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*Variétés et diffusion du français dans
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chanson*

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SOMMAIRE

- Michaël Abecassis, Gudrun Ledegen : *Variété et diffusion du français dans l'espace francophone à travers la chanson.*
- Michaël Abecassis : *From sound to music : voices from old Paris.*
- Sofiane Bengoua : *L'usage du français au travers des comptines dans deux zones périurbaines en Algérie.*
- Belkacem Boumedini, Nebia Dadoua Hadria : *Emprunt au français et créativité langagière dans la chanson rap en Algérie : l'exemple de T.O.X., M.B.S et Double Canon.*
- Adeline Nguefak : *La chanson camerounaise comme lieu d'expression et de construction de nouvelles identités linguistiques.*
- Prisque Barbier : *Place et rôles de la chanson dans la dynamique sociolinguistique ivoirienne.*
- Joëlle Cauville : *La Marseillaise, ses variantes et ses parodies : leçon d'humour à la française !*
- Patricia Gardies, Eléonore Yasri-Labrique : *Mise en portée, mise à portée... utilisations didactiques de la chanson en FLE.*
- Marine Totozani : *Petit niveau cherche chanson... La chanson francophone plurilingue en classe de langue.*
- Amy J. Ransom : *Language choice and code switching in current popular music from Québec.*

Compte-rendu

- Fabienne Leconte : AUGER Nathalie, 2010, *Elèves nouvellement arrivés en France – Réalités et perspectives pratiques en classe*, préface de J-L Chiss, Editions des archives contemporaines, Paris, 152 pages.

LANGUAGE CHOICE AND CODE SWITCHING IN CURRENT POPULAR MUSIC FROM QUEBEC

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Introduction

Harris M. Berger asserts that « *for many throughout the world [...] questions of language choice are a crucial part of musical experience* » (2003: x) and that these choices are tied to larger social contexts through their relationship to the particular « *language ideology* » (Woolard and Shieffelin, 1994: 57) which they reflect and/or inform (Berger, 2003: xiv-xv). Perhaps nowhere is this assertion more applicable than in Québec, where « *[t]he use of French, in and of itself, is an affirmative act with political connotations in North America* », with the result that there is « *a strong component of cultural identity between Québec popular musicians and their fans which has a 'national' overtone* », according to Christopher M. Jones (2010: to be published). This connection appeared perhaps most clearly in the 1960s and in the 1970s. First, *chansonniers* like Gilles Vigneault and Félix Leclerc explicitly contributed to the Franco-Québécois nationalist agenda (Léger, 2003: 55-56), then after 1968 and Robert Charlebois's *L'Osstidcho*, according to Bruno Roy, « *[l]a chanson québécoise était devenue le lieu artistique et politique d'un débat sur la langue* » (Roy, 2005: 159). Still today, in the so-called post-nationalist era, language choices made by Québec's francophone popular music artists can be read as expressions of and resistance to the province's dominant language ideology. Thanks to an array of cultural protection measures, French has clearly established itself as the dominant language of the province's vibrant music industry. What remains to be determined, however, is the question of *which* French. Similarly, while scholars like Line Grenier and Christopher M. Jones convincingly assert that there is « *a relatively high correlation between chanson and Québécois* » (Grenier, 1993: 222) and « *the chanson tradition is alive and well* » in Québec (Jones, 2010: n. p.), we might also ask *which chanson* given the vast diversity in musical styles represented.

Code switching in Québec's popular music

To date, Québec's most marginal – in the sense of distant from the central ideological core of franco-nationalism – genre, the province's rap, appears to be its most studied popular musical form. Christopher M. Jones (2011) and Roger Chamberland (2001, 2005) both connect language choice to expressions of identity and politics in Québécois rap, but no researcher has examined this question as closely as have Mena Sarkar and her research

partners. In their detailed sociolinguistic analysis of Montréal rappers' fluent, fluid and frequent code switching practices, Sarkar and Winer conclude that these artists « *privilege multicultural codeswitching as a way to perform their multilingual identities* » (2006: 188). In a later analysis, Low, Sarkar and Winer examine how the same rappers « *challenge and change the French that is nonetheless accepted as an important base language for rap lyrics* » (2009: 68). The McGill-based group focuses on the rap lyrics of black artists who come from varied ethno-linguistic backgrounds and live in the multicultural metropolis of Montréal. But what of the linguistic practices of artists whose ethnic identities reflect a more traditional, Franco-Canadian background? What of the use of code switching in a more traditionally conceived form of *chanson* than rap? This essay represents a first attempt to answer those questions. First, though, it will be useful to establish what is understood as *chanson* in Québec, to define the linguistic codes observed in the sample, and to describe the sample used for this study.

La chanson québécoise

There is no question that what is meant by *chanson* in Québec bears similarities to a metropolitan French conception of the form, but over time and against Anglo-American models of popular music, the term has become much more inclusive in North America, almost to the point that, if the language of the lyrics is French, then the work is considered *chanson*. According to Line Grenier and Val Morrison, by 1995 « *[a]yant largement perdu son étroite connotation politique d'antan, la chanson représente en quelque sorte l'étiquette générique accolée à toute musique populaire créée/faite au Québec, tous genres confondus* » (1995: 85). This was not, however, always the case and does not remain without nuance. Until the 1960s, Québec's popular music forms appeared often to be calqued upon Anglo-American forms and styles; this changed in part because of the modernization of Québec society, which was accompanied by a strong sense of nationalist sentiment during the Quiet Revolution of that decade. While on the one hand, nationalism became the cause of *chansonniers* like Vigneault and Leclerc who drew largely from French-Canadian folk music, on the other, a few select Montréal nightclubs began to offer French-style *chanson* (Léger, 2003: 32-36). With the rise of rock and roll, a heated debate, embodied in the title of a musical review by Robert Charlebois, Jean-Guy Moreau and Mouffe, *Yéyés versus chansonniers*, developed (Léger, 2003: 45). In spite of the political engagement of many 1970s rock artists (Aubé, 1990: 69), including the use of jodel by Raoul Duguay, Harmonium and Beau Dommage (Beaulé, 2010: n. p.), this stylistic opposition between one form seen as derivative of Anglo-American popular music (the 1960s' *yéyé*, then pop-rock in the 1970s) and another viewed as more authentically French-Canadian (that of the *chanson*) lingered through the 1980s, when major changes in the music industry required some reconciliation and a joining of forces (Grenier and Morrison, 1995: 84-88). Since the 1990s, Grenier observes a trend toward « *the blurring of genre/style distinctions* », which make of Québec « *a pluralistic musical space* » (Grenier, 1993: 222). Léger views this reconciliation as occurring already in the work of Robert Charlebois: « *Déjà à ce stade, la fusion tant attendue de l'habileté littéraire des chansonniers et de la musique rock des groupes yéyé est réussie* » (2003: 67). These opinions support the designation of the variety of works under consideration here as *chanson*; at the same time, I accept Léger's distinction between « *la chanson à texte* », a literary style more deeply rooted in the Metropolitan French *chanson* tradition, as opposed to « *une chanson plus populaire* » (2003: 75), or as Grenier and Morrison describe it: « *les poèmes mis en musique [et] des musiques avec paroles* » (1995: 88).

Codes present in popular *québécoise* music

In addition to defining what is meant by *chanson* here, I must also define the terms of the linguistic analysis undertaken. First, I adopt a broad definition of code switching: « *the shifting from one language, dialect, or register to another within a single piece or performance* » (Berger, 2003: xiii). I also include analysis of other language choices, following Berger, who asserts that « *within societies where a single language dominates the cultural landscape, subtler questions of dialect inform many aspects of song, including the syntax and word choices of the lyrics, [and] the diction of the singers* » (2003: x). As Low, Sarkar and Winer assert, it may be argued that since Law 101, the adoption of French as the only official language in the province of Québec, and other measures, Québec society may be seen as dominated by the single language (2009: 59). However, even among Franco-Québécois, responses to the question of *what kind of French* should be spoken are varied and contentious. Furthermore, the multilingual landscape of Montréal, which dominates the music scene, and the influence of musical genres from the Anglophone world, and increasingly, Latin America, must be taken into account.

The following analysis draws largely from the range of linguistic registers established by Sarkar and Winer (2006: 179-181), reduced and modified for my corpus:

- *Standard International French* (SIF): by this we mean a grammatically standard French, based on norms set in France, but recognizable and understandable by French speakers around the francophone world, including the French typically taught in North American university systems. SIF diction is generally free of any regional accent.
- *Standard Québec French* (SQF) which, as Sarkar and Winer observe, « differs from standard international or Parisian French mainly in the use of distinctively Quebec phonological features, such as the assibilation of /t/ and /d/ before a high front vowel » (2006: 179-180). I would also add a slight opening of and tendency toward diphthongization of vowels, although an exaggeration of these forms more properly belongs to the third category, which Sarkar and Winer refer to as Nonstandard Québec French. I prefer the following term as less normalizing ;
- *Vernacular Québec French* (VQF): in addition to a regionally specific lexicon (*tuque, frette, icitte, dépanneur*, and the colorful expletives derived from the province's Catholic heritage, such as *tabernacle, hostie, crisser, câlisse*), VQF displays specific syntactical variations from SIF/SQF. For example, *-tu* added to the end of a sentence, as in « Ça va-tu? » or « Que se passe-tu? », operates as an interrogative marker not available to SIF. Furthermore, pronunciation can vary from a very subtle opening of certain vowels, for example pronouncing /ɔ̃/ in situations which would be /a/ in SIF, to an exaggerated opening and lengthening (as in the stressed pronunciation of an expletive, *câââlisser*). Furthermore, VQF has assimilated a large number of lexical items that would be considered *anglicismes* in SIF or even SQF (and Sarkar and Winer '2006: 181) point out that there is often generational disagreement as to whether such terms have come to be considered standard). These include the creation of regular first conjugation verbs from English verbs. In print the orthography of such appropriations may or may not conform to Québec phonetic pronunciation rather than the original English: *checker* (*chequer*) < to check out, *shiner* < to shine, *watcher* < to watch. For example, the phrases « *Chèque-moi ça* » (« Check that out/*Regarde-moi ça* ») or « *J'ai watché l'game à soir* » (« I watched the game last night/*J'ai regardé le match hier soir* ») reveal the fluent inclusion of English-derived terms in the discourse of individuals who may be unilingual French speakers. In addition, we find the appropriation of nouns, which may be rendered as masculine or feminine (sometimes in variance with SIF, as is the case with *un job*, which in Québec appears as *une job*), as in the expression, « *C'est le fun!* » (« That's fun/*C'est amusant!* »). Finally, other apparent anomalies – for the speaker of SIF, that is – deriving

from the proximity to English occur, such as « *bienvenue* », a literal translation of « you're welcome » instead of « *de rien* ».

- *Standard North American English*: referred to here simply as English. While black hip-hop may borrow fluently from African-American vernacular English or Creole and other Caribbean languages and dialects, very little of this occurs in our corpus of *chansons québécoises*.

In addition, following Berger, changes in register, such as switching from a colloquial discourse to a literary one (2003: xiii), will also be considered code switching for the purpose of this study.

Air Musique: the sample

Taking the widest possible definition of *chanson* allows the inclusion of a broad range of performers, from engaged *auteurs-compositeurs-interprètes* like Daniel Bouchard and Vincent Vallières to the lead vocalists of rock bands like Noir Silence to solo artists singing in front of studio musicians. The sample examined for this study includes well-established rock-pop divas like Mara Tremblay and Marie-Josée Turpin and their male counterpart Eric Lapointe, as well as début pop artists like Pamela Lajoie and Marie-Eve Côté. The diversity of Québec's popular music scene has broadened from the *chanteuse*-like sounds of Emi Bond and Ariane Moffatt and *chansonniers* like Daniel Boucher and Jonathon Painchaud who follow in the footsteps of Vigneault and Leclerc to include the raggamuffin styles of MamMoiZèle Giraf, neo-New Wave and punk bands like La Patère Rose or Patrik et les Brutes, and the ska of Pépé, as well as the techno-pop of Standing Waltz. While my sample clearly reveals the diversity of francophone popular song in Québec, this is not a technical discussion of *la chanson* as this is meant in French to refer to a specific tradition but rather an analysis of the variety of linguistic choices and their meanings in a particular corpus of French-Canadian popular songs.

The corpus analyzed here derives from the songs aired on Air Musique, XM/Sirius satellite radio channel 88, between May 2008 and December 2009. One of two francophone stations on the XM-Sirius lineup, it was developed specifically as a result of Canada's language ideology of bilingualism, responding to the CRTC (Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission) requirement of French language content (Anonymous, 2009a). While the other French-language XM station, Sur la route française, broadcasts largely metropolitan French adult pop, Air Musique offers a selection of largely Québécois¹ newly released music in a variety of genres, from hard rock to hip hop to R & B pop to alternative, broadcast through the format of a top-40 countdown allowing on-line and phone-in listener voting. Its English-language home page claims that it offers songs from « *the world music scene* », a clear example of what Jones identifies as the North American market's difficulty in dealing with Québec's burgeoning francophone music industry (2001: 52). On the air, the station claims to broadcast « *la meilleure de la musique francophone en Amérique du nord* »; this openly inclusive terminology which spans the continent is complemented by other statements which suggest Air Musique's adoption of codes very frequently used in Québec to signal franco-québécois unity and identity. Following in the vein of common expressions like « *la musique de chez nous* », Air Musique's pre-recorded inter-song blurbs clearly interpellate the listener into a community through such phrases as: « *Un top-quarante à votre goût* », « *Vos quarante chansons préférées* ». In spite of this cultural agenda that may (or may not) be read as nationalist, but definitely offered as francophone, the linguistic choices made by the artists it broadcasts reveal a wide range of heteroglossic practices.

¹ Among the few European francophone artists to air on the station were Indochine, Louise Attaque, and Kate Ryan.

Furthermore, these practices reflect a range of attitudes about popular music's role in the construction of contemporary Québécois identity.

Linguistic choices in new Québec popular music

Standard International French: the *lingua franca* of *la chanson*

Given the variety of musical styles in the sample examined here, it will be apparent that these performers' sounds are as varied as their linguistic choices. Nonetheless, a significant proportion of Québec's mainstream pop vocalists and singer-songwriters elect to sing and/or write lyrics in Standard International French (SIF) with few or no *québécoisismes* and little evidence of code switching. Such was the case with singles released by Mara Tremblay (b. 1969), Anik Jean (b. 1977), Marie-Mai (Bouchard, b. 1984), Marie-Eve Côté, Acadian Wilfrid LeBouthillier (b. 1978), David Jalbert (b. 1980), and many others. Even Boom Desjardins, whose pop-styled «Donne-moi ma chance» contrasts with some more deeply enracinated works on the compilation album *Rock le Québec* (2009), which features covers of the province's rock hits from the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Clearly SIF represents the *lingua franca* of the francophone popular *chanson*, even in Québec, a situation analogical to that of the former dominance of American English diction in British pop-rock, as noted by Peter Trudgill (1984). I interpret this language choice as expressing artists' desire to reach the widest possible, international pop audience, following in the footsteps of the successful Belgian *interprète*, Kate Ryan (née Katrien Verbeeck, 1980) and others. Above all, *la chanson québécoise* carries the torch of the continued presence of the *fait français* in Québec.

Perhaps the exception to prove the rule occurs in «Le sang des innocents», a début single by a very young artist, Pamela Lajoie (b. 1992), who collaborates with the US-Senegalese singer Akon to record the French version of «Blood into Gold», written by Peter Buffett to commemorate the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade (Anthony, 2009). Lajoie performs the duet entirely in SIF with Akon, who learned the French text specifically for the song (Lajoie, 2009); Akon switches codes at its conclusion, asking in spoken English, «How can you live off the blood of another?» The music video (produced by UNICEF to raise awareness about the exploitation of children and adults in the Third World, with the song's proceeds going to Konfidence Foundation) offers a montage of heart-breaking images of hunger, prostitution, and child labor, superimposing phrases in English about this exploitation, such as «*exploited and abused*» and «*from prostitution to child labor*». Given the international nature of the message and the English origins of the song's composer, neither the choice of SIF for its French version, or the final tag line in English surprises us. Read within the context of Québec's popular music, this choice simply appears consistent with the practice of the province's francophone R & B and hip hop, for which code switching is so prevalent as to represent a generically defining practice. At the same time, the song appears symptomatic of a larger trend toward transnational cross-cultural collaborations.

A number of groups performing in less mainstream pop musical forms, such as techno-pop, alternative, neo-New Wave, and world-influenced sounds, also choose to sing in SIF, with few to no linguistic elements coding them as Québécois. La Patère Rose's energetic techno-punk single, «La Marelle» (2008), features a girlish squeal, but otherwise SIF lyrics, as is the case with the techno-pop, New Wave dance song, «Cité phosphore», by Standing Waltz (*Non-Sens*, 2009), a group of Québec area teenagers. Such linguistic choices conform to Bruno Roy's interpretation of 1980s punk's opposition to «une culture populaire québécoise» (Roy, 2005: 161), namely one coded as Québec-specific through musical and linguistic choices like those discussed below. The lyrics of Yelo Molo's island-world sound

on « Voyage » (2009) and Pépé's (Patrick Proulx) rougher, ska rhythmized « Canary Bay » at first appear little enracinated. However, Yelo Molo's album title clearly establishes the group's Québécois identity; *Emmène-moi kekpart* (2009) invokes the common Québec practice of phonetic spelling, particularly /k/ for the « qu », and the colloquial contraction of *quelque part*. Pépé's English-language album title, *Pépé goes français* (2009) points not to the idea of francophone performers who have been recording in English finally coming back to their roots (see Cutler, 2003),² but rather to the album's inclusion of covers of classic French *chanson*. According to Proulx's website: « Avec sa touche perso il reprend et interprète les plus grands de la chanson de l'hexagone : Joe Dassin, Niagara, Nino Ferer, Dutronc, Renaud » (Proulx, 2009). This case demonstrates that while it draws heavily on Anglo-American influences, popular music in Québec remains tied to and influenced by the metropolitan French tradition of *la chanson*. At the same time, with the familiar shortening of « perso » the author signifies that his interpretation will not be stuffy or old-fashioned.

Several *auteurs-compositeurs-interprètes* who typically perform in a diction largely reflective of the norms of SIF, with only traces of SQF, explicitly link themselves to the hexagon-informed *chanson* tradition. Jean Leloup (b. Leclerc 1961) represents one of the most established artists in this area. Although his greatest hits album, *Je joue de la guitare* (2005) touts his association with rock music, his recent single « Le roi se meurt » employs a very literary language (including the *passé simple*) and fits into Leloup's Ubuesque persona of « le roi Pompon ». While several tracks on his album *Mille excuses milady* (2009), clearly invoke French *chanson* in their musical style and lyrical delivery, his more rock-oriented « La plus belle fille de la prison » was featured in Air Musique's countdown. Several younger artists follow in a vein which blends rock and dance pop with a *chanson*-like sensibility, composing and performing lyrics in SIF or in very slightly accented SQF. Yann Perreau (b. 1976) has been described as « un auteur-compositeur-interprète québécois, spécialisé dans le rock-électro et la chanson à texte » (Anonymous, « Yann », 2009), suggesting a closer relationship to the French, lyric-oriented *chanson* tradition. His « Beau comme on s'aime » and « Le président danse autrement » (2009, *Un serpent sous les fleurs*) offer few elements to signal their performer's local identity, either in diction or lexical choices. Jipé Dalpé, signed by Universal Music rather than by an independent Québec label, and Stefie Shock (b. 1969) offer similar cases, with the latter's vocal style, evident on « Panicomanie » (2009, *Tubes, remixes et prémonitions*) described as « a low, conspiratorial voice; prominently inspired by his idol, French singer Serge Gainsbourg » (Anonymous, « Stefie », 2009). The album title's use of the French term for hits, *tubes*, also suggests a leaning toward that cultural pole of influence.

The significant number of groups and artists originating in Québec whose performed French reflects the norms of SIF, or a minimally distinct SQF, reveals the province's continued participation in the larger French community of a global *Francophonie*, as well as its continued desire for a link to France itself as a pole of cultural influence. In contrast, however, nearly as many performers with works broadcast on Air Musique made linguistic choices to specifically mark their work as Québécois.

Marking a song as Québécois through linguistic choices

Like Yelo Molo in the album title mentioned above, several groups using innovative or unique sounds associated with alternative rock and/or independent label recording resort to code switching from SIF/SQF into more vernacular forms in order to mark their work as

² An actual case of a Québec group which began recording in English and which has now returned to sing in French is the The Box, a pioneer progressive rock group led by Jean-Marc Pisapia, which has just released a French-language album *Le Horla* in 2009.

Québec-specific. Indeed, the very name of the group Frogaboum plays with language in its appropriation of the Anglo-American derogatory term for Frenchmen and French-Canadians, as « frogs »; the code switch occurs not in mid-sentence, but in mid-word, as they append *boom*, which refers simultaneously to SIF's onomatopoeic term for the sound of an explosion, adopted as a slang term for a party, as well as to the nonsense phrase « *She boom, she boom* » of early American rock and roll. The title and chorus of « Chu ben », from their self-titled 2008 début CD, employs the Québec-specific contraction of « je suis », pronounced as /ʃu/ in contrast to vernacular metropolitan French's /ʃi/, yet, during the song's verse the phrase is sung with the latter pronunciation³. The song also features a token switch into English with the phrase « *au bord de l'overdose* ». While this group's name and song title offer innovative approaches to language and superficially mark the group's North American origins, their lyrics and diction participate in a more internationalized approach to popular music.

The work of Emi Bond (b. 1986) and Ariane Moffatt (b. 1979), two young, female singer-songwriters whose musical styles blend an alternative rock sensibility with a deep awareness of the French *chanson* tradition, bears extended analysis. In general, they employ SIF in their written lyrics and performed diction; for example, the feminist lyrics of « Le Numéro » and the anti-war lyrics of « Kamikaze » from Emi Bond's eponymous 2008 début album recall the French artist Zazie in their engagement with contemporary issues blended with a pop sound. Yet, Bond's slower, melodic tune entitled « Mon coeur est frette » marks her discourse as Québec specific through lexical choices: the use of *frette* as opposed to *froid* of SIF, « *b'en* » for *bien* (the CD liner notes add the apostrophe, further marking the usage as non-standard), « *pis* » for *puis*, and « *y* » rather than « *il* », although these last items also occur in metropolitan French vernacular. *Frette*'s appearance in the title and repetition in the refrain stand out singularly, reflecting a specific aesthetic, poetic manoeuvre, precisely because of its oddity amidst Bond's largely SIF lyrics.

Of all the female vocalists mentioned here, Ariane Moffatt offers the largest number of very clearly *chanson*-influenced works on her album, *Tous les sens* (2008), yet her least *chanson*-like works were released as singles: « Réverbère » is a bouncy pop song and « jeudi, 17 mai » thematically recalls Emi Bond's « Kamikaze », as the female narrator comments on the depressing nature of that day's news. The techno-style track includes, toward the end, a male voice commenting in spoken English – with a distinct but not excessively heavy, French-Canadian accent – on the relationship between « *unbalanced reality* » and the « *bad news* » found on « *Thursday, May 17 [in] each and every paper* ». His comment « *I'm searching for truth* » leads into a complete chaos of overdubbed voices and music, reflecting a sort of information overload.

Moffatt's and Bond's code switching reveal distinct expressions of their *québécoisité*, a desire to publicly reveal a specific local identity, to foster an aesthetic of recognition with fans. While Bond switches codes from the dominant SIF into VQF, Moffatt's insertion of English-language metadiscursive comments on the song's topic – the headlines of a specific date – reveals the Québécois reality of the omnipresence of English. The other pole of identity reference, that of France, appears as well on Moffatt's very French *chanson*-inspired tracks, « La fille de l'iceberg », « Briser un coeur », and « Tes invectives », the last of which employs a near literary register, using the term *spleen*. That these songs were not released as singles or included in Air Musique's top-forty countdown, however, may suggest that truly popular – as in appealing to the masses – Québec music is less oriented in that direction.

The choice of all of these artists to sing largely in Standard International French, a form of the language understood by the largest possible French-speaking audience, seems to reflect a

³ I would like to acknowledge the assistance of my colleague Dr. Keith Palka with these and other phonetic transcriptions in this essay.

desire to participate in a broader francophone community, rather than just that of Québec, either for reasons of marketing or of identity. Line Grenier and Jocelyne Guilbault's discussion of the «*Québécois mainstream*», a somewhat misleading term since it includes a wide number of popular musical genres, as an expression of *la francophonie* explains perhaps their linguistic choices. They assert that the mainstream creates affinities between « musical practices from Québec and other Francophone musical cultures. These affinities are instrumental in the construction of practices and products of Québec's artists as integral parts of a larger international music scene » (Grenier and Guilbault, 1997: 224). These artists accept Québec's official language ideology, situating it nonetheless within a larger community of French speakers, that of *la francophonie*.

« **Chu kébékwa** »: consistent use of Vernacular Québec French by male vocalists

In contrast with the previous group which uses discrete linguistic items to mark, albeit somewhat superficially, their work as Québécois, a cohort of male singer-songwriters and groups with male vocalists stand out for their consistent use of highly Vernacular Québec French, their self-distancing from Standard International French, and their fluent and intensive code switching into English. Such is the case with male singer-songwriters performing solo or fronting a group, who align themselves with the French-Canadian *chansonnier* tradition of Gilles Vigneault and Robert Charlebois through their political and Québec specific lyrical content, as well as their folk-influenced musical styles. These include Daniel Boucher (b. 1971), and to a lesser extent Vincent Vallières (b. 1978), *Mes Aïeux* fronted by Stéphane Archambault (b. 1970) and Les Cowboys Fringants' lead vocalist, Karl Tremblay. Two performers in this group became musical artists after (or consecutive with) comedy or radio careers; both Stage (Stéphane) Lacroix and Patrick Groulx (b. 1974) rely on a very enracinated form of humor which draws heavily on the use of VQF riddled with English. Similarly, male singers in rock – often hard rock – bands, often write their own lyrics and tend to use a very colloquial form of Québec French, laden with anglicisms; these include Eric Lapointe (b. 1969), Tommy Boulanger of Sens and Sylvain and Sébastien Séguin of Les Dales Hawerchuck.

It comes as little surprise that those groups which have developed a musical style unique to Québec and referred to as «*folk contemporain*» by ADISQ (l'Association du disque, de l'industrie du spectacle québécois) or as «*néo-trad[itionnel]*» by fans, perform largely in SQF and/or VQF. In particular, certain male *auteur-compositeur-interprètes* have developed a method of gravelly, sing-song vocal delivery in a heavily accented Québécois French; this trademark sound, which immediately signals a specific francophone identity, appears typified in the work of Daniel Boucher. The political content of Boucher's work, for example the well-known condemnation of the cronyism of Duplessis-era Québec's Société Saint-Jean Baptiste in «*La patente*» (2004, *La patente*), clearly aligns him with a tradition to which he pays homage with an album titled specifically *Chansonnier* (2007). His two recent singles continue in that vein of a deeply enracinated musical and vocal style. «*Le monde est grand*» (*Le soleil est sorti*, 2009) opens with and consistently uses the *québécoisisme* «*y*» in lieu of the standard third-person singular pronoun, *il*; thematically similar to «*La patente*», the song uses the second-person to chastise a protagonist, the ups and downs of whose life occur based on his connection to others. The refrain summarizes the central theme in a French deeply and clearly coded as Québécois in its lexical choices (*pantoute* for *pas du tout*), in its non-standard grammatical forms (dropping of the negative particle *ne* and use of a stressed pronoun in negative imperatives, as well as in Boucher's pronunciation (*toé*, 'a for *la*, and the nasal /*ɔ̃*/ of *grand* in SIF almost becomes almost /*ɔ̃*/:

Casse toé pas 'a tête
Cher enfant

*Tant que t'es tentant le monde est p'tit
 Ça va être ta fête aussi longtemps
 Que t'es garni
 Mais le jour où ta fête s'arrête
 Mais le jour où t'es moins payant
 Casse toé pas 'a tête
 Pas pantoute, non
 Tu vas te rendre compte qu'le monde est grand
 Heille [...]*

Even the apparent code switch, the English « hey », at the end of the citation has been fully appropriated into VQF through the spelling « heille ».

Similar elements can be observed in Boucher's « La vie comme une vue ». The song's title adopts a specific Québec lexical item: the use of the « vue » instead of the SIF term *film*; similarly, the lyrics include the lexeme « piasse » (a corruption of *piastres* the ancient money of New France, since used as a synonym for the English/SIF « dollar »). In terms of non-standard grammatical morphology, both the printed lyrics sheet and Boucher's delivery drop the negative particle *ne*, and often substitute a dropped definite article with an apostrophe (« *Mettons qu'on a rien qu'à faire/ Rien qu'à faire dans' vie* »), as well as forming non-standard elisions by eliminating the weak /ə/ (« *Rien qu'à faire c'qu'on a dans l'sang/ Rien qu'à faire c'qu'y brûle en d'dans* »). Marking national or regional identity through a heavily accentuated pronunciation is certainly not unknown in the Anglophone world, as witnessed in country music's decidedly nasal twang, a delivery stylized musically and linguistically. Similarly, Boucher's distinctively Québécois language serves as a generic marker for his musical style. Vincent Vallières and Jonathan Painchaud (b. 1974), among others, also signal their Québec identity through use of SQF or VQF, although perhaps to a lesser degree than the highly distinctive Boucher, whose delivery recalls the iconic work of the late André Fortin (1962-2000) of Les Colocs who pioneered this type of sound which blends the sensibilities of traditional French-Canadian folk with contemporary blues and rock.

Such linguistic choices reflect a number of possible stances about language ideology and identity. While the dominant language ideology of Québec is that of French, that ideology reflects a standard form of the language; by using French clearly and heavily coded as Québécois such artists subvert and resist prescriptive forms of the province's official language. Furthermore, they appear to value a sense of the Québécois as specifically North American, as opposed to the broader notion of *la francophonie*. They participate in the identity project of *l'américanité*, answering the question already posed in the late 1960s and through the 1970s, as Bruno Roy asserts: « quelle langue chanter quand on parle français en Amérique du Nord ? » (Roy, 2005: 159). Ironically, as Jody Berland points out, the Anglo-Canadian performer lacks the ability to mark so distinctly his work from the Anglo-American (Berland, 1988: 345, 348). The linguistic choices offered by VQF immediately mark the *québécoisité* of the performer both for a French audience and for a North American one.

The music of Les Trois Accords bridges stylistically such deeply enracinated singer-songwriters as Boucher and performers who blend humor with music, whose work we will discuss shortly. A large proportion of Les Trois Accords' compositions are frank and open pastiches of a range of musical genres. For example, « Saskatchewan » and « Nicole » (*En beau country*, 2008) play with the tropes of country and western, including the video of « Nicole » filmed in the mountains with the band members sporting cowboy regalia. An established band (demonstrated by their concerts at the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics) that has toured and receives radio airtime in France, Les Trois Accords' lead vocalist, Simon Proulx (b. 1980), nonetheless exploits his heavy Québécois accent in his song delivery; there

is a carnivalesque element to their use of popular language to generate humor and sympathy from an audience highly receptive to these. Mikhail Bakhtin's (1968) notion of the carnivalesque as a reversal of accepted standards and norms which offers the people, working and peasant class, a much-needed release from the oppressive authority of such standards offers one explanation for the popularity of music (as well as film, television, stand-up comedy and other forms of entertainment) which rejects the norms of SIF/SQF perceived as imposed from above since the *joual* debates during the Quiet Revolution. This carnivalistic violation of linguistic norms used to humorous effect appears nowhere more clearly in Québec music than in the work of Stage (Stéphane) Lacroix; Patrick Groulx, who records solo and with the band Les Bas Blanc, followed a similar career trajectory.

Stage Lacroix couples a clichéd musical style – indeed, his genre pastiches simply enhance the comic effect of his songs – in a language so far from SIF that his songs might be nearly incomprehensible to the French-from-France. For example, « Chick au pet shop » (2008) recounts the absurd meeting of a clearly Québécois man with « *la femme de [s]a vie* », the « chick » of the title, outside a pet shop after he disputes with her dog who will eat the « *chip au ketchup* » – an expression possibly comprehensible to English speakers, but particularly to Anglo-Canadians (ketchup flavored potato chips are not typically available in the US) – that has fallen on the ground. In addition to a heavily Québécois lexicon, including *char* (car/voiture), *pitoune* (chick, as in *girl/nana, moffe*), Lacroix peppers his discourse with anglicisms in phrases like « *c'est mon trip* », « Oh, what the heck », and « *Chus pas le seul qui l'a spotté* », the latter, rather than an example of code switching, provides an example of VQF's appropriation of English expressions, in this case turning *to spot* into a regular –er verb, *spotter*. As observed earlier in the discussion of Frogaboum, Lacroix employs the typically North American colloquial merging of « je suis » into « chus ». His « J'ai un problème de blonde » – a mildly misogynous yet still humorous piece set to a basic three-chord rock tune – stresses its *québécoisité* in its title and lyrics with the use of « blonde » for girlfriend, « *chialer* » for *crier*, « char » for *voiture*, the adjective « *niaise* » for *bête*, and « *ayoye* », a unique exclamatory, the Québécois equivalent of the Yiddish « *Oy vey* ». In addition to these lexical items, Lacroix uses a number of expressions idiomatic to VQF, which are not common or typical to SIF or even to vernacular French of the Hexagon, such as « *faire tout croche* », meaning to « do something all wrong » and « se fier » (which does occur in SIF, but not in this sense) for « to pay attention » or « to notice »; in terms of morphology it also consistently substitutes « a » for *elle*. This song uses almost no English, however. Lacroix's work, with its clear distancing of itself from SIF or even SQF and its code switching phrases like « *le chick au pet shop* » reversed to « *le chip au ketchup* », offers precisely an example of the ludic reversal of accepted standards – here literally the reversal of sounds – typical of the carnivalesque.

Given the history of popular music in Québec and the association of rock and pop with a purportedly inauthentic Anglo-American sound in contrast with the French *chanson*, it is on the one hand not surprising that code switching into English occurs in much Québec rock, particularly in hard rock/heavy metal. On the other hand, some of these groups – and perhaps this is a defensive move, given that history – perform in a highly vernacular Québec French, thus signalling their local identity very clearly against such accusations of inauthenticity.

Eric Lapointe (b. 1969) is unquestionably Québec's best-known rock vocalist; with a distinctively gravelly voice suited to hard rock, he also performs soft ballads, including one with Céline Dion at the celebration concert for Québec City's 400-year anniversary in 2008. His release, « Le mari pop » inspired this study, not for its ripping electric guitar work, but for its savvy, fluent code switching and its critical commentary on the insider lives of the stars and their hangers on. Based in Montréal, for the most part, Québec's entertainment industry is largely bilingual and bicultural; code switching, therefore, is « hip », done by young urban go-

getters.⁴ This collaboratively written song (Eric Lapointe, Jamil, Olivier Picard listed as authors) satirizes the frequent code switching and the superficiality of this milieu's party lifestyle in its lyrics, which merit citation at length. No other song examined here employs code switching to this extent:

Le jet set
La clique qui s'éclate
*Les robes qui **flashent**, les tapis rouges*
*Les soirées **trash** de taches*
C'est ben beau
Mais penses-y comme faut
Les guitares qui arrachent
Les barbies qui veulent ta place
*Les **front page** avec ta face*
 [...]
 *Les Restos **slick**, open bar*
*Les longs voyages, les **backstages** qui brassent*
*Ton chic alcoolique dans son **suit de star** [...]. (my emphasis)*

The extent of the English language's penetration into VQF and VQF's appropriation of English make it difficult to identify here true code switching from normalized usages, as seen in the terms in bold face above; and the song continues in this heteroglossic vein for several more verses. Its refrain, « *Mari moé pas* », reasserts the VQF element with the stereotypical marker of that distinctly North American French, the stressed pronoun *moi* rendered as « *moé* » (and *toi* as « *toé* »). The phrase's ambiguous spelling appears in the uniquely boxed CD's liner notes, allowing a polysemic reading either as « Don't marry me » (the non-standard negative imperative which drops the particle *ne* and then employs a stressed pronoun after the verb has been seen earlier in this discussion; this should, nonetheless, be spelled « *Marie moé pas* »), or as a sort of pidgin French « Me not husband ». Its linguistic instability reflects the identitary instability of the character it portrays, the frequent code switching marking the uncertain identity of the glamorous wannabe portrayed in the song.

At the other end of the career spectrum from the well-established Lapointe is the new group Sens – which is pronounced /sɛ̃s/ (like the English « sense » or « cents ») rather than the nasal /sɛ̃s/ (as in the French, *sens*). Three singles from their début album, *Dans un monde* (2008) « Hey Baby », « Ma tempête », « Dans un monde », « Quand je pense à toi » and, their newly released French-translation cover of the 1979 hit by The Knack, « My Sharona » appear of interest to this analysis. The young group's (its members range from 22 to 25 years old [Sens, « Biographie », 2009]) « Hey Baby » appeared on Air Musique's web site signaled as French in parentheses after its English-language title. The title's featured phrase represents a clear case of code switching, since the rest of the text is in SQF/VQF. « Ma tempête » reveals the Québécois origins of the group, with expressions like « *j'suis mélangé* » – one of Québec French's borrowings from English, which expresses the psychological state of being « mixed up », which would be out of context in SIF. Further *québécoisismes* appear in the use of « *ma blonde* », « *à soir* » for *ce soir* and « *eux-autres* » used as a stressed pronoun (as opposed to just *eux*). Although the religious reference to « *Qu'est-ce que je peux bien* [written as such in the CD liner notes, but sung as /bɛ̃s/] *faire à soir/ Pour me sortir de mon calvaire* » is clearly comprehensible in SIF, since a « calvaire » is a state of suffering, but it also invokes

⁴ André Turpin's film *Un crabe dans la tête* (2001), vividly portrays this style of language which fluently mixes VQF with English, in the character played by Charles Turpin, a high-rolling stock trader who does drugs and extreme sports in the afternoon after having made millions in the morning.

the Québec-specific use of the term as an expletive. Similarly, « Dans un monde » refers to « la boucane », a traditionally French-Canadian lexeme, for *la fumée* (smoke).

The fast-paced rock and roll of Les Dales Hawerchuk, heavily tinged with rockabilly and punk perhaps more rightly belongs with a discussion of alternative bands but their hard-driving beat and heavily-coded Québec French aligns them, for this study, with Lapointe and Sens. Their choice of a name and a web-site motif comes from hockey – a clear marker of North American rather than Hexagonal French identity. Their song, « On sort à soir » (2008, *Les Dales Hawerchuk 2*) marks their origins in its title, and includes the code switching refrain reminiscent of the « Hey Baby » of Sens:

Je suis la mèche, toi le pétard
Come, on baby
Et on sort à soir
Même si mon corps me dit d'arrêter
Ça me tente pas,
Quand j'suis avec toé [...]. (my emphasis)

The group's very name calls attention to Canada's official language ideology of bilingualism through its choice of an individual who crossed the line between the nation's so-called « two solitudes »: Dale Hawerchuk (b. 1963) is a Toronto-born hockey player, active in the National Hockey League from 1981-1997. What makes his case unique is the fact that the Anglophone player began his career as a star in Québec's Major Junior Hockey League in 1979 (Anonymous, « Dale », 2009). The refrain of the group's eponymous song, an homage to their hero, asserts that « Je ne suis plus Sylvain Séguin/ Moé, je suis Dale Hawerchuk ». Such distinct identification by a French-speaker with a hockey player clearly marks his specifically North American French identity.

A significant proportion of the guitar-oriented faster, harder rock of these groups and the musicians behind the *interprète*, Lapointe, clearly seeks to mark their Québécois identity – although they may also be critical of certain elements within it, as seen in « Le mari pop » – through the consistent use of VQF with code switching into English also occurring. Robert Walser's pathbreaking socio-musicological study of heavy metal, *Running with the devil* (1993), associates hard rock in both the US and the UK with working class listeners alienated from the direction popular music took in the late 1960s and 1970s. The populist appeal of Anglophone heavy metal/hard rock appears in its Québécois analogue precisely in its choice of vernacular rather than standard language, and particularly in vernacular Québécois French. At the same time, however, just as their Vernacular Québec French expresses a specifically « American » form of the language, these artists' appropriation of English-language expressions results clearly from cohabitation of the continent with the English-speaking majority. Rather than hide these *anglicismes* with shame, artists who choose to compose and/or sing in VQF value such expressions for their ability to clearly code their work as *not* metropolitan French. Such appropriation of the language of the dominant Other to serve one's own identity ends reflects perhaps the types of trespass and poaching described by Simon Harel as « *braconnages identitaires* » (Harel, 2006).

Syncretics of Québec pop and alternate ways of coding identity

A number of pop rock bands with male singers, however, tend toward a mainstream diction, SIF or SQF, such as Noir Silence, André, 3 Gars su'l sofa, Balboa, Chinatown, and many others. In particular, a group of increasingly popular, alternative Montréal groups sing in a largely uncoded, SQF verging toward SIF. The musical sound of these groups is a fully contemporary alternative rock, of a quality capable of competing with Anglo-American counterparts like Radiohead, Coldplay and others. However, groups like Karkwa and

Malajube, as well as Bonjour Brumaire (whose members include three Québécois, one of whom is anglophone, a Frenchman and a Swiss woman) and others, are not unconscious of their language choices, do code switch at times, but may use content to mark their specific Québécois interests and identity rather than language, as is the case. For example, Malajube's « Ursulines » (*Labyrinthes*, 2009) invokes one of the orders of nuns who helped found the French colony that would become Québec.

Karkwa represents the most interesting of these, both musically – because their unique sound remains without analogy in the Anglo-American music world – and linguistically – because of the highly poetic nature of their lyrics authored largely by lead vocalist Louis-Jean Cormier, which links them more closely to the French *chanson* tradition. The group signals its awareness of language with its very name, a savvy, bilingual pun, playing upon the common Québec convention of rendering « qu » phonetically as /k/; by reversing the effect we obtain « carquois », a *quiver*. While the French term refers to the holder for arrows (an article associated with French-Canadians viewed metaphorically as a « tribu », both as an appropriation of a status similar to that of Native American tribes as well as a negative critique of nationalism as tribalism), the English refers to the possible effect the band's music might have on its listeners: to make them quiver, *trembler*⁵. Their third album, *Le volume du vent* (2009), features not only a song composed around the lyrics of a Pierre Nepveu poem (« Le solstice »), its single « La façade » offers some light code switching (use of the verb *shiner*, for example). Other tracks on the album, while sung with a relatively standard SIF diction, make reference to the topography and history of Montréal. « à la chaîne » invokes Montréal's history (and present-day) in the textile industry, where pieceworkers worked « à la chaîne », on an assembly line. The song also refers to « *le bruit du volcan* »; built atop an extinct volcano, Montréal's topography recurs elsewhere on the album, in particular on « Deux lampadaires », which refers to the trademark cross perched atop Mount Royal, a symbol of its Catholic past. Cormier's lyrics consistently flirt with the poetic, yet change registers into the vernacular, for example in the line: « *Balayer les cendres et coudre la bouche à ceux qui restent cons* » in « Combien ». This group, although its language choices are not as overtly coded as Québécois as the ensembles discussed in the next section, nonetheless expresses a distinct identity through the content of their lyrics and other artistic choices such as setting a well-known Québécois poet's work to music.

« Musique gossée à la main par des artistes de chez nous »: the sound of identity politics

A similar affirmation of a Québécois identity which relies as much on musical style as on linguistic delivery appears in the work of groups like Mes Aïeux and les Cowboys Fringants, which blend the use of fiddle – the *violoneux* being the most traditional of French-Canadian musicians – and string bass, with modern instruments like the electric guitar to create a unique musical style that is at once modern and traditional, rooted in the French-Canadian tradition and yet looking forward to the future. These groups typify the one purely indigenous French-Canadian popular genre today: that of the *néo-traditionnel*. While their SQF diction typically lies much closer to SIF than the overtly VQF of Daniel Boucher, their songs explicitly recall traditional French-Canadian folk songs⁶. At the same time, they reflect upon the contemporary, postmodern condition of Québec and the world, as seen in Mes Aïeux's « Le déni de l'évidence » (2008), which comments on a worldwide phenomenon of refusing to see and act on current problems, most particularly that of global warming, although the open-ended lyrics allow for polysemic readings.

⁵ This word play might have been even more profound had one of its members been named Tremblay.

⁶ It should be recalled that such icons of the Québécois *chanson* as it developed in the 1960s, such as Gilles Vigneault, wrote and sang in SIF for the most part; not until the 1970s did *joual* begin to appear in popular music.

The 2008 album by Mes Aïeux, *La ligne orange*, pays homage to Montréal's orange Métro line. When seen in print, the lyrics of « Le déni de l'évidence », which are nonetheless in colloquial French (for example elision of pre-consonantal /ə/ and omission of the particle *ne* in negated verbs, as in « *Je veux pas l'savoir* »), do not necessarily seem marked as Québec specific. It is lead singer Stéphane Archambault's rapid delivery, unique voice and distinct accent, coupled with the use of violin, which clearly mark the song as neo-traditional in its inspiration. More clearly Québécois in both language and content is the second single released from the album, « La Dévire », in which a first-person narrator expresses the *angoisse identitaire* of the died-in-the-wool Franco-Québécois in the contemporary, so-called post-national era. The song employs VQF, including examples of the incorporated *anglicisme* (as opposed to true code switching) and an imagery full of French-Canadian coding:

Je suis stallé, emberlificoté
Tricoté un brin trop serré [...]
*Je suis frileux, **pea soup**, peureux [...]*
J'me prends-tu vraiment au sérieux [...]
*Chus pris, je **spinne** dans mon banc de neige [...]*
C'est vrai, je chiale plus que j'milite [...]
Perdu, j'sais pus où chus rendu (my emphasis).

In these lines, we see examples of appropriated English verbs (*stallé*; *spinne*), the derogatory English term for French-Canadians « *pea soup* » – set off as a code switch through the use of italics in the CD's liner notes (as opposed to *stallé*, which is not) –, the use of « -tu » as an interrogative marker; the use of « chus » discussed above as the colloquial contraction of *je suis*, and the lexical *québécoisme*, « chiale » (*chialer* = *se plaindre*, but with a specific meaning calqued somewhat on the English « to whine »). The song concludes with a strong fiddle flourish, further entrenching it into a French-Canadian musical tradition, in analogy with the manner in which the accordion has become closely identified as a marker of metropolitan French music. The depth of the vernacular element is clearly a choice made to portray the type character, as described above, whose impotence appears reinforced by the illustration in the CD liner notes of a shadow figure, seated on a chair, bound up with an orange rope which bears the same motif of white dots used to unify the device of the orange Métro line throughout the disc's packaging design. While the overall impression of the song appears to criticize such stagnant, impotent anguish, it expresses at the same time sympathy for the narrator, established through the first person chosen for the lyrics.

Les Cowboys Fringants share this distinctively Québécois sound with a male lead vocalist who also reveals his North American origins through his diction; their lyrics also appear deeply rooted in the territory, both urban and rural. Several tracks from their most recent album, *L'expédition* (2009), have appeared in Air Musique's top-forty countdown; among these, « Tant qu'on aura de l'amour » celebrates the agricultural life of Québec's past: « *On se plaint pas quand y mouille/ C'est ça qui fait pousser/ nos plants de citrouilles* ». In contrast, « Entre deux taxis » and « La Catherine » appear inevitably associated with the city, the latter recalls the name of Montréal's main east-west axis, la rue Sainte-Catherine, in the given name of its bohemian young woman protagonist. Like Mes Aïeux, Les Cowboys Fringants do not always compose/perform in French highly marked as Québécois, their name, nonetheless offers an example of the ambiguous, pseudo-code switching found elsewhere in this analysis, since the English word « cowboy » has entered even metropolitan French. Their reference to classic French literature in the song « Chêne et roseau », a reworking of La Fontaine's fable, and the fact that they have toured in France and have a French following further internationalizes the appeal of Les Cowboys Fringants. And yet, they openly express their nationalist political agenda in other song lyrics and through their statement « *En 2006, ils ont*

lancé la fondation Cowboys Fringants qui lutte pour protéger des portions du territoire québécois » (Anonymous, « Cowboys », 2009).

Similar groups which offer a deeply enracinated form of popular music are Jaune, whose style is also referred to as « *folk-festif* » and Longue Distance, the *québécoité* of whose « *Passé moé l'crachoir* » will now be self-evident to readers of this study. As we might expect, these groups perform in a discourse heavily and clearly marked as Québécois. The group Jaune took its name from Jean-Pierre Ferland's landmark 1970 album, perhaps the first concept album by a Québécois pop artist (Léger, 2003: 75-76). The title of their first single and album are both well-rooted in a deeply vernacular Québec French: *Quek'chose de beau* and « *Ti-Boutte* » Opening with a mandolin, the song recounts the youth of the first-person narratrice and her friend, who sports the very Québécois nickname of the song's title. Stéphanie Blanchette represents the female vocalist in this sample to most overtly exploit her strong Québécois accent, for example in *rien* pronounced almost as /rjɛ̃̃/, as opposed to the standard international French /rjɛ̃/. These latter groups invoke a distinctly Québécois identity through linguistic choices and diction, without, however, resorting to the excessive anglicism of Stage Lacroix. What the comedian makes fun of, these groups tend to take seriously; at the same time, that does not mean that their music is humorless. Their interest lies less in openly playing with language than with commenting on contemporary Québec and world society. Their linguistic choices result in a fiercely proud *affichage* of their North American identity and their populist language and traditionally-oriented musical sounds interpellate a community of listeners also engaged in the representation of their own local identity through listening choices. These groups most clearly demonstrate the possibility of appropriating popular music sounds from the US into a distinctly local, authentically Québécois musical discourse marked by the choice of enracinated linguistic forms.

Conclusion

Line Grenier and Val Morrison asserted in 1995 that Québec popular music had developed « un mainstream local en pleine expansion qui [... vise à] participer activement à désamorcer les batailles de genres et de styles en privilégiant, au contraire, le mélange, le bricolage, le métissage au double plan du produit sonore et de la performance » (1995: 89). We have seen how popular artists from Québec draw from French and Anglo-American music traditions in their compositions; the linguistic choices of their lyrics also reveal the hybrid nature of Québec popular song. At the same time, Québec has developed its own musical traditions as well; the influence of earlier generations of performers like Vigneault, Ferland, Charlebois and more recently of groups like Les Colocs appears in the emerging music examined here. The generation of artists given airtime on Air Musique, a venue which explicitly codes itself as francophone and implicitly representative of a certain national norm (« *voire top quarante* »), many of whom began their careers since Grenier's pathbreaking discussions of developments in Québec's popular music industry, have all benefited from the local institutionalization of the industry she describes, the creation of a Québec-specific mainstream.

The diversity of expression that these artists are allowed without losing the perception of their « authenticity » illustrates the maturity of Québec's language ideology. At one time this ideology was rooted in the fear of the extinction of French in North America; the attitude of *la survivance* rejected out of hand any encroachments onto that territory. While continuing to acknowledge the status of francophones as a minority in North America and their right to self-determination however that might play itself out politically, intellectuals like Jocelyn Létourneau (2000), Jocelyn Maclure (2001, 2002) and Dimitrios Karmis (2001) propose new

and inclusive models of Québec-ness. As we have seen in this examination of contemporary popular music broadcast on Air Musique, a wide range of linguistic and musical forms are all accepted as authentically « Québécois ». At the same time, the range of French expression found in the written lyrics and performed pronunciation by Québec's popular music *auteurs* and *interprètes* also reveals, although this issue is beyond the scope of this essay, the range of divisions that remain *within* Québec society: urban versus rural, educational level and class conflict, as well as the varied levels of *prise de conscience* and/or resistance to either metropolitan pole of influence, France for the *chanson* and the U.S. for pop-rock.

This study represents only the beginning of the critical examination of Québec's popular music other than rap from a socio-linguistic perspective, it nonetheless demonstrates that the *chanson québécoise* is defined by its language, but even that parameter allows for a wide degree of variety. The range of language choices, from Standard International French to a highly Vernacular Québec French peppered with English and *anglicismes*, coupled with the diverse musical styles, from folk to reggae to hard rock, found among popular music artists confirm Jocelyn Maclure's conclusion that today « québécoisité is a polymorphous creation » (2002: 141). These artists demonstrate that « *different Québec authenticities [...] are already clashing with, tolerating, and intermingling with one another in the agora* » (Maclure 2002: 141) of popular culture.

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