



## **History Teaching and Narrative Tools** **Towards Integrating English-Speaking Youth into Quebec's Social Fabric**

Paul Zanazanian

Number 7, 2016

Diversité, frontières ethnolinguistiques et éducation au Québec et au Canada

Diversity, Ethnolinguistic Boundaries, and Education in Québec and Canada

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1036417ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1036417ar>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

Institut canadien de recherche sur les minorités linguistiques / Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities

ISSN

1927-8632 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this article

Zanazanian, P. (2016). History Teaching and Narrative Tools: Towards Integrating English-Speaking Youth into Quebec's Social Fabric. *Minorités linguistiques et société / Linguistic Minorities and Society*, (7), 70–96.  
<https://doi.org/10.7202/1036417ar>

Article abstract

Based on an analysis of five English-speaking students' written narratives on Quebec's history, this article proposes a pedagogical tool for better integrating and vitalizing these students' language community in Quebec. Despite tendencies of reliance and opposition emerging from their historical consciousness, these students do not employ clearly articulated and coherent English-speaking storylines for positioning themselves as a minority group. To this end, I suggest the creation of *schematic narrative templates* of English-speaking Quebec's collective historical experiences for offering students workable springboards to develop personal narratives of belonging, while taking Francophone concerns of linguistic and cultural fragility into account.

## History Teaching and Narrative Tools: Towards Integrating English-Speaking Youth into Quebec's Social Fabric

Paul Zanazanian

McGill University

### Abstract

Based on an analysis of five English-speaking students' written narratives on Quebec's history, this article proposes a pedagogical tool for better integrating and vitalizing these students' language community in Quebec. Despite tendencies of reliance and opposition emerging from their historical consciousness, these students do not employ clearly articulated and coherent English-speaking storylines for positioning themselves as a minority group. To this end, I suggest the creation of *schematic narrative templates* of English-speaking Quebec's collective historical experiences for offering students workable springboards to develop personal narratives of belonging, while taking Francophone concerns of linguistic and cultural fragility into account.

### Résumé

À partir d'une analyse des récits sur l'histoire du Québec de cinq jeunes Anglo-québécois, cet article propose un outil pédagogique pour intégrer la minorité anglophone et renforcer sa vitalité au sein de la société québécoise. Malgré l'émergence de tendances qui révèlent une conscience historique, telles que la dépendance et l'opposition, ces jeunes n'utilisent pas un contre-récit articulé et cohérent pour se positionner en tant que minorité. Nous proposons la création de *trames historiques schématiques* des expériences collectives anglophones pour aider ces jeunes à construire leurs propres récits d'appartenance, tout en tenant compte de la fragilité linguistique et culturelle des Franco-québécois.

The Quiet Revolution of the 1960s transformed Quebec into a Francophone national welfare state with a centralized education system for both the province's French and English language communities (Dickinson & Young, 2008; Gossage & Little, 2012). In introducing a common national history program as part of a new province-wide school curriculum, the historic English-speaking minority's lived experiences were however omitted from the master narrative Quebec formalized for integrating social diversity.<sup>1</sup> Rather than create a shared vision of the past that incorporated English-speaking Quebec contributions, only the main attributes of the Francophone majority's collective memory marked the guiding reference points for the province's new identity. The change in intergroup power dynamics with English-speakers during this period undoubtedly contributed to the promotion of such a narrative, as did Francophones' growing sense of national purpose and increasing quest for political autonomy. English-speaking Quebec has since been broadly represented in homogenous, simplistic, and oppositional terms, possibly mirroring a generalized Francophone historical consciousness prevalent with memories of negative historical experiences at the hands of the Anglophone *other* (*Bulletin d'histoire politique*, 2007; Zanazanian, 2008; 2011; 2012; Commins, 2009; Jedwab & Perrone, 2012). Keen on cementing their community's linguistic and cultural position, certain Francophone interest groups seem to promote reinforcing conventional notions of the *French–English conflict* and national *survival* for renewing Quebec as a French-speaking society (*Bulletin d'histoire politique*, 2007; Piotte & Couture, 2012; Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport [MELS], 2013). Driving these interest groups are continued concerns over Francophones' status fragility within Canada and perceptions of the English language's powerful pull, of the concomitant weakening of French in Montreal, and of English-speakers' persisting privileged status. These perspectives have distanced the *Anglo-Québécois* and minimized acceptance of their needs for revitalization as a genuine linguistic minority.

In contrast to nationalist ambitions of primarily promoting a solid grasp of Quebec's overall Franco-centric storyline through the teaching of history—which (inadvertently) stigmatizes English-speakers as the antagonists to Francophones' national aspirations and fulfillment (Maclure, 2003; Létourneau, 2006; Zanazanian, 2008; 2012), the current History and Citizenship Education program's vision comes closest to making room for English-speaking Quebec's realities and experiences. In offering an open vision for integrating social diversity, including English-speaking Quebec, the program aims to instead complicate reified historical perspectives and to encourage new inclusive understandings

---

1. In following the definition of the Quebec Community Groups Network (2009), English-speaker, Anglophone, and Anglo-Québécois refer to Quebec citizens who self-identify as such, including those of either French or English descent and those who identify with both Anglophone and Francophone communities. In turn, I view French-speaking, Francophone, and Franco-Québécois as denoting Quebec citizens of French-Canadian descent. While these understandings do not fully cover the rich cultural diversity of both language communities, they nonetheless broadly mirror what is understood as Anglophone or Francophone for most people living in the province.

of the past. Equally committed to securing the vitality of French and the maintenance of Quebec nationhood and identity, it nonetheless focuses on chiefly fostering critically engaged citizens that appreciate differing viewpoints, are capable of developing well-informed and well-reasoned historical perspectives, and who identify with the state's democratic principles and civic projects (MELS, 2007).

While laudable for its openness and commitment to complicating pre-given understandings of the past, the History and Citizenship Education program's viability for integrating English-speakers is however problematic. At cause is the relevance of solely relying on Anglophone students' ability to think historically for acquiring civic mindfulness and commonality with Francophones, despite the fact that the English-speaking community is largely absent from the program's central storyline and Ministry prescribed textbooks (Commins, 2009; Mc Andrew, 2010; Jedwab & Perrone, 2012; Zanzanian & Moisan, 2012). Questions particularly arise regarding how such a disconnection between Anglophone content knowledge and historical thinking skills would permit English-speaking students to successfully grasp their communities' diverse histories and contributions, and to then employ that information for strengthening their group's vitality. Underlining these challenges is the core issue of determining how to democratically integrate an important minority whose historical presence in Quebec is largely disregarded and perceived as being problematic.

Any change to how English-speaking Quebec is presented in Quebec history programs will require mediating between a prevailing *Franco-Québécois* historical consciousness that tends to *other* Anglophones and the need to raise awareness of English-speakers' increasing minority group realities and quest for survival. To do this demands addressing how Francophones, as a historic community that has only fairly recently seen itself as a dominant majority, can stay true to and promote their own collective experiences, while also making room for differing minority viewpoints of the past. It requires speaking to how French-speakers' collective memory can be respected, while strengthening a present day community that increasingly identifies itself as English-speaking, culturally diverse, and *Québécois*, but whose linguistic presence is still viewed by certain politicians and interest groups as a key threat to Quebec's French character. If the national historical narrative were to recognize English-speaking Quebec's quest for survival and better integrate its realities and experiences in a more comprehensive manner, English-speaking young people's civic engagement and national commitment to Quebec stands to improve in the long run.

In the present article, which is a position paper, I propose a potential solution to better include English-speakers in the teaching of national history, while also respecting Francophones' shared historical memories and generalized historical sense making patterns for knowing and acting *Québécois*. Based on the findings of an exploratory study and on my ongoing reflection of the narrative workings of historical consciousness, what I put forth is a pedagogical tool to help better integrate a misunderstood historic minority and to give

its members a much-needed voice for sharing its contributions to Quebec. In revisiting an existing dataset of youth narratives on Quebec's past and closely examining English-speaking students' historical sense making processes, I discuss the lack of a clearly articulated English-speaking Quebec historical storyline—one that young English-speakers (and others) can identify with and that is simultaneously open to their own and Francophones' diverse experiences. My interpretation of the detailed workings of five particular students' historical consciousness through the lens of James Wertsch's (2000) notion of *knowing but not believing* leads to my main underlying call: that of specifically creating well-crafted and workable *schematic narrative templates* of English-speaking Quebec's collective historical experiences as a democratic means for raising awareness and opening up possibilities of change. To be operational, I argue that these narrative templates must be grounded in group experiences, while also taking Francophone concerns of linguistic and cultural fragility into account. They should be founded on historians' critical input, and provide an open space for divergent individual expressions of what once was and what could be, without essentializing the workings and use of the past for constructing and acting in social reality. To function pedagogically, they should moreover serve as a springboard for students to create personal narratives of belonging according to rationally developed arguments founded on valid and reliable historical evidence. In the following sections, I contextualize my study, present its main findings, develop my line of argument, and end with a discussion on the potential uses of such core identity narrative templates.

### **Locating English-speaking Quebec: From Identity Politics to a Search For (Narrative) Vitality**

English-speaking Quebec as an identity referent is relatively new, having slowly emerged with the restructuring of French-English power dynamics in the 1960s. As Francophones in Quebec moved away from identifying as French Canadians, asserting their dominance as a majority group within the territory of Quebec, Anglophones' standing gradually shifted as well from part of an English-speaking Canadian majority to that of a provincial linguistic minority. English-speakers began to progressively renegotiate their sense of self in relation to the more powerful Francophone community and to conceive of themselves as *Québécois* for purposes of social and political integration (Stein, 1982; Magnan, 2004; Jedwab & Maynard, 2008). It was with the language policy context of the 1970s that English emerged as a central marker for imagining and socializing the community, which provided new ways of reading Anglophone realities and securing institutional needs (Stein, 1982; Magnan, 2004; Jedwab & Maynard, 2008; Jedwab and Perrone, 2012). As the Liberal government's *Official Language Act*, or Bill 22, made French Quebec's sole official language, English-speakers' imminent minoritization and identification with their language was set in motion. Unsettled by this sudden change, English-speakers' attitudes and behaviors also shifted,

mirroring the provoked dissonance between their “‘majority group’ self-perception” and “the reality of their [newfound] ‘minority group’ status and political impotence” (Stein, 1982: 116). The election of the *Parti Québécois* on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 1976 and the eventual replacement of Bill 22 with *Charter of the French Language*, or Bill 101, on August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1977 further perturbed and disrupted, provoking the beginnings of a “profound psychological transformation” (Stein, 1982: 109, 114). One consequence of Bill 101 was its strong impact on English-speakers’ institutional vitality. By limiting access to English-language schools to rights-holders, the English educational system would quickly dwindle in size.<sup>2</sup> The community’s exodus from Quebec following Bill 101 and the economic shift to Toronto and the west would complicate matters further. English-speakers’ demographic weight was weakened, and they found that they needed to adapt to an increasingly interventionist Quebec government, growing nationalism, and the eventual specter of Quebec sovereignty. By the 1980s, English language advocacy groups and political conglomerations, such as Alliance Quebec and the Equality Party, coalesced around the idea of promoting an English-speaking Quebec identity and means to action for facing new political, economic, and institutional challenges. While some linguistic rights were gradually secured, until quite recently English-speakers’ overall heterogeneity proved to be an obstacle for properly manoeuvring group sentiments to defend community interests (Caldwell, 1994; Levine, 1990; Stevenson, 1999; Breton, 2005; Jedwab & Maynard, 2008).

To varying degrees, English-speakers today appear to be mutually engaged in a form of identity politics with Quebec Francophones, where each is held hostage to the other’s yearning for self-fulfillment, but also deeply bound to the contours of their own understandings of the potential hindrances that the Other presents to the Self. Both communities seem to be *competing* over their respective regeneration and linguistic reproduction, albeit on differing playing fields, each believing that the solution lies with the other’s willingness to make concessions (Juteau, 2000; Mc Andrew, 2010; Zanazanian, 2008; 2012). Adapting to their ever-growing minority status, Anglophones are still coping with all the decried losses and fears that their change in dominance prompted and are now tackling obstacles to their vitality: their capacity to regenerate as an autonomous and distinct Quebec community (Bourhis & Landry, 2008; Mc Andrew, 2010). Persisting demographic decline, stemming from a low birthrate, the continued out-of-province migration of youth, an aging population, increased rates of intermarriage with French-speakers, and growing bilingualism,

---

2. Bill 101 made French-language instruction the norm for all Quebec students unless they were already enrolled in English schools at the time. Today, those who are exempt from the law are Aboriginal and handicapped children, those who are only living temporarily in the province, and those who had either one of their parents attend an English primary school before the adoption of the Bill. Francophone *ayants droit* (rights-holder) crossovers are those students who have the legal right to attend English-language schools through these exemptions. Anglophone *ayants droit* are those who have the right to attend English schools but do not for mostly instrumental reasons, more so than ideological ones, of participating in Francophone Quebec society.



characterize the English-speaking community today. The continued fragmentation of the community's educational infrastructure, especially with the increased closing of schools, and the need to adequately respond to the group's growing cultural, ethnic, racial, and confessional diversity are other challenges.

According to leaders in the community (Quebec Community Groups Network [QCGN], 2009; Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages, 2011), in terms of history teaching, it is the community's capacity to foster sentiments of group identity, belonging, and valued inclusion among its youth that is of particular concern. These involve the ability to provide English-speaking students with readily available and proper means of identifying with Anglophone Quebec, to have them feel connected to their community and the province, and to help Francophone youth be more accepting and appreciative of English-speakers as part of Quebec's common *We* discourse. Teacher testimonials from English-speaking language schools reflect and give credibility to this call for change, pointing to how history students recognize their community's poor representation in the current History and Citizenship Education program and feel excluded from Quebec society (Commins, 2009; Russell, 2012). A youth consultations report highlights English-speaking students' interest in seeing more of their community's heritage and past experiences in history classrooms. While expressing readiness to overcome shared challenges with Francophones, these students seem to be keen on affirming their distinct English-speaking identity and diverse backgrounds, in other words, of claiming an identity within Quebec that is their own (QCGN, 2009).

Létourneau (2014) provides insight into how Anglophone youth make sense of the past and structure boundaries with Francophones. It appears that a vast majority of students from English-language schools possess a negative vision of Quebec's historical experiences. A predominant theme of tense French-English relations emerges in these youths' historical consciousness, with Anglophones being depicted on several occasions as victims of Francophone unease or frustration resulting from the arrival of the British in 1760. The concepts of diversity, pluralism, multiculturalism, and Canada seem to foster positive attitudes among English-speaking youth. Notions of separation, independence, assimilation, persecution, being a constrained minority, and hatred of the English lead instead to distancing Francophones, and to possibly even othering them.

Research on educational actors' rapport with the national history program complements these findings. Regarding the prior History of Quebec and Canada curriculum, they point to how the disregard of English-speaking Quebec realities and experiences generates feelings of neglect and disappointment.<sup>3</sup> A small number of history teachers from English-language schools have admitted to not fully following program directives on claims of bias

---

3. The program was in use until the 2006 curricular reform.

towards English-speakers, while others in another study said they display empathy to the *Franco-Québécois* storyline and transmit it to their students while simultaneously feeling like second class citizens (Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec [MEQ], 1998; Zanzanian, 2008). Principals from English-language schools have stated that they believe that French schools provide a lack of understanding about Anglophones and their histories, with not one principal thinking that a just vision of their community is conveyed in Francophone schools (Lemire, Mc Andrew, & Smith, 2006). More recent research on the current history program highlights specific challenges when teaching about English-speaking Quebec. Hindrances vary from political and professional facets of teachers' work environments to their lack of understanding and pedagogical implementation of both historical content matter and its disciplinary underpinnings. The insufficiency of reliable resources, curricular time, and motivation to gather information on English-speaking Quebec, as well as the seemingly biased objectives of the end-of-year ministerial exam, and the pressure of nationalist leaning interest groups to strengthen the *Franco-Québécois* master narrative all constitute other challenges (*Bulletin d'histoire politique*, 2007; Zanzanian, 2011; Zanzanian & Moisan, 2012).

Research on Francophones' historical consciousness and its impact on group identity offers added insight regarding the difficulty in making room for Anglophones in the teaching of national history. This literature indicates how a vast majority of teachers and students deeply rely on conventional perspectives of the past for structuring boundaries with English-speakers (Létourneau & Caritey, 2008; Zanzanian, 2011; Létourneau, Lévesque, & Gani, 2013). Generalized memories of often-unequal intergroup power relations lend to (inadvertently) confining Anglophones to a somewhat rigid (exclusive and largely atemporal) category of otherness, devoid of their differing realities, experiences and perspectives on the past. Given their historical consciousness and generally underdeveloped understandings of disciplinary history, Francophone teachers particularly depend on Quebec's traditional narrative and conventional ways of thinking historically when teaching history. Many visualize the national past linearly and univocally, as if it were to hold some grand truth that could be transferred objectively. Despite recognizing the importance of multiple perspectives, if teachers offer any, these viewpoints remain rather simplistic and basic instead of being complicated for all their intricacies and nuances (Demers, 2011; Zanzanian & Moisan, 2012; Boutonnet, 2013).

As per the wider literature, such teacher reliance on pre-given means of historical sense making, along with the official state histories they are responsible for transmitting, can impact students' engagement patterns with the past, and, as an extension, their negotiations of national identity, belonging, and agency (Clark, 2011; Carretero, Asensio, & Rodriguez-Moneo, 2012; Zanzanian & Moisan, 2012). As formal school settings constitute one important source of influence on students' historical consciousness—with family, the media, historical sites, and even every-day pop culture and socio-economic interpersonal encounters



constituting others (Barton, 2001a, 2001b; Barton & Levstik, 1998; Sears, 2011)—teachers hold the potential of becoming students’ most decisive or authoritative reference on history, confirming already-possessed knowledge gained from elsewhere, and at times even actually reinforcing official representations of the national past and reaffirming wider public understandings of such officialized narratives (Barton, 2001a; Létourneau & Moisan, 2004). While not necessarily problematic for members of a given society’s dominant group, the resulting impact can particularly be challenging for the social integration of students from (historic) minority communities. As cultural context, social class, ethnicity, and racialized identities inform both understandings of history and ideas about politics and civic engagement, outright resistance to pre-given and officialized perspectives risk surfacing (Seixas, 1993; Epstein, 1998, 2000; Yeager, Foster, & Greer, 2002; Barton, 2001a, 2001b; Barton & Levstik, 1998; Barton & McCully, 2004; Sears, 2011; Peck, 2010, 2011; Flanagan, 2013). Youth from marginalized communities, whose historical understandings do not always necessarily resonate with what they learn in schools, may instead rely on outside sources; ones that they can better grasp and easily use for navigating through their lives (Seixas, 1993; Epstein, 1998, 2000; Yeager et al., 2002; Barton, 2001a, 2001b; Barton & Levstik, 1998; Peck, 2010, 2011).

Regarding English-speaking Quebec, findings from a recent, vast nation-wide study on Canadians’ daily engagements with the past suggests that such empirical realities are possibly alive in group members’ overall consciousness, including their youth. As family exchanges and group affiliation constitute important entry points for general interactions with the past, history appears to be central for group self-identification, with members of such self-conscious communities as English-speaking Quebec possessing shared historical memories that inform their individual worldviews (Conrad et al., 2013). Stemming from heightened politics over language and identity, Anglophones’ perceived insecurities in Quebec lead them to engage with history for preserving their heritage and for vitalizing their collective identity (Friesen, Muise, & Northrup, 2009; Létourneau & Northrup, 2011).

A starting point for encouraging English-speakers’ civic engagement and community vitality can be found in the findings of an empirical study that touch upon English-speaking Quebec’s historical memory and that offer the actual beginning contours of an historical identity (Bougie, Osborne, de la Sablonnière, & Taylor, 2011). Holding the potential to cement a sense of group cohesion, key historical turning points, which seem essential to grasping English-speaking Quebec, emerge. These historical turning points comprise the beginnings of Quebec/Canada in the New World, the Conquest, the Maurice Duplessis era, and the Quiet Revolution. Forming one of the central negative events of English-speaking Quebec’s past, it is however the rise of nationalism during the Quiet Revolution that appears to be the most important episode for describing their community’s history. During this

period, English-speakers were perceived to be a disadvantaged population in comparison to Francophones, and as moreover forming a threatened community.

## The Exploratory Study

Keen on comprehending the workings of English-speaking youths' historical consciousness and their degree of attachment to Quebec, I revisited a portion of a vast dataset of anonymous narratives authored by young Quebecers on the history of the province from its earliest days until current times (Létourneau & Moisan, 2004).<sup>4</sup> Historian Jocelyn Létourneau, who studied students' knowledge of Quebec's historical experiences, collected these texts over the last several years. Curious about the themes and forms of these youths' historical consciousness, Létourneau analyzed the central structuring elements of the content of the narratives that students have used for taking the past into account. My focus in the present study is on how English-speaking students from this dataset specifically use their written histories to negotiate their sense of knowing and acting *Québécois*. I particularly examine the extent to which these youth accept the national historical narrative that is offered to them, and the impact that transmitting such a national identity framework, with its tendency to *other* and simplify their language community, has on shaping their attitudes towards the province's Francophone majority.

Historical consciousness in this study refers to an individual's capacity to mobilize notions of the past—both its narrative configurations and the interpretive filters used to make sense of the past—for making necessary moral decisions to orient oneself in a social relationship (Rüsen, 2005; Zanazanian, 2012). When faced with ethical, political, or practical issues of an historical nature, individuals consult past ideas, events, and experiences for giving meaning to *what once was* and for establishing *what could have been, should, and shall be*. Influenced by the specific patterns of consciousness and thought that given cultures set and refine as well as transmit through different processes of socialization, historical sense making involves negotiating between already-available forms of knowing and doing that group trendsetters (intellectuals, politicians, interest groups, grassroots movements, etc.) provide and are keen on controlling and dispensing according to their needs (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; den Heyer, 2003; den Heyer & Fidyk, 2007; Rapport & Overing, 2007). In conceiving the materialization of historical consciousness as narrative competency, historical sense making particularly comprises narrative acts of meaning-construction for human understanding and action (Wertsch, 2000; 2004; Rüsen, 2005; Straub, 2005). As such, historical consciousness constitutes an entryway into how individuals perceive, explain,

---

4. For a detailed explanation of the study's objectives, methodology, processes of coding, analysis and main results, please refer to: Zanazanian, Paul (2015).

and give meaning to (past) events and life experiences, as well as into how they understand their situatedness, belonging, and intentionality for living their lives.

To get at respondents' historical consciousness, I initially focused on a group of twenty-five English-speaking students. These participants had either offered whole histories that contained a clearly identifiable thread—complete with a beginning, middle, and end, but nonetheless starting and ending with different time periods—or opinion pieces with clearly developed arguments defending a particular perspective.<sup>5</sup> I, however, narrowed in on five particular students whose narratives provided definite insight into their reasoning processes. As opposed to their peers who simply transmitted historical content matter, these five distinctly expressed overt attitudes towards Francophones, clearly engaged with Quebec's national history classroom, or offered both types of information. By closely examining their texts, I succeeded in seeing how they interact with the history they know and write about and how they use it to situate themselves and their attitudes towards the *Franco-Québécois* and the history that is taught to them.

The dataset that I consulted was gathered during the 2004–2005 and the 2006–2007 school years. I centered on the narratives of Secondary Five students because their texts provided rich historical content and were politicized regarding their understandings of intergroup relations between Francophones and Anglophones. Narratives were collected from students studying French or history and who had taken the mandatory national history class in the previous year of their studies in Secondary Four. It is important to keep in mind that this dataset was amassed when the former History of Quebec and Canada course was still in use. The general workings of young Quebec students' historical consciousness however have not changed with the new program. Létourneau (2014) has found that its competency-based approach to history teaching has had a very negligible impact on young Quebecers' historical representations of the past.

---

5. I originally looked at a larger sample of seventy-seven texts that came in several different formats: short or long narratives, point form answers, drawings, timelines or three-four sentences. For purposes of consistency, rigor, and feasibility, I only focused on full histories and opinion pieces, hence bringing the number of texts I examined down to twenty-five. In asking students to write the history of Quebec, one could assume that the vast majority of the study's English-speaking participants answered what was asked of them. But in comparing their responses to their Francophone peers, which formed a larger portion of Létourneau's overall dataset—of which I only looked at ninety-eight closely—, English-speakers' feedback was overwhelmingly sparse. Given the distinctiveness of this difference, one could clearly argue that the study's English-speaking participants were less motivated than Francophone ones in writing their histories, and thus, as an extension, are possibly less engaged with Quebec's past (or at least the history that they might have thought they were required to engage with, especially since data collection was conducted in formal school settings where larger societal language and identity politics are clearly felt). In turn, this would moreover suggest a possible differentiation and distancing from Quebec's history. Possibly the exercise was seen as one of writing the story of the Other's past. As such, those who were motivated did their best to answer what was required of them, while others did what they could to pass the time. It would be interesting to analyze the drawings that emerge from Létourneau's dataset. Based on the ones I looked at, I would argue that there is some resistance to the national history that is taught to these students. Such recurring themes as the Quebec fast food delicacy known as poutine, Pepsi cans, and mullets (haircuts from the eighties) emerge from students' drawings as symbols of Quebec or for depicting the Franco-Québécois.

Given the heightened awareness of language and identity politics in the province, the generalized absence of knowledge about English-speaking Quebec's various historical contributions, realities and experiences in the public sphere, and the persistence of the *French–English conflict* and *survival* templates in many Francophones' historical consciousness, such a finding should not come as a surprise. Despite the introduction of the History and Citizenship Education program in 2006, my study's findings are relevant to present day workings of English-speaking students' historical consciousness. The master narrative transmitted in prior programs and in the current one is the same, but is only more implicit in the latter. With the recent return of nationalist politics in Quebec, the program has been re-written with a stronger emphasis on the dominant national storyline, and with an added objective of intertwining the political and social history of the majority group together.<sup>6</sup> Students may again be required to memorize main *Franco-Québécois* identity markers for the June exam at the end of Secondary Four, which they will have to pass in order to graduate high school (MELS, 2013). Chances are that simplified and limited representations of Anglophones will also remain, but may risk becoming even more explicit. English-speakers' exclusion from the master narrative, whether ten years ago or today, reflect similar lived experiences for English-speaking youth whose linguistic and educational rights are continuously declining. English-speaking students today interact with the same core elements of pre-given narratives that their older peers did and that their younger ones in all probability will continue to do so in the future.

On a final note, the following findings are clearly exploratory and not fully illustrative of the larger English-speaking student population. In employing a qualitative and interpretive approach to data analysis, I seek to develop a deep understanding of the workings of historical consciousness. While strong statements cannot be made, these results can nonetheless assist in probing, questioning, and problematizing our present knowledge of English-speaking youth in Quebec and their experience of the national history program's master narrative. Additional research would be needed to investigate whether these exploratory findings occur among a larger population sample of participants.

## Relevant Findings from the Exploratory Study

The main findings of my exploratory study suggest that the twenty-five English-speaking respondents are familiar with the central features of Quebec's master narrative, or at least the core aspects of its underlying conception of intergroup relations between Francophones

---

6. The resurgence of nationalist politics following the *Parti Québécois*' (PQ) election in 2012 has successfully renewed the calls for strengthening the national history program's Franco-centric storyline that is to be transmitted to Quebec students, including English-speaking youth whose educational sector continues to share in the province's common curriculum. Despite the *Parti Québécois*' recent loss of power to the Liberals, the changes to the secondary history program it initiated have not been overturned and have been piloted in a trial run in the fall of 2015.

and Anglophones. These students most likely gained this information from their Secondary Four national history class and from their everyday life experiences in Quebec. In providing similar accounts, they tend to generally understand the English/British as *the* group that had been (and still is) on top and that acted according to its dominant position in the past. The French/*Québécois* are chiefly portrayed as *victims* who also act according to their sociological standing, albeit a subordinate one. The French/*Québécois* are discussed as (always) losing out to the English/British, seeking to get rights, or struggling to maintain them along with their language and their culture. Relations between the two communities are mostly depicted as having been antagonistic. The general tone of these English-speaking respondents' narratives is quite similar to those written by their French-speaking counterparts. While Létourneau has already portrayed French-speakers' historical consciousness as tending to overwhelmingly encapsulate a "victimized", "melancholic", "miserable", and "nostalgic" attitude as well as to underscore a quest for group "survival", questions were left unanswered regarding the historical consciousness of English-speaking students (Létourneau & Moisan, 2004; Létourneau, 2006). As these students also view the *Franco-Québécois* as the historical victims of an oppressed past, I was curious to grasp the degree to which they too had interiorized a corollary historical identity that basically portrays Anglophones, their own group, in a negative light.

In examining the study's five students who offer direct insight into their underlying thought processes, the potential ways in which English-speakers would position themselves in terms of the *othering* of their community become evident, ranging between acceptance and resistance. Some would adhere to the dominant narrative within certain limits, whereas others would outright resist it. While my five students' understanding of intergroup dynamics is similar to that of the larger English-speaking sample, their reasoning processes (as caught in their overt attitudes or expressed opinions) actually differ in their comments regarding the relevance of history for knowing and acting as members of Quebec society. Two main and essentially contrasting tendencies of historical consciousness seem to emerge in their texts. The first comprises an inclination to *perpetuate* the structuring elements of Quebec's master narrative through a reliance on its main markers for making sense of the past. The second tendency stands in *opposition* and contradicts this narrative, expressing a yearning for fuller understandings of what once was. Two sub-tendencies surface in this opposition. Whereas one variant reflects a call to overcome *important narrative gaps* in the national historical storyline, the other instead chides Francophones for their narrative's *shortsightedness and negative impact* on themselves and on others.

Charlie illustrates the first tendency of historical consciousness, that of *perpetuation through reliance*. He seemingly adheres to the *Franco-Québécois* collective narrative for comprehending the province's history and for thinking about its significance for being *Québécois*. He specifically states that he appreciates the *Franco-Québécois* collective narrative's



relevance because it discusses Canada's story, defining who Canadians are. Finding Quebec history boring, he explicitly states that it "is important because it is where 'Canada' (New France at the time) began to adopt some of its traditions and regular activities, social and economic." He then adds, "Quebec history is all about the birth of a nation." Through possessing a positive outlook on the history he studied and adopting the central elements of Francophones' collective memory (i.e. portrayal of intergroup power relations), he can be seen as imagining Quebec's history as part of his own Canadian narrative.

Calling to overcome important gaps in Quebec's master narrative, Jennifer and Muriel diverge from Charlie in seeking a variety of differing perspectives for a more complete understanding of the province's history. The national historical narrative is seen as being slanted and deficient in its complexity and clarity for explaining the past. Jennifer reflects this when she states:

I think there should have been more detail in the Canadian history program that would have accurately emphasized the importance and struggles of the people at that time and explained more their situations (e.g. we were never taught about the Battle of Isle-aux-Noix (which happened a week or so after the Plains of Abraham) and only knew Montreal surrendered in 1760 officially).

To make amends for historical injustices, Jennifer further calls for a better portrayal of First Nations communities in popular historical narratives, thereby potentially representing a significant way for overcoming one of the master narrative's many gaps, while also redressing the abuses of the past:

Another important thing for me was learning about the Natives, those here before the Europeans, and how they lived. It grieves me that our ancestors brought them such pain and suffering through our tools and vices, cheating and deceiving to gain wealth, ending with their loss of land, religion and way of life. I think Natives should be better portrayed in history (instead of people only out for scalps).

Muriel expresses a similar attitude (albeit more indirectly) as Jennifer's at the end of her text where she describes Quebec history and the history offered in schools as being ethnoculturally one-sided: "It's based on a biased French point of view." Despite sharing main features of Quebec's master narrative, Muriel seems to condemn its unjustness because of its Franco-centric direction and its neglect in offering equal space to diverging *Québécois* perspectives, including those of English-speakers.

Reactionary in tone, Toby and Adam offer a more structured argument than Jennifer and Muriel do. Their differing call speaks to acknowledging and improving Quebec's historical narrative's shortsightedness. They boldly discredit and condemn Quebec's master storyline for its narrow and exclusionary view and its strong hold over Francophones. Finding it highly emotional and thus limiting for fully conceiving Quebec's past, they consequently

believe that Quebec's historical narrative amplifies Francophones' unhappiness and anger for having *lost* to the English, which in turn lends to shunning English-speakers and First Nations. Quebec's emotional historical storyline is deemed to be confining for it encourages closed-mindedness among Francophones.

Toby expresses how the French are still quite perturbed with the occurrences of the past. He articulates that the French remain angry with the English for having triumphed and having gained control of their land. He also insists on how the French are resentful or unappreciative as a result of their past interactions with the English. He further ascribes guilt to the French, underscoring how the French too have done some conquering. In describing how the French treated First Nations communities, he seems to suggest that Francophones should come to terms with what the English had done to them and to move forward:

The French came to Quebec and established colonies and killed the Indians. The English came here and conquered Quebec. The French were extremely angry. We gave them Quebec and took the rest of Canada and they are still angry. The French always say '*Je me souviens*' [I remember] and that is because they will always be angry that the English won (Author's translation).

Toby's take on both the Franco-Québécois and Quebec's motto, *Je me souviens* [*I remember*], betrays some entailments of his comprehension of how history is employed in the present. He seems to take issue with the motto for reminding the French/Québécois to thoughtlessly recollect what happened to them in the past—whatever that past may signify, but for ultimately remembering that they had lost and that they suffered hardships at the hands of the English. He suggests that such an emotive use of Quebec's historical memory limits Francophones to concentrate on their own concerns, while forgetting their own misdeeds of the past. He thus puts forth that this use of history or memory can result from basic dissatisfaction with how things evolved, and can thereby be restrictive to the way that a people act in the present.

In viewing the English as conquerors of a land where the French were already settled, Adam's storyline also resembles one where the French are angry for having had their territory taken away, and who eventually revolt against British rule because of their unhappiness. Adam recounts the experiences of First Nations, how their lives were turned upside down, how the French easily took over and killed Indigenous people, and how the English came and conquered the land. He ends by reasoning with the *Franco-Québécois*:

So today the *Québécois* are still angry with all the other Canadians for having stolen their land. But, the [American] Indians also lost all their land. The *Québécois* are thieves just like the English, so it's time to stop complaining. One must return to being '*la belle province*' [the beautiful province] and to finally forget the English.

In thinking about what he perceives to be distinctly Francophone anger, and by seeming to complain that this Francophone anger is groundless and unbecoming, Adam is suggesting that the *Québécois* should relinquish their version of the remembered past. Singling out both groups, Adam highlights how both the English and French took territory from Indigenous nations, and then asks the French to forget what the English did to them. He seems to be suggesting that the two former imperial powers are at fault. If the English are believed to have wrongly seized land from the French, then so too should the French for having stolen territory from the First Nations. Like Toby, Adam believes that the French concentrate on their victimhood and accuse the English for the suffering of the French, which leads them to forget their own actions towards the First Nations. He subsequently seems to be signaling that Francophones' ethno-centric conceptions of history have obscured them to the realities and experiences of others who also have a right to the land they live on.

### Reading the Relevant Findings: *Knowing But Not Believing*

As a reading lens to interpret these findings, the work of James Wertsch (2000) offers important insight, especially regarding the manner in which students—faced with dominant historical narratives and equipped with possible fragments of alternative storylines—negotiate their personal stance vis-à-vis what is transmitted to them in schools. Of interest is his notion of *knowing but not believing* that helps in outlining a general pattern by which individuals from minority or marginalized groups may engage with the official historical narrative(s) of their respective societies. They may sometimes know such official texts for imagining the nation, and may be able to read them in their intended ways, but may not ultimately believe them, looking instead toward unofficial versions of the past for knowing and acting in time—even if these do not form ready-to-mobilize, or well-configured narrative wholes.

Three notions carefully underlie the manner in which individuals, including students, negotiate their personal rapport with a given society's collective story. These notions include *mastery*, *appropriation*, and *resistance*. Regarding the transmission of national historical narratives, *mastery* refers to an engagement with the past, whereby one knows (and is able to reproduce and think in terms of) the official historical storyline of the nation, but does not appropriate it or does not have any affective identification with it. *Appropriation* on the other hand directly relates to having an emotional attachment to the nation's storyline or to a process where one *makes* the dominant narrative *one's own*. Students clearly identify with the national historical narrative and may incorporate its main markers for knowing and acting in time or for *imagining* the nation. Finally, *resistance* points to one's distancing and rejecting of the main elements of the dominant narrative. An individual may thus have mastered a given historical narrative, may be able to think the nation in such terms, but

may not make, feel, or appropriate it as his or her own. Wertsch carefully clarifies that these notions should not be seen as “simple” and “all-or-nothing affairs,” especially since such texts as these official historical storylines can be used “in particular contexts in a variety of flexible ways” (Wertsch, 2000: 44-45).<sup>7</sup>

In following Wertsch’s logic, the five respondents in my study seem to have more or less mastered Quebec’s collective narrative, or at least some of its central aspects, and thus possess the potential to *think* the Quebec nation in Francophone terms. At the same time, they do not seem to have appropriated and made the history their own. They have not incorporated this history as their individual means for establishing a sense of their own national selves. Instead, they know how to use these ideas and can duplicate and employ them for reasoning “about the causes of events or the motives behind a group’s actions” (Wertsch, 2000: 41). Although it is less clear whether Charlie has fully appropriated Quebec’s grand historical narrative, it does seem that he accepts it as part of the overall Canadian historical narrative. The French *Québécois* collective story is thus part of the larger Canadian one, thereby constituting part of his identity, and thus possibly reflecting his keenness to more or less appropriate it. The remaining four respondents seem instead to “resist” Quebec’s historical narrative, and to distance themselves from the main identity markers of the Francophone majority. While they differentiate themselves from the latter and even *other* the French, they nonetheless have to take these markers into account and negotiate their own personal rapport with them for establishing their sense of identity and cultural agency in Quebec. This negotiation reflects part of their own reality as members of Quebec society. They experience these central ideas *not* as their own, but as those of the *other*, reminding them of their difference and their sense of exclusion from the latter.

Taken together, one important point sticks out and requires special attention. Bringing in Jörn Rüsen’s (2005) conceptualization of his *Critical* type of historical consciousness as

---

7. In contrast to the North American context where official and vernacular histories intermingle regularly and where students may come to partially master multiple accounts of the past, Wertsch’s (2000) three notions emerge from his research in Soviet Estonia, where a clear, dichotomized demarcation between official Soviet and unofficial underground Estonian accounts of the national past existed and which emerged in the articulation of his participants’ national historical memories. Despite this distinction, I believe Wertsch’s three notions are still useful for reading the workings of English-speaking students’ historical consciousness in Quebec, where the ambiguity of Anglophones’ group status and the fragility of Francophones as a dominant majority still point to a heightened maintenance of group boundaries and the potential for tense intergroup relations resulting from ongoing language and identity politics. Although history teachers are permitted to bring English-speakers’ experiences into their teaching if they so decide to, which would not necessarily have been the case regarding minority group narratives in Soviet Estonia, Anglophone youth are still faced with having to negotiate their place and role in society as members of a historical community that continues to be stigmatized by an on-going nationalist discourse that is very present in the national history program and in larger Quebec society (Maclure, 2003; Létourneau, 2006; Mc Andrew, 2010; Zanazanian, 2008, 2012). Wertsch’s three notions should thus simply be seen as comprising interpretive filters for reading data that may otherwise be very complex and hard to access, the analysis of which need to nonetheless be examined with care in order to not reinforce stereotypes or to misinform readers concerned with Anglo-Quebec vitality and the teaching of national history.

one means of interacting with the past for knowing and acting in time clarifies matters here. The *Critical* inclination to historical sense making is one where individuals tend to question and transgress the viability of dominant historical narratives for making sense of reality as handed down through collective memory. In instances of exhibiting such a tendency, individuals tend to emphasize the problematic aspects of significations of the past for the present and to justify their non-pertinence. Of importance and which speaks to Wertsch's notion of *knowing but not believing*, they bring in elements of a counter narrative as a way of counteracting the master storyline that is presented to them (Rüsen, 2005). Interestingly in my study, when reciting the history of Quebec, such an effect among these students does not emerge. It is not clear if they, in *resisting* or remaining *critical*, possess a counter narrative that provides a 'coherently' alternative perspective on the past than that already offered to them, or whether it replaces their main understanding of the nation with a storyline they fully identify with. In my analysis, it is evident that these students do not possess and mobilize their (group's) interpretations of English-speaking Quebec's own historical adventure as a clear means for countering the master narrative that is given to them (Wertsch, 2000; Rüsen, 2005). Despite their criticizing and problematizing the national storyline, no such elements seem to emerge for discrediting and replacing the simplified and oppositional presentations of their group's realities and experiences. No explicit narrative of the historical experiences of English-speaking Quebec surfaces in the students' accounts.

Consequently, this raises some important questions in terms of historical sense making and integrating English-speaking youth into society as members of a historic minority community and of strengthening their group's vitality. Do the five students in my study possess an understanding of the history of English-speaking Quebec? If so, does it comprise a coherently *whole* historical narrative of their own, and one that is readily available? Furthermore, do they share a common historical vision of their past with other English-speaking Quebecers? If not, could it be that they feel "Quebec" and "Anglophone" don't go together, and instead think in terms of Canada? Or is it because they really lack a sense of their own language group's diverse social realities and historical experiences? Raising and answering such questions is timely. It is possible to reflect on some of these emerging ideas and to examine them further, while also theorizing about ways of developing pedagogical strategies for helping overcome Anglophone challenges to social integration.

## Towards English-speaking Quebec Schematic Narrative Templates

The exploratory interpretations of my findings hold particular consequences for reflecting on the workings of English-speaking youths' historical consciousness and the processes involved in fostering both their civic engagement and the vitalization of their language community. Irrespective of their varying degrees of mastery, appropriation, or resistance,



it is clear that the five students in my study possess an attachment to Quebec, and seek to feel like they belong and that they are wanted to belong. More significantly, whether they rely on the main markers of Quebec's master narrative or criticize this history for a lack of resonance with their own realities and experiences, none of them explicitly refer to an historical narrative of their English-speaking community's own Quebec past as a means for either discrediting what is offered to them in school and elsewhere or for even simply reciting the history of the nation as they deem fit. Consequently, this raises questions as to whether the absence of such community storylines actually impedes these students' commitment to the state and their inclusive integration into Quebec society as members of an important historic minority. In following all available empirical and community based information, coupled with the urgency of vitalizing English-speaking Quebec history, the same issues could be raised regarding the wider English-speaking student population. One could wonder whether the lack of such usable histories hinders them from developing the much-needed self-confidence for contributing to the province's general good as a group. Further research would help elaborate this line of argument and better assess what Anglophone youth know or don't know about their language community's social realities and historical experiences, where they stand vis-à-vis Quebec's French-speaking majority, and the impact of their historical consciousness on the concrete processes of their civic engagement (or lack of). Given how certain cognitive frames, or prior knowledge, for assessing and acting in reality are usually gained at a very young age, access to historical knowledge that English-speaking children already possess would also prove quite useful in this regard (Gardner, 2005; Sears, 2011).

While consolidating and building on this information would help to better pinpoint the narrative needs of English-speaking Quebec, the beginning foundation blocks for creating usable histories can nonetheless be set. To be relevant to students' lives for fostering group coherency and functionality, the availability of such structured English-speaking Quebec narratives would have to ideally configure both the content and epistemological knowledge underlying the community's diverse historical adventures and contributions to the province. It would have to be ones that Anglophone youth could readily draw upon and mobilize for cultivating a sense of common belonging to Quebec as a welcomed and embraced community, and ones that their French-speaking counterparts could come to recognize and employ for accepting English-speakers as important and respected Quebec citizens, and not as a threat to their group's security and regeneration (Maclure, 2003; Létourneau & Moisan, 2004; Zanzanian, 2012; Létourneau, 2014).

In going beyond the foreseeable limits of an overall or general Anglo-Quebec history, a process whereby such above-mentioned personal mediations are achieved without having one historical vision imposed over another is particularly needed. I thus put forth the idea of helping English-speakers create schematic narrative templates of Anglo-Quebec's diverse experiences for offering their youth clearly articulated storylines for constructing their own

narratives of inclusion. These templates would serve to complement those of the Francophone majority that are already in place, including the ones of *struggling for rights* or a *quest for survival*. Since content knowledge may vary among group members' historical understandings, such basic narrative outlines would ease their negotiations of knowing, feeling, and acting *Québécois* as a group in time. Following Wertsch (2004), schematic templates refer to culturally available skeleton plots of generalizable storylines that provide core narrative frameworks for underlying many instances of a broad range of community narratives that group members may recite and relate to. On this view, I believe that schematic narrative templates hold the potential of informing group members' sense of community, national identity and social posture in their wider public role as citizens. In offering workable plotlines that resonate with group members' experiences (and those of the *Franco-Québécois* by extension), English-speakers would be better prepared to give meaning to the past for guiding their sense of identity and agency. Ideally, these templates would come to populate group members' cultural toolkits for giving meaning to social reality and hence may inform the workings of their historical consciousness. Although prior knowledge that is gained through various processes of group socialization is sometimes deeply ingrained or even relegated to the domain of the emotional, and not the rational, these templates would serve to offer differing perspectives regarding the past, and to some extent promote cognitive dissonance between them and pre-given stereotypes or scripts that Quebec youth have interiorized or have come to take for granted for making sense of the province's history (Gardner, 2005; Sears, 2011).

In following this logic, Wertsch's description of schematic narrative templates as being unconscious, unreflective, and non-analytical is countered by my aim for them to be as transparent and democratic as possible (Wertsch, 2000; 2004). This call for transparency and democracy would require offering English-speaking Quebec the proper means for getting involved in building these templates in a collective and responsible manner, one that does not lend to essentializing visions of the Self, Other, and relations between the two. Ideally, such an initiation would be spearheaded by a partnership between English-speaking community organizations, such as the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN), and Quebec's *Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS)*. These templates would be introduced at a very young age to students in English-language schools. And as students grow older they would gradually be presented with ways of problematizing the templates to learn about their practical, ethical, and political workings, and by extension to also be taught about the narrative functions of master narratives, group identity, and issues of community vitality.

In making sure that students' inquisitive minds are activated in the process, group members should conceptualize, design, and employ these building block templates as critically

as possible.<sup>8</sup> By reaching out to the public and hearing them speak through community based empirical research, the development of these templates would necessarily be grounded in group members' lived or believed experiences, while also guaranteed to be kept in check by professional historians' careful watch, if they were to also be involved in the process. Overall, the creation of such templates would involve a special mandated working group bringing representative members of the community, individuals from Quebec's ministry of education, academic historians, history educationalists, and educational psychologists together. The templates would be planned carefully and introduced to students progressively. The only matter at hand for developing such templates is whether a political will to create them exists, which raises questions regarding the extent to which English-speaking interest groups have the power to properly lobby the government to this end and whether the Quebec government is truly keen or motivated to help vitalize the province's English-speaking communities.

In building on these core identity templates, Anglophones—in all of their many shapes—would be empowered to develop a variety of historical narratives for configuring their own particular understandings of settings, characters, and sequences of events of the past for knowing and acting as members of Quebec society. The end result would be the prevalence of already-available narrative template-like ideas for using the past, ones that could be employed to render individuals conscientiously answerable to their decisions for making public life decisions through exercising their historical imagination in a critical manner.

In terms of English-speaking youth, these Anglophone Quebec templates or narrative scripts would work by complementing the dimensions of historical thinking that students are (or should) already (be) taught in schools. Similar to the activation of group members' inquisitive minds, in learning about the practical, political, and cultural workings of narrative, their relationship to historical consciousness, and their particular relevance for making sense of and acting in reality (as moral and historical actors inserted in the flow of time), students can come to autonomously develop their own histories of Quebec's past in well-informed and well-reasoned ways. These democratically developed English-speaking Quebec templates would serve as prompts for configuring personal narratives of national belonging.

---

8. An open-ended use of English-speaking Quebec templates can be developed through exercising one's historical imagination, open attitudes to differing realities and experiences of the past, and consequent quests for fuller comprehensions of what once was. In possessing inquisitive minds, individuals can undo and move beyond imposed visions of past intergroup relations and of who the Self and Other are. By developing a reflex to question the solidity of simplified group histories, the power processes involved in the construction of group identity could be grasped and the value of multiple perspectives for considering alternative possibilities when signifying and narrating the past could be appreciated. Equipped with this information, individuals would be aware of the dangers of thoughtlessly accepting pre-given narratives at face value. By prodding and problematizing, they might instead reinvigorate these storylines according to changing realities and the needs of the day. It is in this process that they may come to further realize that pre-given narratives are sometimes necessary for community survival, especially for historic minorities. The key would be for informed group members to see the benefits and drawbacks of developing community narratives and to not feel guilty in how they develop their standpoint or in how they view the relevance of history for making sense of and acting in reality, be it different from their peers or not.

To avoid closed-mindedness, students' histories would however need to be carefully crafted with their teachers' guidance who, in ideally following their good will, would help students develop their narratives according to rationally developed arguments that are based on sufficient historical evidence and that are assessed for their reliability and validity following the various dimensions of historical thinking.

## Conclusion

In this article, I have tried to demonstrate one important way for democratically encouraging openness to Anglo-*Québécois* realities and experiences in the teaching of national history. In respecting Francophones' right to have their collective experiences nourish the state's master narrative, I am calling for the creation of English-speaking Quebec schematic narrative templates that complement the province's national storyline, that offer English-speakers structural patterned ways of knowing and acting *Québécois*, and that provide Anglophone youth with a pedagogical means of developing well-reasoned and evidence-based personal narratives of inclusion. These templates would provide much needed tools for raising awareness of English-speakers' contributions to Quebec and for filling a void in students' content knowledge regarding the history of their linguistic community.

The availability of such skeletal storylines for students holds important implications regarding the vibrancy of English-speaking Quebec. In developing a firm understanding of their communities' collective and also historically diverse identities, these templates would be beneficial for practically all facets of English-speaking Quebec vitality from strengthening group members' and youths' sense of tradition, continuity, commonality, and inclusion to offering coherence to its growing diversity and providing a needed impetus for fostering group consciousness and higher degrees of self-confidence for making effective change. They would moreover serve to enrich their knowledge of the impact of historical consciousness and means of narrative knowing on their daily lives in Quebec. The templates would provide a sense of social prestige or positive feelings about English-speakers' historical experiences and contributions, thus fortifying understandings of their social identity, *raison d'être*, and destiny as members of Quebec society (Bourhis & Landry, 2008; Zanzanian, 2010). For these templates to be functional, their initial workings should however be introduced to students at a very young age through storybooks and film so that the foundations for their appropriation can be set. With time more explicit uses of these templates' workings and underlying epistemologies should be exposed to students (in their history classrooms) so that they are able to navigate, problematize, reject, adapt them on their own, according to their needs, if so deemed necessary.

With knowledge of (a diverse) self, Anglophone Quebec would be better placed for introducing important changes to the functioning of their communities and for developing

informed means of dialogue with their majority group counterparts. The creation of such collective templates would promote awareness of English-speakers' diverse historical experiences and thus would help dispel negative historical stereotypes that emerge from the province's traditional master narrative. In this process, Francophones may even acknowledge English-speakers' shared historical experiences as those of a historic Quebec community in its own right, and to appreciate their history from their own perspectives (especially if the production of these templates were to take Francophone fears of linguistic and cultural fragility into account). Of great significance, these templates would work well under any government in Quebec, even under ones that call for a strong return to transmitting a Francophone collective identity narrative as a means of "integrating" diversity (in effect an assimilationist stance), but that unwittingly excludes Quebec's historic and cultural communities from the process.

In terms of teaching history, these templates pertain to their significance in enabling teachers to shape English-speaking youths' sense of identity, belonging, and accepted inclusion in the province. They would help overcome the important disparity between content knowledge and historical thinking skills that are needed for encouraging civic mindfulness and commonality in the current program. Much-needed perspectives of minority group experiences that are presently lacking in classrooms would be provided and co-created with students. If developed collectively, the basis of a counter-narrative(s) for complementing Quebec's master storyline and for permitting English-speaking youth (and adults) to think of themselves and the past differently, while presenting Francophones' own historical realities and experiences, would moreover be formed. In a more practical vein, these experiential templates would offer culturally diverse English-speaking youth guiding frameworks for developing their own stories of integration, which in and of themselves would also provide great pedagogical tools for teaching students about the narrative workings of history and their implications for civic engagement and community vitality.

## References

- BARTON, Keith C. (2001a). "A sociocultural perspective on children's understanding of historical change: Comparative findings from Northern Ireland and the United States." *American Educational Research Journal*, vol. 38, no. 4, p. 881–914.
- BARTON, Keith C. (2001b). "'You'd be wanting to know about the past': Social contexts of children's historical understanding in Northern Ireland and the USA." *Comparative Education*, vol. 37, no. 1, p. 89–106.
- BARTON, Keith C., and Alan W. McCULLY (2004). "History, identity, and the school curriculum in Northern Ireland: An empirical study of secondary students' ideas and perspectives." *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, vol. 36, no. 6, p. 1–32.



- BARTON, Keith C., and Linda S. LEVSTIK (1998). "It wasn't a good part of history': National identity and students' explanations of historical significance." *Teachers College Record*, vol. 99, no. 3, p. 478–513.
- BERGER, Peter L., and Thomas LUCKMANN (1967). *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. New York, Anchor Books.
- BOUGIE, Evelyne, Esther USBORNE, ROXANE DE LA SABLONNIÈRE and Donald M. TAYLOR (2011). "The cultural narratives of Francophone and Anglophone quebecers: Using a historical perspective entitativity and collective esteem." *British Journal of Social Psychology*, vol. 50, no. 4, p. 726–746.
- BOURHIS, Richard, and Rodrigue LANDRY (2008). "Group vitality, cultural autonomy, and the wellness of language minorities." in Richard Bourhis (ed.), *The vitality of the English-speaking communities of Quebec: From community decline to revival*, Montreal, CEETUM, Université de Montréal, p. 185–211.
- BOUTONNET, Vincent (2013). *Les ressources didactiques : typologie d'usages en lien avec la méthode historique et l'intervention éducative d'enseignants d'histoire au secondaire*. Doctoral dissertation, Université de Montréal.
- BRETON, Raymond (2005). *Ethnic relations in Canada. Institutional dynamics*. Montreal and Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press.
- BULLETIN D'HISTOIRE POLITIQUE (2007). "Débat sur le programme d'enseignement de l'histoire au Québec." *Bulletin d'histoire politique*, vol. 15, no. 2.
- CALDWELL, Gary (1994). *La question du Québec anglais*. Québec, Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture.
- CARRETERO, Mario, Mikel ASENSIO, and Maria RODRIGUEZ-ONEO (2012). *History education and the construction of national identities*. Charlotte, North Carolina, Information Age Publishing.
- CLARK, Penney (2011). *New possibilities for the past: Shaping history education in Canada*. Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press.
- CONRAD, Margaret, Kadriye ERCIKAN, Gerald FRIESEN, Jocelyn LÉTOURNEAU, Delphin MUISE, David NORTHRUP, and Peter SEIXAS (2013). *Canadians and their pasts*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press.
- COMMINS, John (2009). "Teaching history in English in Quebec schools." *Canadian Diversity = Diversité canadienne*, vol. 7, no. 1, p. 42–45.
- DEMERS, Stéphanie (2011). *Relations entre le cadre normatif et les dimensions téléologique, épistémologique, et praxéologique des pratiques d'enseignants d'histoire et éducation à la citoyenneté : étude multi-cas*. Doctoral dissertation, Université du Québec à Montréal.
- DEN HEYER, Kent (2003). "Between every 'now' and 'then': A role for the study of historical agency in history and citizenship education." *Theory and Research in Social Education*, vol. 31, no. 4, p. 411–434.
- DEN HEYER, Kent, and Alexandra FIDYK (2007). "Configuring historical facts through historical fiction: Agency, art-in-fact, and imagination as stepping stones between then and now." *Educational Theory*, vol. 57, no. 2, p. 141–157.

- DICKINSON, John, and Brian YOUNG (2008). *A short history of Quebec*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Montreal and Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press.
- EPSTEIN, Terrie (1998). "Deconstructing differences in African-American and European-American adolescents' Perspectives of U.S. History." *Curriculum Inquiry*, vol. 28, no. 4, p. 397–423.
- EPSTEIN, Terrie (2000). "Adolescents' perspectives on racial diversity in U.S. history: Case studies from an urban classroom." *American Educational Research Association Journal*, vol. 37, no. 1, p. 185–214.
- FLANAGAN, Constance A. (2013). *Teenage citizens: The political theories of the young*. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, Harvard University Press.
- FRIESEN, Gerald, Delphin MUISE, and David NORTHRUP (2009). "Variations on the theme of remembering: A national survey of how Canadians use the past." *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association = Revue de la société historique du Canada*, vol. 20, no. 1, p. 221–248.
- GARDNER, Howard (2005). *The development and education of the mind: The selected works of Howard Gardner*. London and New York, Routledge.
- GOSSAGE, Peter, and Jack I. LITTLE (2012). *An illustrated history of Quebec: Tradition and modernity*. Don Mills, Ontario, Oxford University Press.
- JEDWAB, Jack, and Julie PERRONE (2012). "Faire une place aux anglophones dans notre histoire." *Enjeux de l'univers social*, vol. 8, no. 1, p. 16–19.
- JEDWAB, Jack, and Hugh MAYNARD (2008). "Politics of community: The evolving challenge of representing English-speaking quebecers." in Richard Bourhis (ed.), *The vitality of the English-speaking communities of Quebec: From community decline to revival*, Montreal, CEETUM, Université de Montréal, p. 161–178.
- JUTEAU, Danielle (2000). "Du dualisme canadien au pluralisme québécois." in Marie Mc Andrew and France Gagnon (eds.), *Relations ethniques et éducation dans les sociétés divisées : Québec, Irlande du nord, Catalogne et Belgique*, Montréal, Québec, L'Harmattan Inc, p. 13–26.
- LEMIRE, Francine, Marie Mc ANDREW, and William SMITH (2006). "L'éducation et les relations entre les francophones et les anglophones au Québec: les perceptions des directeurs d'école." in Roel De Groo, Rudi Janssens, Jan Degadt, and Els Witte (eds.), *Politiek, Taal, Onderwijs en Samenleving in Beweging. Brusselse Thema*, special issue, no. 14, p. 335–359.
- LÉTOURNEAU, Jocelyn (2014). *Je me souviens? Le passé du Québec dans la conscience de sa jeunesse*. Montréal, Fides.
- LÉTOURNEAU, Jocelyn (2006). "Mythistoires de loser: introduction au roman historique des Québécois d'héritage canadiens-français." *Histoire sociale = Social History*, vol. 39, no. 77 (May), p. 157–180.
- LÉTOURNEAU, Jocelyn, and Sabrina MOISAN (2004). "Mémoire et récit de l'aventure historique du Québec chez les jeunes Québécois d'héritage canadien-français : coup de sonde, amorce d'analyse des résultats, questionnements." *The Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 84, no. 2, p. 325–356.

- LÉTOURNEAU, Jocelyn, and Christophe CARITEY (2008). "L'histoire du Québec racontée par les élèves de 4<sup>e</sup> et 5<sup>e</sup> secondaire : l'impact dans la structuration d'une mémoire historique collective chez les jeunes Québécois." *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, vol. 62, no. 1, p. 69–93.
- LÉTOURNEAU, Jocelyn, and David NORTHRUP (2011). "Québécois et canadiens face au passé : similitudes et dissemblances." *The Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 92, no. 1, p. 163–196.
- LÉTOURNEAU, Jocelyn, Stéphane LEVESQUE, and Raphaël GANI (2013). "A giant with clay feet': Quebec students and their historical consciousness of the nation." *International Journal of Historical Learning, Teaching and Research*, vol. 11, no. 2, p. 156–172.
- LEVINE, Marc V. (1990). *The reconquest of Montreal: Language policy and social change in a bilingual city*. Philadelphia, PA, Temple University Press.
- MACLURE, Jocelyn (2003). *Quebec identity: The challenge of pluralism*, Translated by Peter Feldstein, Montreal and Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press.
- MAGNAN, Marie Odile (2004). "Anglos du Québec et 'autres privilégiés': référence identitaire en mutation." *Aspects sociologiques*, vol. 11, no. 1, p. 124–143.
- MC ANDREW, Marie (2010). *Les majorités fragiles et l'éducation*. Montréal, Les Presses de l'université de Montréal.
- MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION, DU LOISIR ET DU SPORT (2013). *For the reinforcement of the teaching of Québec history in elementary and secondary school*. [Online] [http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site\\_web/documents/dpse/formation\\_jeunes/Montage\\_VA\\_Consultation\\_History\\_s.pdf](http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/dpse/formation_jeunes/Montage_VA_Consultation_History_s.pdf), consulted 14 December 2013.
- MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION, DU LOISIR ET DU SPORT (2007). *Quebec education program, secondary cycle two*. [Online] [http://www1.mels.gouv.qc.ca/sections/programmeFormation/secondaire2/medias/en/7b\\_QEP\\_Histoire.pdf](http://www1.mels.gouv.qc.ca/sections/programmeFormation/secondaire2/medias/en/7b_QEP_Histoire.pdf), consulted 13 December 2013.
- MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION DU QUÉBEC (1998). *Overview of the teaching of elementary social studies and secondary history within the Anglophone community of the province of Quebec*. A report by the history task force, Quebec City, MEQ.
- PECK, Carla L. (2010). "'It's not like [I'm] Chinese and Canadian. I am in between': ethnicity and students' conceptions of historical significance." *Theory and Research in Social Education*, vol. 38, no. 4, p. 575–617.
- PECK, Carla L. (2011). "Ethnicity and students' historical understandings." in Penney Clark (ed.), *New possibilities for the past: Shaping history education in Canada*, Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press, p. 305–324.
- PIOTTE, Jean-Marc, and Jean-Pierre COUTURE (2012). *Les nouveaux visages du nationalisme conservateur au Québec*. Montréal, Québec Amérique.
- QUEBEC COMMUNITY GROUPS NETWORK (2009). *Creating spaces for young Quebecers: Strategic orientations for English-speaking youth in Quebec*. Montreal, Quebec Community Groups Network's Youth Standing Committee.

- RAPPORT, Nigel, and Joanna OVERING (2007). "Agent and agency." in Nigel Rapport and Joanna Overing (eds.), *Social and cultural anthropology, the key concepts*, New York, Routledge, p. 3–11.
- REPORT OF THE STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE ON OFFICIAL LANGUAGES (2011). *The vitality of Quebec's English-speaking communities: From myth to reality*. Ottawa, Senate of Canada.
- RÜSEN, Jörn (2005). *History: Narration, interpretation, orientation*. New York, Berghahn Books.
- RUSSELL, Matthew (2012). "S'appropriier le curriculum: réflexion sur l'enseignement et l'apprentissage de l'histoire chez les Anglophones de l'Ouest du Québec." *Enjeux de l'univers social*, Dossier: les Anglophones du Québec, vol. 8, no. 1, p. 40–42.
- SEARS, Alan (2011). "Historical thinking and citizenship education: It is time to end the war." in Penney Clark (ed.), *New possibilities for the past: Shaping history education in Canada*, Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press, p. 344–364.
- SEIXAS, Peter (1993). "Historical understanding among adolescents in a multicultural setting." *Curriculum Inquiry*, vol. 23, no. 3, p. 301–325.
- STEIN, Michael (1982). "Changing Anglo-quebecer self consciousness." in Gary Caldwell and Eric Waddell (eds.), *The English of Quebec: From majority to minority status*, Québec, Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture, p. 107–141.
- STEVENSON, Garth (1999). *Community besieged: The Anglophone minority and the politics of Quebec*. Montreal, Quebec and Kingston, Ontario, McGill-Queen's University Press.
- STRAUB, Jürgen (2005). *Narration, identity, and historical consciousness*. New York, Berghahn Books.
- WERTSCH, James V. (2004). "Specific narratives and schematic narrative templates." in Peter Seixas (ed.), *Theorizing historical consciousness*, Toronto, Ontario, University of Toronto Press.
- WERTSCH, James V. (2000). "Is it possible to teach beliefs, as well as knowledge about history?" in Peter Stearns, Peter Seixas and Sam Wineburg (eds.), *Teaching and learning history: National and international perspectives*, New York, New York University Press, p. 38–50.
- YEAGER, Elizabeth A., Stuart J. FOSTER, and Jennifer GREER (2002). "How eighth graders in England and the United States view historical significance." *Elementary School Journal*, vol. 103, no. 2, p. 199–219.
- ZANAZANIAN, Paul (2015). "Historical consciousness and being Québécois: Exploring young English-speaking students' interactions with Quebec's master historical narrative." *Canadian Ethnic Studies / Études Ethniques au Canada*, vol. 47, no. 2, p. 113–135.
- ZANAZANIAN, Paul (2012). "Historical consciousness and the structuring of group boundaries: A look at two Francophone school history teachers regarding Quebec's Anglophone minority." *Curriculum Inquiry*, vol. 42, no. 2, p. 215–239.
- ZANAZANIAN, Paul (2011). "Towards developing an 'Anglo-Québécois' information resource book for school history teachers in Quebec: Thoughts from a qualitative study." *Journal of Eastern Townships Studies*, vol. 36, (Spring), p. 69–95.

ZANAZANIAN, Paul (2010). “Historical consciousness and ethnicity: How signifying the past influences the fluctuations in ethnic boundary maintenance.” *Ethnic Studies Review*, vol. 33, no. 2.

ZANAZANIAN, Paul (2008). “Historical consciousness and the ‘French-English’ divide among Quebec history teachers.” *Canadian Ethnic Studies / Études ethniques du Canada*, vol. 40, no. 3, p. 109–130.

ZANAZANIAN Paul, and Sabrina MOISAN (2012). “Harmonizing two of history teaching’s main social functions: Franco-Québécois history teachers and their predispositions to catering to narrative diversity.” *Education Sciences*, vol. 2, no. 4, p. 255–275.

### Key words

historical consciousness; schematic narrative templates; history teaching;  
social inclusion and community vitality; English-speaking Quebec.

### Mots clés

conscience historique; trames historiques schématiques; enseignement de l’histoire;  
inclusion sociale et vitalité de groupe; Québec anglophone.

### Correspondance

[paul.zanzanian@mcgill.ca](mailto:paul.zanzanian@mcgill.ca)