem also helped address a second problem common to mixed-methods research.

A lack of data integration at the analysis stage is common to mixed-methods research (Maxwell & Loomis, 2003). As a result, rather than integrating data throughout analyses, researchers tend to analyze their qualitative and quantitative data separately, integrating them only at the conclusion stage of research. Aware of this, we consciously planned numerous opportunities to integrate (or mix) our analyses (e.g., move between the thematic analyses present in our observations of classroom activities and the quantitative analysis of student learning in the final interviews). By making these conscious points of integration, we were also able to monitor the data sources inherent to any causal attributions that emerged.

Given our unpacking of *dialectical mixed-methods*, we now focus on our specific data sources. Using stratified, purposive sampling (Teddlie & Yu, 2007), we identified two sites in one of Canada's largest public school systems and received voluntary and informed consent to observe their classrooms while teachers and students completed integrated units.

DATA SOURCES

At the first site we observed a pod of two teachers and fifty grade 8 students engaged in a toy-building unit. During the unit, students experimented with simple machines, surveyed other students in the school, and then designed, built, and marketed a moving toy. While we gathered observations on the class as a whole, we focused our observations and interviews on twelve students in three homogenous ability groups (total observation time = 26 hrs). At the second site we observed one teacher and twenty-six grade 6 students engaged in a thematic hockey unit. During the unit, students designed a hockey season schedule, created travel brochures, and built an ice rink unit (including lighting and sound systems) to scale. For this site we focused our observations and interviews on ten students in two mixed ability groups (total observation time = 33 hrs).

For both sites, we simultaneously collected qualitative and quantitative data, with some earlier data being used to structure the data tools used later in the study. This sequence resulted in three main stages of data collection: pre-unit, during unit, and post-unit. All three stages were completed at both sites. The pre-unit data collection included interviews with the site teacher(s) and each of the selected students. We placed special emphasis on having the teacher(s) identify the key learning academic goals for the unit. The student interviews had students describe what they thought integration was and included application problems related to the key learning outcomes identified in the teacher interview.

During the unit we completed observation records that both coded student behaviour and provided a descriptive written record of teacher instructions, teacher behaviours, and general observations of student behaviours. Given the high levels of group work inherent to integrated units, we audio recorded all small group discussions and problem solving. In addition, we conducted mini-interviews with students and teachers regarding perceptions of activities, teacher assessments and reasoning, and student *think-alouds* which aimed to expose student thinking, knowledge acquisition, and transfer. The post-unit data included a final teacher interview, final student interviews, and a whole class motivation survey. During the final interview we asked teachers to comment on specific aspects of the unit as well as identifying, for each of the key objectives identified in the initial interview, the *evidence* they had for assessing whether an individual student had or had not achieved that objective. The final student interviews asked students how meaningful they had found each activity throughout the unit as well as a series of knowledge and skill testing questions designed to assess each student's ability to apply the key learning objectives identified at the start of the unit.

RESULTS

Both sites utilized separate marking guides or rubrics for each subject area; while they considered this an integrated unit, they assessed each discipline independently to match the curricula set out by the Ontario Ministry of Education. These case studies also revealed a number of strengths and challenges with regards to assessment *as, for*, and *of* learning. At the first site, students were continually made aware of the criteria for which they were being evaluated; both teachers took a minimum of one period to explain and give examples of how students could meet the rubric designed for the final project (one for math and one for science). This opportunity for assessment *as* learning remained a focus for students who continually referred to their rubrics while building and marketing their toys. For example, the rubric described how students were to make explicit connections between their survey results (summarized by measures of central tendencies) and their schematics; all marketing display boards provided this comparison and, in the final interview, students were very successful at determining measures of central tendency when problem solving. In addition, both teachers encouraged students to refer to the rubrics while building their toys and provided opportunities for groups to give each other feedback with regards to the criteria. These self- and peer-assessment opportunities were reflected in student discussions which illustrated a common language for discussing their projects and a continued focus on the objectives listed in the rubrics.

For the math objectives, both teachers then provided numerous opportunities for groups to share their observations and data with the rest of the class, encouraging students to ask questions of each other and challenge each other's conclusions. These opportunities to share and ask questions led to numerous whole class discussions which focused on student-to-student conversations and thinking while providing opportunities for teachers (and researchers) to identify the problems students were having and provide alternative examples and clarifications. As a result, these assessments *as* learning opportunities in math led to assessment *for* learning opportunities. The teachers used these formative assessments to modify their lessons and support student learning. These discussions were referenced in student final interviews as being very helpful and students were very successful in applying those skills (e.g., calculating measures of central tendency and interpreting a graph) which involved this type of peer interaction and assessment.

In contrast to the strong emphasis on assessment *as* learning for both math and science, the first site did not engage in a large number of assessments *for* learning with regards to the science objectives. Students found the task of designing, constructing, and marketing their own movable toy completely engaging; even though they had watched videos, had group discussions, lectures, and completed experiments with regards to simple machines, applying that knowledge proved challenging for many students. As they worked through

their schematic development and toy construction, the task differentiated those students who understood and could apply what they had learned and those who could not. For example, one group included a pulley in their schematic; however, they did not correctly apply what they had learned regarding pulleys, attempting to use a pulley to change the direction of force rather than minimize the amount of force required. This error on the schematic was not addressed by the teachers and, when these students tried to build their toy, they were unsuccessful.

Similarly, another group of students tried to build a toy car with rotating wheels; when these students experienced difficulties, they dropped their original plan and ran out of time to complete their final project. In the end, they had to "Frankenstein" a car by taking the motor out of an existing toy car and building a new carriage. As a result, for the science objectives, assessments *for* learning were not identified or used to alter instruction. Instead, the differentiation between students who were and were not able to build a toy using a simple machine was used in an assessment *of* learning. Just as important, when asked to apply their knowledge of levers (as a type of simple machine) at the end of the unit, the majority of students were unsuccessful. Consequently, objectives that included an assessment *for* learning (i.e., math) positively supported student transfer of knowledge and objectives that did not include an assessment *for* learning (i.e., science) demonstrated low levels of knowledge transfer.

At the second site, the use of assessment *as* learning was not as prevalent. While the teacher did discuss the attributes of successful completion (e.g., all aspects of the ice rink need to be to scale, 40% of the games need to be in the Eastern division, etc.), these attributes were not linked to specific curriculum objectives (e.g., converting percents to decimals, differentiating between a parallel and series circuit, etc.). As a result, we observed students focusing on the final products and having it "look" like what was expected rather than focusing on how they were accomplishing each task. For example, students experimented with many different ways of calculating 40% of 80 games and, when they stumbled across an answer that made sense, they used that method; however, they were unsure of how to relate percents to decimals or which procedure to use for future problems. In the final interviews, when students were asked to calculate percentages, the majority of students were unsuccessful.

Similar to the first site, several tasks at the second site provided opportunities for assessment *for* learning. For example, one of the major tasks involved in the unit was the building of a scale model ice rink with a working light and buzzer system. This required students to apply their math skills associated with ratios and science skills related to electrical circuits, both of which had been taught prior to the integrated unit. While groups avidly worked on the task of building their ice rinks over a two-to-three week period, some groups

experienced a great deal of difficulty building the rink to scale and getting the lights to work. As noted at the first site, the integrated tasks clearly differentiated between those students who understood proportions and those who did not, those who knew how to build a parallel circuit and those who did not. In contrast to the first site, this teacher did identify those students who were unsuccessful (teachers at the first site did not identify those groups who were unsuccessful); however, in this case, the teacher *chose* not to intervene. When asked why she did not intervene, the teacher shared that she was concerned about providing assistance as it would affect the validity of her final assessment. When asked how she would evaluate a group that did receive assistance from the researcher, enabling students to correct their errors in scaling, the teacher replied that: "It's like a whole process, like they did get it, but it took them a while, so they may be a little bit lower because they had to get some assistance" (teacher, site #2). Consequently, this teacher chose not to utilize the information she had learned through her assessment *for* learning as she felt it would jeopardize the validity of her assessment *of* learning; the ice rink was her one major assessment tool for those particular objectives. When we tested these students on their ability to calculate measures to scale, the majority were unsuccessful. Even though time had been provided for students to attempt to "work" through the problem, their understanding was not adjusted and they were unable to apply those concepts after the completion of the unit.

CONCLUSION

Both sites illustrated the power of assessment *as* learning. At the first site, assessment *as* learning opportunities related to increased student ability to transfer knowledge. In contrast, at the second site, reference to the objectives remained global and vague, focused instead on the look of the final product. As a result, throughout the unit, students remained focused on the look of the final product as opposed to the specific objectives for the unit. This then led to an overall decrease in success on the curriculum objectives. These examples illustrate the value not only in sharing criteria with students and maximizing assessment *as* learning opportunities, but also the importance of focusing these assessment opportunities on specific curriculum objectives as opposed to global, vague project descriptors.

With regards to assessment *for* learning, both sites demonstrated the rich opportunities that integrated tasks provide in the creation of assessments *for* learning; in each case, the application of knowledge that was required for the completion of each integrated task clearly illuminated gaps in student understanding. This illumination of gaps in student understanding was especially true in the second case study when students' inability to determine percentages shocked the teacher as this was a skill that students had already "learned" and been "evaluated" on prior to the integrated unit; she was surprised that they were unable to transfer knowledge that she assumed they possessed, since she

had already evaluated them (traditionally, using written tests) as successful. These two case studies, if anything, clearly demonstrate the importance of providing real-life problems or projects whereby students are asked to apply knowledge and skills a teacher may think they already have; in many ways, these findings strongly support the use of alternative performance assessments to increase the validity of student evaluations.

However, it is important to note that both sites also demonstrated the challenges involved with assessment *for* learning. As illustrated by the first case study, teachers need to be monitoring for student successes and challenges and use the information they acquire from their assessments *for* learning to adjust their planning and clarify activities. At the first case study, time was a huge factor (e.g., report cards, coordinating with the other grade 8 teachers in the school, coordinating with incoming practicum students, etc.); these two teachers did not have the time to closely monitor each group's progress through the toy construction. As a result, even though student learning (or lack thereof) was clearly evident during the science-heavy schematic and construction day activities, this had not been identified by teachers and, consequently, instruction was not altered and student learning decreased. In relation to math, teachers at the first site did use the assessment information they gathered *for* learning to modify and adapt their lessons, increasing student success. In contrast, while the teacher at the second site did closely monitor groups through their construction phase, she chose not to use the information she gathered formatively out of fear that it would make her assessment *of* learning invalid. Putting the findings from both sites together, it becomes clear how important it is to (a) schedule time for ongoing assessment *for* learning – teachers need to recognize how vital it is to closely monitor group work and (b) use the information that you learn about student progress to provide specific feedback and alter activities so as to fill in the learning gaps which were identified by students. If, as at the second site, a teacher is worried about the validity of his or her assessment if they intervene, this can be managed by increasing the number and/or variety of assessments being used. Assessment *for* learning, when used for the purpose of adapting instruction, appears to increase students' ability to transfer knowledge beyond the immediate unit of instruction; if student understanding is a teacher's primary concern, learning gaps need to be dealt with earlier (formatively) rather than after the fact (summatively).

LOOKING BEYOND INTEGRATION

We now return to the final question we asked at the beginning of this paper: what can we learn from the assessment of student learning in integrated settings that can be applied to teaching practices in general? There are three things we suggest teachers can take away from these two case studies (in relation to assessment):

1. Even if a teacher is not using integrated units, it is important to include an alterative performance/project assessment opportunity that requires students to apply what they have taught/learned; these case study results strongly support the problem-solving model.
2. We found that the more an assessment moves from traditional tasks (e.g., exams, essays, reflections) towards an alternative project, product, or performance assessments, the more time is needed for assessment *for* learning opportunities. In this sense, group work and independent projects lead to an increase in the amount of supervision and guidance students need from their teacher(s).
3. Assessment *as* learning, when specific to identifiable objectives rather than overall global aims/understands, appears to increase students' ability to transfer knowledge (or *understand*). These case studies reveal how critical it is to share assignment criteria with students and teach students to be effective assessors of their own and others' work.

These results strengthen arguments for both the use of integrated tasks to assess student understanding and the importance of having assessment *for* learning as a priority; we advise teachers to plan these assessments *for* learning into the overall unit schedule as well as continually use what is learned to alter activities and redirect student learning.

LOOKING BEYOND THIS STUDY

Reflecting on the use of a dialectic mixed-methods approach for this study, a discussion regarding data analyses is pertinent. During the analysis stage, our planned opportunities to integrate the data were important and often led to a re-analysis of data. Two specific types of integrated analyses were especially valuable. First, data transformation led to our first *recycling* of data. After an initial thematic analysis of the observation records and teacher interviews (qualitative data), we were able to break down each unit into specific activities linked to specific learning objectives. Using this new thematic organization, we recoded our quantitative data enabling a quantitative description of the unit. For example, we were able to identify percentages of time spent on each learning objective, percentages of time per activity, as well as levels of on- and off-task behaviour by learning objective. This data transformation then led to an opportunity to consolidate our data.

After examining how much time and how on-task students were for each learning objective, we compared these results with students' ability to demonstrate each learning objective in their final interviews. This revealed an important inconsistency. Students' ability to successfully transfer knowledge did not correlate with the amount of time spent on each objective or student levels of on-task behaviour; something else was affecting student learning. This then

led to a re-visitation of the data. When consolidating our teacher and student interviews with our observation record descriptions of classroom activities, assessment emerged as a key factor. This then led to a second recoding of our qualitative data (another type of data transformation) using the theoretical model of assessment *as, of,* and *for* learning, the results of which were reported earlier in this article.

Consequently, a dialectic mixed-methods approach, given the size of our data sets and the expansiveness of the questions we were asking – trying to link pedagogy and student learning – was the best research design. However, it required numerous re-visitations and recycling of our data set. In addition as researchers, we needed to be adept in managing both qualitative and quantitative data, recognizing how to use and re-use data appropriately. Nevertheless, this increased time spent managing and analyzing data resulted in new insights and new areas of investigation. Further research examining the links between assessment *as, of,* and *for* learning and student success is warranted.

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L'ÉCHAFAUDAGE DU DISCOURS COLLABORATIF EN LIGNE D'ENSEIGNANTS DANS UN CONTEXTE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT PROFESSIONNEL FORMEL

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RÉSUMÉ. L'étude porte sur le soutien de la progression du discours collaboratif en ligne, à l'aide de l'utilisation de deux groupes d'échafaudages. Le cadre de référence fait appel aux concepts de la communauté d'apprentissage en réseau et de la communauté d'élaboration de connaissances, où les participants (des enseignants du primaire et du secondaire) poursuivent conjointement des buts d'apprentissage partagés par le biais de la communication écrite en asynchrone. La méthodologie retenue fait appel à des principes de l'expérimentation de devis qui s'est déployée en deux itérations. Des analyses quantitatives descriptives et qualitatives ont été effectuées. Des différences se dégagent de l'utilisation des deux groupes d'échafaudages mis à l'essai, et des *patterns* d'utilisation récurrents émergent du second groupe. Des implications sont proposées pour soutenir le discours écrit en ligne.

THE USE OF ONLINE COLLABORATIVE DISCOURSE TO SUPPORT IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING

ABSTRACT. This study focuses on encouraging the growth of online collaborative discourse using two scaffold groups. Network learning and knowledge building communities are part of our framework where primary and secondary teachers investigate shared learning goals through asynchronous written communications. Our method was guided by principles of design experiment unfolding on two distinct levels. Descriptive, quantitative, and qualitative analysis were conducted. Differences emerged between the two scaffold groups tested, and recurrent patterns of use emerged from the second group. Suggestions are made on how to sustain written online discourse.

INTRODUCTION ET OBJECTIFS DE L'ÉTUDE

Notre étude s'inscrit dans un contexte de formation continue formelle portant sur la communauté d'apprentissage (Brown & Campione, 1994; Bielaczyc & Collins, 1999; De Laat & Lally, 2003; Palloff & Pratt, 1999; *International Scientific Committee on Communities of Learners (ISCoL)*, 2001). Il s'agit d'un cours universitaire de deuxième cycle qui se déroule dans un environnement d'apprentissage hybride (Laferrière, Lamon, & Breuleux, 2006). L'étude s'intéresse de façon spécifique à l'utilisation de deux groupes d'échafaudages (Bruner, 1960; Vygotsky, 1978) visant à soutenir le discours écrit asynchrone des participants, des enseignants du primaire et du secondaire. Le premier

groupe d'échafaudages est construit à partir des jalons d'une communauté d'apprentissage (*ISCoL*, 2001), alors que le second s'inspire des principes de coélaboration de connaissances (Scardamalia, 2002). Trois objectifs spécifiques sont poursuivis :

1. Comparer l'utilisation de deux groupes d'échafaudages élaborés à partir de principes distincts ;
2. Comparer l'utilisation d'un même groupe d'échafaudages avec plusieurs groupes de participants en vue d'identifier des récurrences et des différences;
3. Analyser la nature du discours écrit produit lorsque les deux groupes d'échafaudages ont été utilisés par les participants.

La pertinence de cette étude réside notamment dans le fait que, bien que l'échafaudage du discours asynchrone soit de plus en plus reconnu comme important (Angeli, Valanides, Curtis, & Bonk, 2003; Dillenbourg, 1999; Pea, 2004; Shank, 2004), peu d'études portant sur la façon dont ce processus se déploie ont encore été réalisées. Pourtant, la progression du discours (*progressive discourse* ; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1993) est un élément important qui intervient dans le processus de construction des connaissances. Les recherches effectuées dans le champ de l'apprentissage collaboratif supporté par l'ordinateur (*computer-supported collaborative learning,* CSCL) démontrent que les technologies de l'information et de la communication (TIC) peuvent jouer un rôle à cet égard.

CADRE DE RÉFÉRENCE

Innovation pédagogique et développement professionnel

Le développement professionnel est reconnu comme un moyen permettant de composer avec le changement et l'innovation en éducation (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992; Guskey, 1995, 2002). Par développement professionnel, Day (1999 ; cité et traduit librement par Brodeur, Deaudelin, & Bru, 2005) entend un :

> (...) processus par lequel, individuellement et collectivement, les enseignants révisent, renouvellent et augmentent leur engagement en tant qu'agents de changement, aux fins morales de l'éducation. Grâce à ce processus, ils acquièrent et développent de façon critique le savoir, les habiletés et l'intelligence émotionnelle qui sont essentiels à une pensée, à une planification et à une pratique de qualité, tout au long de la vie professionnelle. (p. 4)

Le récent Programme de formation de l'école québécoise (MEQ, 2001), qui est inspiré par les perspectives sociocognitives et qui souligne le potentiel des TIC pour l'enseignement et l'apprentissage, encourage des enseignants en exercice à s'inscrire dans une démarche de formation continue, dans l'intention de se mettre au diapason de changements d'une telle envergure. Cela peut se concrétiser notamment par le biais de cours formels en milieu universitaire.

Les possibilités de réinvestissement en classe des savoirs acquis dans un tel contexte sont accrues lorsque les cours sont de nature participative et lorsqu'ils préconisent et déploient concrètement les principes qui en sont l'objet même d'apprentissage (Cumming & Owen, 2001; Fullan, 1993; Lieberman, 1996; Little, 1993).

Communautés d'apprentissage et d'élaboration de connaissances

Les activités de développement professionnel alignées avec de telles façons de faire peuvent se concentrer sur une organisation et une gestion de la classe qui préconisent le modèle de la communauté d'apprentissage (Brown & Campione, 1984; Bielaczyc & Collins, 1999; *ISCoL*, 2001), et les principes de coélaboration de connaissances (Scardamalia, 2002). Selon une acception générique, par communauté d'apprentissage, il est entendu un contexte dans lequel les apprenants, soutenus par l'enseignant, partagent conjointement et intentionnellement un objet, c'est-à-dire qu'ils essaient, ensemble, de mieux comprendre quelque chose. Bielaczyc et Collins (1999) identifient quatre éléments caractéristiques d'une communauté d'apprentissage : un objet partagé qui donne le ton à une participation conjointe, une diversité d'expertise au sein des participants, une capacité métacognitive leur permettant de réfléchir à propos de ce qui se déroule au sein de la communauté et des mécanismes de partage des savoirs qui y sont acquis. Quant à *IsCoL* (2001), il a formulé les caractéristiques d'une communauté d'apprentissage en sept jalons : identification de buts d'apprentissage commun, mise à contribution du dialogue progressif, ouverture de la communauté sur la communauté élargie, posture de développement professionnel, travail à partir de problèmes authentiques et diversité de connaissances et de compétences individuelles.

Quant à une communauté d'élaboration de connaissances, elle représente une forme avancée de communauté d'apprentissage au sens où ses participants tentent délibérément de faire progresser les idées qui ont de la valeur pour eux. De façon plus spécifique, Bereiter et Scardamalia (1993) définissent la coélaboration de connaissances de la façon suivante :

> *Knowledge building may be defined as the production and continual improvement of ideas of value to a community, through means that increase the likelihood that what the community accomplishes will be greater than the sum of individual contributions and part of broader cultural efforts.*

Scardamalia (2002) a identifié 12 principes qui caractérisent le fonctionnement d'une communauté d'élaboration de connaissances. Ce sont : évaluation simultanée, ancrée et transformative; idées réelles, problèmes authentiques; démocratisation du savoir; intégration des idées débattues et émergence de nouvelles idées; idées perfectibles; utilisation constructive de sources d'autorité; savoir communautaire, une responsabilité collective; démarche épistémologique; avancement symétrique du savoir; diversité des idées; discours transformatif; ubiquité du processus d'élaboration de connaissances.

Importance de l'échafaudage

Dans de tels modèles, où la dimension sociale occupe une place importante, l'échafaudage (Bruner, 1960; Vygotsky, 1978) du processus d'apprentissage, c'est-à-dire le soutien offert aux apprenants en cours de démarche, représente un aspect crucial. L'enseignant est un premier acteur clé de l'échafaudage, par la guidance qu'il offre. D'autres acteurs peuvent être les pairs. Une troisième façon de soutenir le processus d'apprentissage a trait à une possibilité d'échafaudage dite rigide (*hard scaffolding*, Brush & Saye, 2002), incluse dans certains logiciels d'apprentissage. Une telle possibilité, complémentaire au rôle de l'enseignant, offre une médiation par le biais de la technologie et vise à aider les apprenants en l'absence de l'enseignant. C'est ce dernier type d'échafaudage qui est étudié ici et, plus particulièrement, celui qui fait appel à la facilitation du processus d'écriture (*procedural facilitation of writing*, Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1982), compte tenu de la prépondérance de l'écrit dans le processus d'apprentissage de notre environnement hybride. Il s'agit de permettre aux scripteurs d'aborder la tâche d'écriture dans sa globalité, son authenticité et sa complexité, tout en lui fournissant des repères (par exemple par le biais d'expressions clés) qui, de façon facultative et au besoin, peuvent le diriger à travers la réalisation des composantes importantes du processus ciblé.

MÉTHODOLOGIE

Expérimentation de devis

Des principes de l'expérimentation de devis (*design experiment*, Brown, 1992 ; Collins, 1992, 1999) ont été considérés dans le cadre de notre étude. Cette méthodologie préconise, entre autres, un processus itératif dans le déploiement d'une innovation en éducation afin de tenir compte de sa dynamique complexe et de son arrimage progressif aux pratiques en cours. Concrètement, cela s'est réalisé en analysant, d'une itération à l'autre (d'un groupe de participants à l'autre), la qualité du discours écrit généré dans l'optique de mieux comprendre la façon dont on peut soutenir son approfondissement et d'en cerner certains déterminants, notamment l'échafaudage rigide (Brush & Saye, 2002).

Design de l'environnement d'apprentissage hybride

Dans le contexte d'implantation du Programme de formation de l'école québécoise (MEQ, 2001), un cours portant sur les communautés d'apprentissage a été offert à des enseignants du primaire et du secondaire dans le cadre d'un programme court d'études de deuxième cycle à l'Université Laval. Il s'agissait d'une façon de les amener à composer avec des réalités du nouveau curriculum d'études. Dans une optique de modélisation des pratiques et selon une dynamique de coenseignement, deux formateurs ont « collaboré pour créer les conditions d'enseignement et d'apprentissage les plus favorables et faire de la classe une véritable communauté d'apprentissage » (MEQ, 2001, p. 6).

Le cours était de nature hybride (Laferrière, Lamon, & Breuleux, 2006) : un tiers du temps a été vécu en face à face, et l'autre portion s'est déroulée en ligne, par le biais d'interactions asynchrones à partir d'un forum électronique. Le cours a été mené selon des modalités de gestion démocratique et en considérant d'autres balises d'une communauté d'apprentissage (ISCoL, 2001). Par exemple, les formateurs et les étudiants ont tout particulièrement cherché à travailler à partir de questionnements réels (jalon intitulé *Problèmes authentiques*). Les savoirs d'expérience des enseignants et leurs compétences individuelles ont été considérés dans l'élaboration des idées en lien avec les objets partagés ciblés (jalons intitulés *Diversité des connaissances et des compétences individuelles* et *Buts d'apprentissage communs*).

Tous ont utilisé le *Knowledge Forum*® (version 4.5) à titre d'outil pour supporter des interactions écrites en ligne. La participation au forum faisait partie des exigences du cours. Du strict point de vue du développement professionnel, cela voulait contribuer à l'engagement des participants. Or, sur le plan de la recherche, cela pourrait être considéré comme une limite de notre étude, en ce sens que les participants étaient en quelque sorte captifs, par leur statut d'étudiant universitaire. Le choix de la technologie *Knowledge Forum* a été fait en vertu de la diversité des *affordances* (les possibilités d'un environnement qui, lorsque perçues, poussent un individu à agir) socionumériques de l'outil, qui permettent notamment d'échafauder le discours écrit dans une optique d'élaboration collective des connaissances, un des objectifs poursuivis dans le cadre du cours sur la communauté d'apprentissage. Ainsi, des expressions clés ont été définies par les formateurs des enseignants du cours afin de supporter la progression de leur discours (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1993), et de les guider dans leur compréhension du concept de communauté d'apprentissage et d'en cerner des implications pour l'enseignement et l'apprentissage, tout en prenant part eux-mêmes à une telle dynamique. L'*affordance* d'échafaudage du *Knowledge Forum*® a été paramétrée à partir des expressions clés qui visaient à orienter et soutenir le processus d'écriture des participants. La figure 1 illustre l'interface que les utilisateurs perçoivent au moment d'écrire une contribution alors que la figure 2 illustre une note soumise.

FIGURE 1: *Fonction d'échafaudage du Knowledge Forum ®*

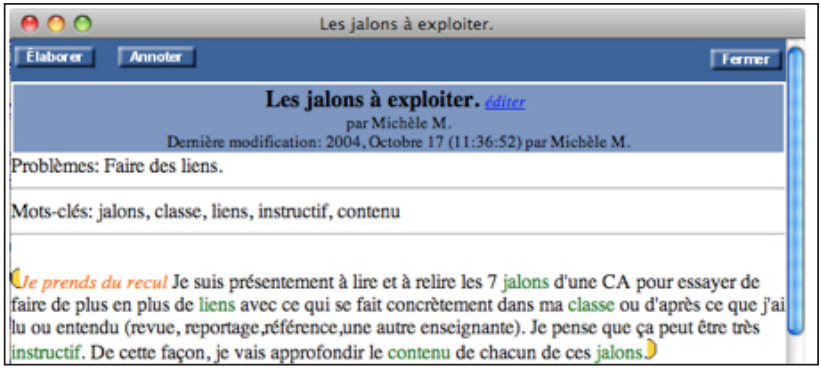

FIGURE 2: *Exemple de note écrite dans le Knowledge Forum*

Deux groupes d'échafaudage ont été mis à la disposition des participants. Le premier s'est inspiré du titre des sept jalons d'une communauté d'apprentissage, tel que définis par l'*International Scientific Committee on Communities of Learners* (ISCoL, 2001). Ce groupe d'échafaudages a été utilisé auprès d'un premier groupe d'étudiants (itération 1) ayant pris part au cours sur la communauté d'apprentissage. À son terme, la réflexion sur l'action (Schön, 1983) des formateurs a mené à la redéfinition des échafaudages utilisés avec les groupes d'étudiants subséquents (itération 2), pour le même cours. Deux principales raisons ont contribué à cette redéfinition, soit la faible utilisation qui a été faite des échafaudages et la nature du discours écrit par les participants. Elles seront explicitées dans la présentation des résultats. Ainsi, un second groupe a été élaboré, cette fois en considérant 10 des 12 principes de coélaboration de connaissances (Scardamalia, 2002). Les principes relatifs à la dimension communautaire du savoir et à l'omniprésence du processus d'élaboration de connaissances n'ont pas été retenus puisqu'ils étaient considérés comme des aspects du contexte global de formation continue plus que des éléments pouvant guider le processus discursif des participants. Le tableau 1 détaille les échafaudages utilisés lors des deux itérations.

Une description détaillée des jalons d'une communauté d'apprentissage a été mise à la disposition des participants sur le site Web du cours.[1] Ainsi, ils avaient en quelque sorte accès à une définition explicite de chaque jalon. Tous les participants ont consulté ces définitions[2] ; elles faisaient partie des lectures obligatoires du cours. En ce qui a trait aux principes de coélaboration de connaissances, aucun texte de référence n'a été fourni. Les formateurs ont préféré « laisser parler » les échafaudages d'eux-mêmes, puisque le thème général du cours portait sur la communauté d'apprentissage et que l'intention n'était pas de traiter des nuances qui existent entre ce type de communauté et celle d'élaboration de connaissances.

TABLEAU 1: *Échafaudages utilisés pour chaque itération*

Échafaudages – Itération 1 (Inspirés des jalons d'une communauté d'apprentissage)	Échafaudages – Itération 2 (Inspirés des principes de coélaboration de connaissances)
Processus démocratiques	Ce que j'aimerais apprendre
Dialogue progressif	Ce que j'en sais
Buts d'apprentissage communs	Ce qu'en disent les experts
Communauté ouverte	J'enrichis l'idée
Développement professionnel	Je fournis une rétroaction
Problèmes authentiques	J'explore une idée différente
Diversité des connaissances et des compétences individuelles	Ma compréhension se modifie
	Je prends du recul
	Mise en commun de nos idées
	À propos de notre processus en tant que communauté d'apprentissage

Une distinction supplémentaire entre l'itération 1 et 2 concerne l'explication des échafaudages en classe, en face à face. Dans l'itération 1, aucune discussion n'a eu lieu avec les étudiants à propos des échafaudages alors que cela a été le cas pour l'itération 2. De façon plus spécifique, les formateurs ont demandé aux étudiants ce qu'ils comprenaient de chaque échafaudage et ils ont apporté des précisions, au besoin. Aussi, dans le cas de deux échafaudages en particulier (Je prends du recul, Ma compréhension se modifie), une clarification a été nécessaire pour en arriver à une compréhension commune.

Collecte et analyse des données

Les données ont été colligées auprès de quatre groupes d'étudiants constitués d'enseignants du primaire et du secondaire en exercice, sur une période de trois trimestres (automne 2003, été 2004, automne 2004). L'expérience en enseignement des participants était variable dans l'ensemble des groupes; certains étaient débutants alors que d'autres avaient un parcours professionnel de plusieurs années dans le domaine. Les quatre groupes étaient représentés par un nombre semblable d'étudiants (23, 29, 19 et 17), pour un total de 88 participants. Le premier groupe a fait partie de la première itération du devis; il a été le seul à utiliser les échafaudages du groupe élaboré à partir des jalons d'une communauté d'apprentissage. Les trois autres groupes d'étudiants, répartis sur deux trimestres, ont fait partie de la seconde itération (Tableau 2). La progression de leur discours asynchrone a été soutenue par des échafaudages inspirés des principes de coélaboration de connaissances, sans toutefois que la provenance de ces principes leur ait été expliquée.

TABLEAU 2: *Groupes de participants selon les itérations du devis*

Itération 1	Itération 2		
Trimestre 1 (A2003)	Trimestre 2 (É2004)		Trimestre 3 (A2004)
Groupe 1	Groupe 2A	Groupe 2B	Groupe 3
Utilisation des échafaudages construits à partir des jalons d'une communauté d'apprentissage	Utilisation des échafaudages construits à partir des principes de coélaboration de connaissances		

Les interactions écrites sur le forum électronique ont constitué notre principale source de données, de même que les données colligées à partir de l'*Analytic ToolKit (ATK)*, un outil intégré au forum et qui comptabilise automatiquement des statistiques de participation. L'ensemble des 1 114 notes et des 25 perspectives développées sur le *Knowledge Forum*® a été considéré dans l'analyse. Elles ont aussi été compilées quantitativement à partir de l'*ATK*.

De plus, une analyse de la concordance de l'utilisation des échafaudages a été effectuée, à l'instar de celle menée par Allaire (2006) et Turcotte (2008). Cela a permis de vérifier dans quelle mesure les participants ont réellement mis de l'avant, lors de l'écriture de leurs contributions sur le forum électronique, les processus suggérés par les échafaudages qui étaient à leur disposition. Par exemple, l'échafaudage « Processus démocratiques » voulait amener les participants à traiter de cette dimension ; l'analyse de la concordance a permis de vérifier si cela a été le cas. Pour ce faire, un échantillon aléatoire de 50 % de l'ensemble des contributions écrites a été sélectionné. Lorsque les contributions contenaient au moins un échafaudage, le contenu qualifié par l'échafaudage a été codé selon qu'il correspondait ou non au processus proposé (voir tableau 1).

Enfin, la nature des propos écrits a aussi été observée. Cette observation s'est concentrée dans les perspectives élaborées à partir de questions réelles et authentiques. Nous avons identifié de façon inductive les thèmes centraux qui étaient abordés. Pour ce faire, nous avons considéré la note complète comme unité d'analyse puisque nous désirions observer l'orientation générale que les échafaudages proposés procuraient au discours asynchrone, plus qu'effectuer une analyse de contenu microscopique. Les perspectives qui ont fait l'objet de l'analyse traitaient principalement du rôle de l'enseignant à l'intérieur d'une communauté d'apprentissage, dans un contexte de réforme de l'éducation. Dans le cas des quatre groupes, ce sont ces perspectives qui renfermaient le plus d'enfilades, c'est-à-dire de séquences de notes reliées entre elles et reflétant ainsi un potentiel accru d'approfondissement de l'objet traité.

RÉSULTATS

Un premier résultat a trait à l'utilisation, d'un point de vue quantitatif, du groupe d'échafaudages construit à partir des principes de coélaboration de connaissances. Ce groupe a été largement plus utilisé (18 utilisations par participant[3]) que le groupe élaboré à partir des jalons d'une communauté d'apprentissage (2 utilisations par participant) (Figure 3). En ce qui a trait à la concordance de l'utilisation des échafaudages, elle a dépassé les 75 %, peu importe le groupe d'échafaudages retenu et peu importe le groupe de participants (Groupe 1 : 94 % ; Groupe 2a : 82 % ; Groupe 2b : 76 % ; Groupe 3 : 88 %). C'est dire que les échafaudages définis ont contribué à soutenir certains éléments de discours spécifiques auprès des participants. Soulignons néanmoins un cas d'exception, celui de l'échafaudage intitulé « Je fournis une rétroaction », dont l'utilisation n'a pas été concordante dans près de 75 % des cas. Cet échafaudage a été davantage utilisé dans l'optique préconisée par celui intitulé « J'enrichis l'idée ».

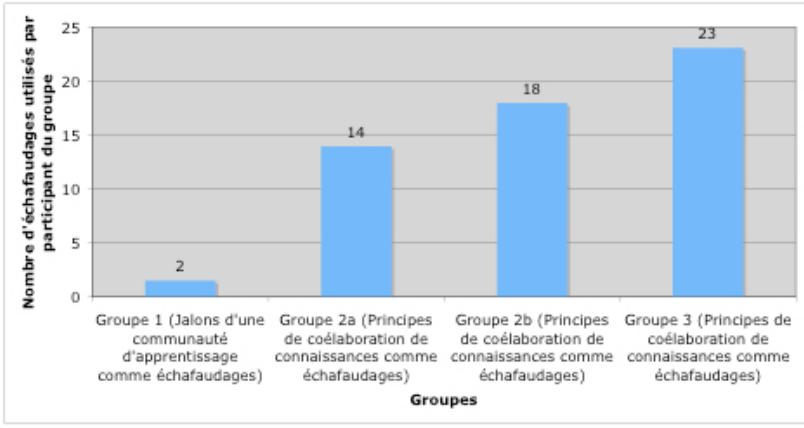

FIGURE 3: *Utilisation des échafaudages par groupe de participants*

Soulignons cependant que le groupe élaboré à partir des jalons d'une communauté d'apprentissage ne suggérait aucune gradation particulière dans les éléments d'échafaudage proposés. Il a encouragé les participants à catégoriser leurs contributions plutôt qu'à les engager dans une compréhension approfondie des questions ciblées. Ainsi, les analyses menées à partir du discours écrit pendant la première itération (groupe 1) ont révélé une énumération de connaissances en lien avec le concept véhiculé par l'échafaudage. Quant à la seconde itération (groupes 2a, 2b, et 3), caractérisée par la présence des échafaudages de coélaboration de connaissances possédant une gradation, elle a illustré un discours progressif en lien avec le problème initialement formulé.

Le tableau 3 renferme des extraits de texte qui illustrent la dimension énumérative du discours que nous venons d'évoquer. On y remarque que les échafaudages

utilisés (processus démocratiques, problèmes authentiques, buts d'apprentissage communs) ont contribué à orienter le contenu même du discours plutôt que les processus impliqués dans la progression de ce discours d'un point de vue collectif. Les échafaudages ont en quelque sorte amené les scripteurs à mettre au second plan le problème initialement formulé, en l'occurrence le rôle de l'enseignant dans une communauté d'apprentissage, pour se concentrer sur la définition du jalon représenté par l'échafaudage. Ce dernier a aussi amené les participants à se concentrer davantage sur le contenu de leurs notes, plutôt qu'à la façon de lier ce contenu à celui des autres participants de la communauté d'apprentissage en réseau.

TABLEAU 3: *Extraits de discours qualifiés par le groupe d'échafaudages des jalons de la communauté d'apprentissage*

Processus démocratiques *Le processus démocratique est un jalon de réussite qui, selon moi, peut facilement être véhiculé dans une classe. Tout en suivant le programme, l'enseignant(e) peut suggérer des thèmes (dans toutes les matières) et proposer à ses élèves de trouver des idées d'activités (toujours en lien avec ce thème). Ce concept est fort simple et il donne la chance à tous les élèves de s'exprimer sur le sujet. Il est également intéressant de constater qu'il est possible, par la suite, de cibler une problématique suite à leurs commentaires de façon à approfondir leurs savoirs. Le rôle de l'enseignant est donc de guider les élèves dans leurs démarches tout en étant une personne-ressource.*
Problèmes authentiques *La planification doit inclure des tâches complexes et authentiques. Ces tâches peuvent être issues de manuels scolaires, mais bien souvent celles que j'ai trouvées dans ma pratique venaient d'ailleurs (sites Internet suggérés, idées de collègues, sujets traités dans des revues d'actualité, idées des élèves, etc.)*
Processus démocratiques *La planification doit être souple et ouverte. Elle doit nécessairement tenir compte des idées des élèves afin de tendre vers le jalon « processus démocratique ». On ne peut donc tout prévoir à l'avance, il faut planifier avec les élèves. Cela ne veut pas dire de tout décider avec eux. Il faut viser un certain équilibre, faire des compromis. C'est à nous de voir ce qui est pertinent d'imposer en fonction des compétences visées.*
Buts d'apprentissage communs *Si les buts sont bien clairs, alors l'évaluation devrait être plus facile. On cerne davantage ce qui est visé comme apprentissage.*

En ce qui a trait au discours élaboré à partir des échafaudages inspirés par les principes de coélaboration de connaissances, la séquence de quatre notes, reproduite au tableau 4, illustre le rôle des échafaudages dans l'enchaînement des idées élaborées par les participants. On remarque que les échafaudages ont contribué à la liaison des idées, d'une note à l'autre, plutôt que donner une orientation au contenu à proprement parler, comme ce fut le cas pour le groupe d'échafaudages des jalons de la communauté d'apprentissage. Ainsi, dans le premier extrait, le participant a partagé ce qu'il croyait savoir à propos du rôle de l'enseignant dans un contexte d'apprentissage socioconstructiviste. Un second participant a évoqué que cette première idée a suscité une prise de conscience chez lui et il a explicité à quel niveau elle est survenue. Puis un troisième et un quatrième participant ont fait chacun un apport pour enrichir

la dernière idée élaborée, toujours en lien avec la question initiale traitant du rôle de l'enseignant.

TABLEAU 4: *Extraits de discours qualifiés par le groupe d'échafaudages des principes de coélaboration de connaissances*

Ce que j'en sais *Le meilleur exemple pour ma part est le fait que je suis constamment à la recherche de nouvelles méthodes d'enseignement ou de nouvelles façons de voir mon enseignement. Bien sûr, j'aurais pu utiliser les volumes mis sur le marché afin de poursuivre ma formation, mais je désirais avoir du concret. C'est pourquoi je suis toujours en train de suivre des cours afin d'améliorer mes savoirs et mes savoir-faire. Ainsi, il m'est possible de me tenir à jour et de me questionner à différents niveaux sur mon enseignement. Comme je travaille avec des élèves ayant des difficultés académiques et des problèmes de comportements, je cherche à actualiser mes connaissances afin d'être en mesure de mieux les aider et les guider. Selon la théorie socioconstructiviste, il faut créer des situations de déséquilibres chez l'élève afin qu'il prenne ses apprentissages en main. Je fais un peu la même chose en désirant toujours en savoir plus. De toute façon, j'ai toujours pensé que le métier d'enseignant en était un sujet à la formation continue. On ne peut pas rester assis à regarder le train passer. J'aime beaucoup mieux entrer dans le train et suivre le mouvement des rails afin qu'elles m'indiquent des nouveaux chemins à suivre. Je souhaite de tout coeur ne jamais devenir blasé et inactive au fil des années.*

Je prends du recul *Je suis en accord avec ce que tu dis. Il faut être à la recherche de l'outil, de la stratégie, de la compétence qui va nous permettre d'effectuer un pas de plus en direction de nos élèves, d'être des repères pour eux, afin de maximiser la construction de leurs savoirs et des nôtres. De plus, je suis certaine que déjà dans nos classes nous vivons des occasions ou des situations qui rejoignent les jalons d'une CA sans être aussi développées que ceux-ci. Donc, nous essayons ce que nous apprenons et nous nous questionnons.*

J'enrichis l'idée *J'aime quand tu dis que nous sommes des repères pour les élèves. Ainsi, lorsqu'ils nous voient nous poser des questions, chercher la réponse par toutes sortes de stratégies, ils apprennent comment faire pour apprendre. Ils nous imiteront par la suite dans leur procédure d'apprentissage. Ils développent alors la métacognition.*

J'enrichis l'idée *Je poursuis l'idée d'Isabelle en affirmant que nous sommes des modèles, des exemples pour nos élèves en classe. L'an dernier, je me suis fait poser une question de grammaire par une de mes élèves et je n'ai pas été capable de lui répondre sur le coup. J'ai donc été obligé de mettre son questionnement en veilleuse et de me renseigner pour le cours suivant. L'élève a eu envie de m'accuser de ne pas connaître ma matière et ainsi d'être incompétente. Finalement, le lendemain, je suis revenue avec la réponse à sa question et je lui ai expliqué que je n'avais pas la science infuse même si je suis un professeur de français. J'ai même pu reprendre cette conversation avec l'ensemble de la classe pour leur dire que je ne connais pas toutes les réponses et qu'il m'arrive à moi aussi de devoir chercher des réponses. C'est alors que je leur ai parlé des stratégies que j'utilise pour remédier à ce problème et quelles sont les ressources qui sont disponibles. Voilà pourquoi je crois que nous effectivement des modèles pour nos élèves.*

D'autre part, l'utilisation du groupe d'échafaudages des principes de coélaboration de connaissances a donné lieu à des enfilades (séquences de notes liées entre elles) plus longues que le groupe des jalons de la communauté d'apprentissage, pour lequel la plupart des séquences (76 %) n'ont renfermé que de deux à cinq notes (Figure 4).

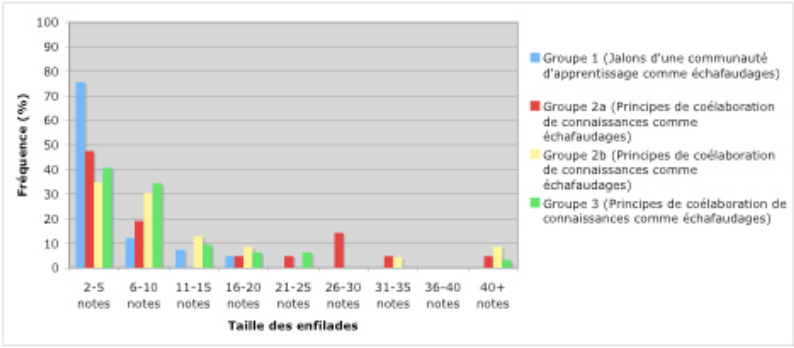

FIGURE 4: *Répartition de la taille des enfilades selon les groupes de participants*

La longueur accrue des enfilades s'est traduite par une présence de négociation de sens. Le tableau 5 en présente un exemple. Il s'agit d'un extrait provenant d'une enfilade de 16 notes traitant de la question de l'évaluation dans le contexte de renouveau pédagogique.

Par ailleurs, en comparant l'utilisation faite du groupe d'échafaudages des principes de coélaboration de connaissances par les trois groupes d'étudiants qui l'ont utilisé, des patterns récurrents ont été constatés (Figure 5). Précisons que l'absence d'échafaudage « À propos de notre processus en tant que communauté d'apprentissage », dans la figure 5 pour le groupe 2b, s'explique par un problème de configuration technique au moment de paramétrer les échafaudages pour ce groupe d'étudiants. Ceux-ci n'y ont donc pas eu accès.

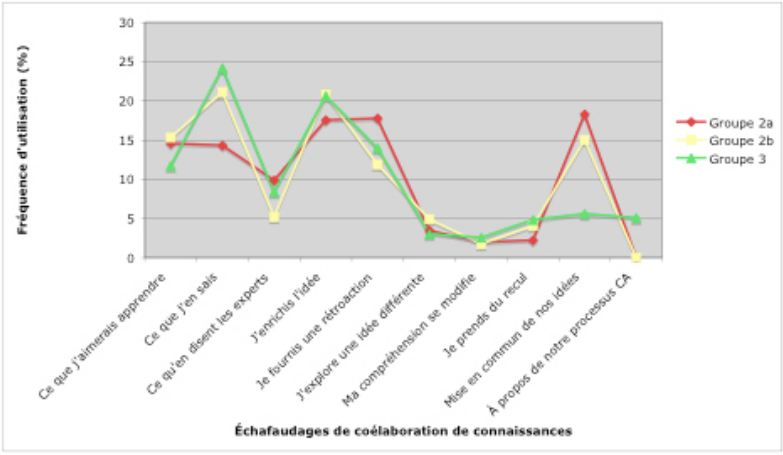

FIGURE 5: *Utilisation des échafaudages de coélaboration de connaissances*

TABLEAU 5: *Exemple de négociation de sens*

Ce que j'en sais *Lorsqu'il est question d'évaluation (que se soit par rapport à la réforme ou par rapport à la communauté d'apprentissage), j'ai un peu de difficulté à appliquer le fonctionnement de celle-ci. En effet, lors de récents essais dans le cadre de projet en français, j'ai éprouvé un peu de difficulté à ne pas attribuer de notes. Il nous fallait utiliser qu'un barème pour évaluer nos élèves, par exemple : 1=acquis et 3= non-acquis. Je me suis cassée la tête à tenter d'être la plus objective possible lors de cette attribution de nombre pour chacun de mes élèves et dans le sens de la compétence qui était évaluées. De plus, j'ai eu de la difficulté à ne pas me laisser guider par mes émotions (elle, elle le mérite, lui non). Je me donnais comme mandat d'appuyer mes dires sur des faits observables, mais ce n'était pas évident à réaliser. Je trouve donc que cette façon d'évaluer est axée sur des jugements de valeur personnels. Un élève pourrait être évalué par trois enseignants différents et probablement que les trois évaluations seraient fort différentes.*

Ce que j'aimerais apprendre *Comment s'y prendre pour mener à bien ce genre d'évaluation sans avoir l'impression de porter un jugement ? Comment faire pour exécuter une transition entre les notes scolaires et ce système de notation ?*

> J'explore une idée différente *Je crois qu'il est important de ne pas vouloir porter un jugement objectif pour les élèves, ce serait une utopie et cela met une pression inutile sur votre évaluation. Je me demande si la grille d'évaluation n'est pas trop circonscrite. Pourrais-tu nous en dire plus ?*
>
> > Ce que j'en sais *Il est vrai que la grille me semblait très restreinte. J'avais le sentiment de ne pas pouvoir m'en sortir. De plus, nos activités ne se faisaient de façon répétée, mais bien souvent on les faisait une ou deux fois, et puis il fallait évaluer. Je crois que les apprentissages de l'élève doivent s'étendre sur une plus longue période afin d'avoir le temps de ramasser des informations.*
> >
> > Ma compréhension se modifie *À la lumière de ce que je viens de lire dans les réponses fournies, je crois que notre méthode d'évaluation n'était pas tout à fait complète. Il nous manquait certains éléments et surtout des mises en contexte de plusieurs notions avant de porter un jugement sur ce qui a été fait par l'élève. Je suis en accord avec le fait qu'il faut s'appuyer sur des observations, des autoévaluations, le portfolio, mais, pour moi, ma crainte serait de me faire demander par un parent pourquoi il a eu droit à tel critère de notation alors qu'un autre n'a pas eu le même. Je pense que je suis vraiment trop habituée à notre système de note. De plus, au secondaire, les parents nous demandent toujours quelle est la note, car eux-mêmes ne comprennent pas lorsqu'on leur mentionne que leur enfant est en voie d'acquisition de telle notion, etc. Il faut que tes arguments soient en béton pour les convaincre sans note à l'appui.*
> > >
> > > Ce que j'en sais *Dans le monde scolaire, je crois que c'est à l'enseignante elle-même de bâtir ses propres grilles d'observation. Ainsi, elle les bâtit à son goût et ces grilles auront un sens à ses yeux et, de plus, elles seront plus faciles à expliquer aux parents.*
> > >
> > > Je fournis une rétroaction *Pour en revenir aux parents, je voulais juste ajouter que la réforme n'a pas été comprise et encore moins approuvée par les parents. Depuis que la réforme fait son chemin, nous, les enseignants, avons fait de nombreux progrès face aux compétences, aux outils à utiliser, aux méthodes d'enseignement, etc. Maintenant, si nous voulons que les parents comprennent le cheminement de leur enfant, nous avons besoin d'être patients.*
> > > *Maintenant, il faut être persévérants et tenir tête à nos façons d'évaluer, que le parent le veuille ou non. Selon moi, autant au primaire qu'au secondaire, les enseignants doivent être toujours en mesure d'expliquer une observation ou une évaluation.*

Un premier constat a trait à l'échafaudage « Ce que j'aimerais apprendre » qui a amené les étudiants à identifier des buts d'apprentissage de façon explicite. Ce sont 14 % des notes qui contiennent un tel échafaudage (écart-type : 1,9). Cela appert important dans l'optique où l'apprentissage intentionnel (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1993) peut contribuer au dynamisme d'une communauté d'apprentissage réseau. C'est une prise en charge autonome par les participants de leur apprentissage que cela dénote et qui peut aussi constituer un indicateur d'engagement à l'intérieur du cours, au-delà des exigences formelles établies au départ.

Un second constat concerne la forte présence d'enrichissement des idées des autres (échafaudage « J'enrichis l'idée »). C'est en fait 20 % des notes (écart-type : 1,8) qui contiennent un échafaudage de cette nature.

D'autre part, cet enrichissement était régulièrement accompagné de références indirectes et de citations directes pour en situer les éléments auxquels l'apport se greffait. C'est le cas de l'extrait suivant, dont le procédé de reprise indirecte d'éléments textuels du second passage voulait permettre l'arrimage avec l'idée exploratoire du premier passage.

> *J'explore une idée différente* Devrions-nous laisser les élèves créer d'abord et ensuite enseigner à partir des «erreurs» collectives? Est-ce que nous pourrions appeler ces «erreurs» le but commun recherché dans une communauté d'apprentissage, et nous aideraient-elles à mieux situer la zone proximale de développement ?
>
> *J'enrichis l'idée* L'idée de faire travailler les élèves et d'enseigner les notions non comprises par la suite est une bonne voie pour mettre en oeuvre un enseignement différencié, c'est-à-dire, que chaque élève à ses propres buts à atteindre. Lors de l'écriture par exemple, il serait possible [...]

Ici, c'est en fait la proposition « L'idée de faire travailler les élèves et d'enseigner les notions non comprises par la suite » qui a servi de conjonction au discours collectif.

D'autre part, l'échafaudage intitulé « Ce qu'en disent les experts » a été peu utilisé (moyenne : 8 %, écart-type : 2,2) en tant que tel pour qualifier les propos des participants, mais l'analyse de discours a néanmoins révélé des unités de sens y référant, comme en témoigne l'extrait suivant :

> *Je prends du recul* Je trouve que l'on peut faire le parallèle avec la lecture en français. Entre autres, l'enseignant, au début de l'année scolaire, va explorer des stratégies de lecture avec les élèves lors d'une compréhension de texte. Cette démarche va amener l'élève à prendre conscience de quelques trucs pour faciliter sa compréhension. Donc, je pense que l'on peut procéder de la même façon pour amener les élèves à travailler dans une communauté d'apprenants et pour qu'ils puissent y découvrir les bienfaits.

Sans faire mention de façon explicite à quelque auteur ou à quelque écrit scientifique que ce soit, on constate néanmoins la présence d'idées éprouvées concernant le modelage et l'enseignement de stratégies cognitives aux élèves à partir de contextes de lecture réels. Cela n'est pas sans rappeler que les enseignants en exercice en appellent souvent davantage à leurs savoir d'expérience qu'à des savoirs formalisés pour justifier et expliciter leurs intentions et pratiques (Saussez et Paquay, 2004 ; Perrenoud, Altet, Lessard, & Paquay, 2008).

Par ailleurs, peu de participants ont remis en question les idées émises par leurs collègues (échafaudage « J'explore une idée différente ») (moyenne : 4 %, écart-type : 1), pas plus qu'ils n'ont revisité leurs idées (échafaudage « Ma compréhension se modifie ») (moyenne : 2 %, écart-type : 0,4) ou qu'ils n'ont pris du recul (moyenne : 4 % ; écart-type : 1,3). Un tel résultat invite à questionner la façon dont une partie du discours a été échafaudé ou supporté. Par exemple, les formateurs ont-ils suffisamment encouragé la cohabitation d'idées différentes ? Ont-ils suffisamment mis d'accent sur la diversité des idées à l'intérieur d'une communauté d'apprentissage ? La métaphore de Scardamalia (2002) à propos de la biodiversité dans les écosystèmes en écologie pourrait constituer une stratégie intéressante à exploiter, et les échanges en face à face pourraient servir à cet effet. De plus amples analyses seront requises et elles pourraient faire l'objet d'une troisième itération, notamment en la comparant avec d'autres devis qui utilisent les mêmes groupes d'échafaudages dans des contextes différents, par exemple en formation initiale des enseignants.

DISCUSSION

Les environnements d'apprentissage hybrides sont de plus en plus présents dans le développement professionnel des enseignants (Larrimore & Sadera, 2004; Power, 2008). Les interactions sociales à des fins d'apprentissage et de coélaboration de connaissances peuvent être soutenues à l'aide de forums électroniques qui présentent des *affordances* appropriées. L'échafaudage du discours en ligne requiert une investigation délibérée et minutieuse de la part des formateurs en regard de ce qu'ils désirent voir accomplir en matière de processus sociocognitifs de la part des étudiants. Cette investigation gagne à viser l'émergence de problèmes authentiques pouvant être traités de façon significative et progressive. Nous entendons par là qu'il appert préférable que les échafaudages renferment une gradation entre eux, sinon, ils risquent de devenir de simples étiquettes à contenu plutôt qu'un soutien au discours collectif qui prend forme graduellement, au gré des interactions que les participants entretiennent. En d'autres termes, la gradation des éléments d'échafaudage constitue un gage du soutien des processus d'écriture en ligne et fait davantage en sorte que les échafaudages peuvent servir à ce pour quoi ils sont conçus, c'est-à-dire guider les participants à travers des comportements qu'ils n'auraient pas nécessairement tendance à mettre de l'avant que par eux-mêmes, à l'instar

de ce que Bereiter et Scardamalia (1982) font remarquer par leur concept de *procedural facilitation of writing*.

D'autre part, force est d'admettre que la seule présence d'une gradation entre les éléments d'échafaudage n'est pas suffisante pour encourager un processus discursif particulier. En effet, comme nous avons pu le constater, s'il est aisé de considérer les propos d'autres participants et d'y ajouter ses idées pour les bonifier, cela semble se réaliser plus facilement en abondant dans le même sens qu'eux (« J'enrichis l'idée ») plutôt qu'en explorant des idées qui, sans nécessairement être contradictoires, traitent de la question d'un point de vue ou d'une perspective différente (« J'explore une idée différente », « Je remets en question »). Il s'agit là d'un constat qui abonde dans le même sens que celui de Allaire (2006). Les échafaudages proposés à cet effet dans le devis de l'étude ont peut-être intimidé certains participants. Après tout, est-il si aisé de remettre en question les idées de personnes que l'on connaît peu, comme ce fut le cas dans le contexte de l'étude ? Cela porte à se questionner à propos du contexte social plus large mis en place, comme le suggère Bielaczyc (2001). Prise sous cet angle, la question de la diversité des idées abordées au sein d'une communauté d'apprentissage peut soulever la question de sa cohésion et de la confiance mutuelle, mais aussi celle de la distanciation entre les propos élaborés par les participants et les participants en tant qu'individus. Si, comme le suggère Dunbar (1995), les idées élaborées par une communauté donnée deviennent une propriété intellectuelle partagée, alors les individus qui ont contribué à leur élaboration devraient tendre à s'en détacher personnellement et à les considérer comme des productions et des artefacts distincts de leur propre personne. Cela relève du rapport entretenu par les participants à l'égard de leurs idées, et les échafaudages ont possiblement une portée limitée à cet effet. Il s'agit d'une première piste d'interprétation pour expliquer la faible utilisation des éléments d'étayage ciblant l'exploration d'idées différentes.

Une interprétation alternative veut que le processus d'élaboration de connaissances se soit déployé peut-être plus que la nature des analyses conduites ait pu le laisser transparaître. Rappelons-le, à travers ce processus, les participants cherchent de façon délibérée à améliorer des idées qui ont de la valeur pour eux. N'est-ce pas là l'essence de ce que véhiculait l'échafaudage « J'enrichis l'idée », qui a non seulement été fréquemment utilisé, mais utilisé de façon concordante dans un contexte où les participants en sont venus à prendre en charge eux-mêmes le processus d'investigation en regard des questionnements pédagogiques ciblés (Reiser, 2004). Cela porte à croire que la démarche d'échafaudage proposée, lorsqu'on la considère dans sa globalité, a contribué à fournir une guidance en regard de pratiques scientifiques, un principe de design important à prendre en considération dans la mise en œuvre d'une démarche d'étayage (Quintana, Reiser, Davis, Krajcik, Fretz, Duncan, Kyza, Edelson, & Soloway, 2004).

En revanche, lorsqu'on adopte un point de vue spécifique sur la démarche d'étayage, se pourrait-il que la présence de remises en question ne soit pas aussi essentielle à la progression du discours collaboratif asynchrone que ce qui avait été anticipé par les formateurs ? Cette progression passe-t-elle nécessairement par une rhétorique de type thèse/antithèse ? Des analyses de contenu plus pointues sont requises pour explorer cette idée de façon empirique et cela apparaît comme une piste de recherche féconde.

Par ailleurs, en ce qui a trait à l'intervention des formateurs, deux éléments particulièrement névralgiques méritent d'être discutés, à la lumière de la plus faible utilisation des échafaudages « À propos de notre processus CA » et « Ma compréhension se modifie ». Le premier visait à stimuler la métacognition chez les participants, une caractéristique importante à l'intérieur d'une communauté d'apprentissage. Une intervention éventuelle à cet égard pourrait mettre à contribution les moments de présence en face à face afin que les formateurs animent des échanges ponctuels à propos de la dynamique qui prévaut au sein de la communauté, à l'image des conseils de coopération présents dans les classes des enseignants en exercice. Cela pourrait possiblement contribuer au développement du sentiment d'appartenance et à la cohésion du groupe. Aussi, cela s'inscrirait tout à fait dans l'optique de l'approche d'échafaudage distribué (*distributed scaffolding*) suggérée par Tabak (2004) qui argue pour l'importance de la diversité des formes d'étayage offertes aux étudiants.

En ce qui a trait à l'échafaudage « Ma compréhension se modifie », celui-ci voulait permettre une formalisation des acquis développés dans le cadre des échanges asynchrones. À cet effet, l'affordance « Élever le propos » du *Knowledge Forum* pourrait être exploité plus amplement afin d'amener les participants à rédiger, périodiquement, des bilans permettant de faire le point à propos des idées développées. Dans le feu de l'action des échanges, la prise de conscience des apprentissages effectués peut ne pas aller de soi, surtout en considérant leur dimension progressive. La planification de moments ponctuels consacrés à des retours systématiques sur les apprentissages effectués pourrait s'avérer une autre piste d'intervention à exploiter.

CONCLUSION

Dans le contexte de réforme scolaire actuel qui requiert un changement de perspective important pour les enseignants, le développement professionnel offert par les universités doit considérer des contextes et des besoins réels. Ainsi, des questions mobilisatrices peuvent-elles émerger chez les enseignants. La combinaison des interactions en face à face et du discours en ligne à des fins d'investigation n'est pas seulement profitable dans une optique de gestion du temps; elle tient aussi compte de récents avancements au niveau de l'apprentissage (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999 ; Sawyer, 2005). Un nouveau défi pédagogique devient non seulement l'arrimage des interactions

qui surviennent tantôt en face à face, tantôt en ligne, mais aussi la médiation de ces dernières. Il n'est pas aisé de trouver un équilibre entre un trop grand encadrement susceptible d'engourdir la participation et un trop faible accompagnement susceptible de reproduire la cacophonie de certaines situations d'échange à l'oral. Or, lorsque les participants, incluant les formateurs d'enseignants, travaillent conjointement à partir de questions porteuses de sens pour eux, tout en se donnant quelques balises flexibles mais diversifiées pour guider l'élaboration de leurs propos, leurs interactions ressemblent progressivement à celles qui prennent place dans une communauté d'apprentissage ou d'élaboration de connaissances. Aussi, la distance entre la culture de recherche et celle de métier tend-t-elle à diminuer (Bereiter, 2002).

NOTES

1. http://www.telelearning-pds.org/coa/index.html
2. Nous ne les présentons pas ici par souci de concision du texte.
3. Ce nombre provient de la moyenne d'échafaudages utilisés par les participants des groupes 2a, 2b et 3, soit respectivement 14, 18 et 23.

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BOOK REVIEW

JEROME E. MORRIS. *Troubling the Waters: Fulfilling the promise of quality public schooling for Black children*. New York: Teachers College Press (2009). 216 pp. Paper: $27.95 (ISBN: 0807750158). Cloth: $64.00 (ISBN: 0807750166).

> *The Negro needs neither segregated nor mixed schools. What he needs is an education.* (Du Bois, 1935)

It has become a virtual truism to say a gap exists in achievement between Black and White students in America today (Cooper & Jordan, 2005; Fergusen, 2005; Grissmer, Flanagan, & Williamson, 1998; Lee, 2004; Lee, 2006; National Reading Panel, 2000; Roderick, 2005). And while programs such as No Child Left Behind and Head Start drape themselves in the language of moral imperatives, the stark reality is that for far too many Black children living in the United States school continues to be a place of iniquitous and staggering marginalization long after the landmark ruling of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) sought to create a level playing field: Black students are disproportionately identified for special education programming in comparison to their peers (Cooper & Jordan, 2005; US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1995), half as likely to be placed into classes with gifted programming (Hopkins, 1997), and continue to score lower on high-stakes testing than their White counterparts (Hopkins, 1997; Lee, 2006). In short, the "promise of *Brown*" has not yet been fulfilled.

It is in this milieu of continued structural failings on the part of schools that Jerome E. Morris seeks to reinvigorate the discussion of what a quality education means for Black children. What distinguishes Morris from the majority of scholars working on this problem today is that central to his argument is W.E.B. Du Bois' call to consider equity beyond desegregation and to consider what kind of role predominately Black schools might play in Black education. He notes here that typical scholarship on Black education focuses on "achieving racially balanced schools rather than also considering the extent to which Black children might receive quality schooling across school context- whether Black, predominantly White, or integrated" (p. 15). For Morris, this kind of simple

rhetoric is not enough. He seeks to highlight through extensive fieldwork in four Atlanta and St. Louis schools the tender balance between the laudable goal of desegregation championed by *Brown* and the pivotal place Black schools have in Black communities.

Broken into three parts, Morris' ethnographic research provides a window into the desegregation effort in Atlanta and St. Louis, and reframes the debate to consider not only the level of integration schools have achieved but also the quality and experience of education for Black children in those schools. His findings are frank: for Black students who leave traditionally Black schools for magnet or predominantly White schools outside the cities, their experience is one of continued challenge and marginalization. For Black students in Black schools, however, he finds children able to succeed in culturally welcoming environments which serve as an anchor for the community. Using a variety of interviews with teachers, students, parents and administration, as well as several years of participant observation, Morris creates a thick description of the cultural concerns of Black schooling and the perpetual role that race plays in education, despite neoconservative protestations to the contrary.

Part 1 of the book is an overview of the vigorous debate around desegregation and the unwillingness of Black people to limit *Brown's* promise of quality education to desegregation. This section contextualizes *Brown* within a broader conversation of Black civil rights during the 1950s and 60s, and a contentious discussion among Black leaders as to the best approach for helping Black people maintain control over their own education. Narrowing the focus, this section further provides historical background to St. Louis' and Atlanta's slow road to integration and the 'hollowing out' of urban centers by Whites following Black migrations to the cities. Here, Morris demonstrates how Black schools have become the subject of derision in contemporary discourse thanks to limited budgeting, poverty among the student body, and systematic exclusion from the levers of power.

Part 2 is a critique of desegregated education in two sites: a magnet school and integrated school in St. Louis. Both seem to suffer from what Morris deems "the invisibility of black people" (p. 69), whether it be teachers, parents, or administrators. While Black parents intentionally seek out these schools as part of St. Louis' voluntary transfer program, they quickly discovered that their input is not welcome, their children are labeled as 'slow' or 'city kids', and that the schools' integration of Black culture is largely token. Furthermore, transfer programs which allow students to attend schools outside their community often lure key students from Black schools to attend institutions miles away from home. Morris argues that this policy cripples Black inner city schools by robbing them of their best students and removing the local school as the locus of community life. Integration is exposed here as simply the first step to equitable education- the remainder of the steps have seemingly yet to be taken.

Part 3 provides an alternative picture to the typical representation of urban black schools as 'crumbling' and 'unable to compete.' Morris highlights two successful schools, Lincoln and Fairmont Elementary, to unveil the promise of all-Black schools in meeting the needs of students. Common to these two schools is an affirmation of Black culture through song, dress and curriculum, a high proportion of Black educators, and a seamless ability to integrate parents into the life of the schools. Perhaps most relevant to this is the location of the schools: children who attend Fairmont and Lincoln Elementary live within reasonable distance, thus allowing the schools to serve as a pillar of the Black community.

At its rhetorical height, Morris' book provides a generous argument for the cultural necessity of Black schools. While other scholarship is content to provide statistical measures of desegregation efforts as proof of harmonized racial tension, this book reminds the reader of the crucial place ethnography can serve by teasing out close description; the truth of a Black person's experience of schools is found in the unquantifiable nuance of a teacher's clothing, the songs at an assembly, and the ease with which a parent can enter the premise. Thus, Morris' argument is emboldened by his commitment to fluidly integrate narrative and interview transcriptions into the text in order to provide a voice from the buildings themselves.

Despite a convincing socio-cultural critique of modern American schooling, the book's argument fails to point a much-deserved finger at one of the leading culprits in continued structural inequalities for Black children: No Child Left Behind (NCLB). While Morris provides passing mention of NCLB and its unwieldy institutional structure, he does not interrogate the legislation and its continued negative consequences on Black education, thus failing to elucidate a critique of what is undoubtedly a core factor to continual marginalization (Diamond & Spillane, 2004; Hursch, 2007; Lee, 2006; McNeil, 2000; Roderick, 2005). His critique of integrated and magnet schools is mostly cultural, highlighting the dissonance for Black parents and children in their experience of White schooling, but the next piece to include should be an examination of how NCLB exacerbates this dissonance by mandating fixed programming and providing systematic escapes for schools to continually disregard or even weed out Black students (Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008; Hursch, 2007; Kozol, 2006). In modern America, NCLB is not simply one factor in determining cultural dissonance in schools but is in fact a cornerstone.

In sum, this book highlights that while structural adjustments can help eliminate some of the gross inequities that exist at an institutional level, they cannot wipe away persistent racism. Morris' call for federal and state support of Black schools is not a rejection of the noble intent of *Brown*, but is instead a pragmatic realization that despite structural remedies, Black students remain inexplicably second-class citizens in White schools (Kozol, 2006). This approach is bound

to garner controversy, notably in the wake of the Obama administration's commitment to voucher programs and open-ended choice as a virtual panacea to educational issues. If the answer were simply choice or integration, it could be expected that Black achievement and experience would have improved by now; studies have shown just the opposite (Lee, 2006). Choice is therefore a red herring. What Morris is instead calling for is a nuanced approach to understanding Black experiences of school. For him, this means a long look at the promise of *Brown* and the willingness to understand the intent of civil rights activists as still unfulfilled in desegregation. And though this type of talk may ring strange on liberal ears, who like to rest easy knowing Black students have access to predominately White schools, it remains true that all is not calm for Black children in education and that the waters of schooling still need to be troubled.

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INDEX: VOLUME 44*

Reviews

* Volume 44 Number 1 (pp. 1 - 134)
Volume 44 Number 2 (pp. 135 - 322)
Volume 44 Number 3 (pp. 323 - 496)