

Snapshot of the situation

IDENTITY BUILDING





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Strategic priority:

IDENTITY BUILDING

The Identity-building strategic priority aims to create optimal opportunities for building an individual and collective Francophone identity.



OBJECTIVES OF THE IDENTITY-BUILDING SNAPSHOT

THROUGH THE OPTIMIZATION OF LIFELONG OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUILDING A FRANCOPHONE IDENTITY, AS WELL AS INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN SUCH OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITY BUILDING, THIS SNAPSHOT AIMS TO:

- PRESENT THE FINDINGS
- IDENTIFY STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES
- IDENTIFY RELEVANCE INDICATORS
- IDENTIFY EXISTING RESOURCES
- IDENTIFY MISSING RESOURCES

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Taking relevance indicators into account, Francophone and Acadian communities (FACs) have developed/ reviewed and implemented their intersectoral strategies in relation to:

- **TAKING RELEVANCE INDICATORS INTO ACCOUNT, FRANCOPHONE AND ACADIAN COMMUNITIES (FACs) HAVE DEVELOPED/REVIEWED AND IMPLEMENTED THEIR INTERSECTORAL STRATEGIES IN RELATION TO:**

* A strategy becomes intersectoral when it is planned collaboratively by representatives of various sectors whose strengths are harnessed within a convergence of interests and a shared willingness to achieve common objectives..

TARGET AUDIENCE

Who are you ?

I AM AN EDUCATOR

I AM AN ELEMENTARY OR A SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER

I AM SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

I AM A SCHOOL TRUSTEE

I AM A GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR

I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR TEACHER TRAINING/
POST-SECONDARY STUDIES

I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

I AM FROM A MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OR A MINISTRY
WITH A RELATED INTEREST

I AM AN EMPLOYEE OF A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION OR A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY WITH AN
INTEREST IN THIS AREA

FINDINGS

OVER THE PAST FEW DECADES, THE CONCEPT OF IDENTITY HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF CONSIDERABLE RESEARCH. WHETHER APPLIED TO THE INDIVIDUAL OR THE COMMUNITY, IDENTITY IS CONSIDERED AS A MEETING BETWEEN THE SELF AND THE OTHER AND IS MATERIALIZED THROUGH THE ACTIONS THAT INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS OF INDIVIDUALS ACCOMPLISH WHILE LIVING IN SOCIETY. THE NOTION OF IDENTITY CAN BE STUDIED FROM AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW.

WHAT IS IDENTITY?

IDENTITY IS BUILT FROM WITHIN

While identity is defined in the social sphere, it is built from within each individual. This is why identity can only exist where there is a sense of identity.

ACCORDING TO RESEARCH BY ALEX MUCCHIELLI, SUCH A SENSE OF IDENTITY CONSISTS OF A SET OF FEELINGS INCLUDING:

- A SENSE OF MATERIAL BEING derived from bodily sensations and the recognition that society attributes to the individual (name, social status, physical aspect, possessions, etc.);
- A SENSE OF UNITY AND COHERENCE that is made up of the sum of the individual's experiences. This feeling is based on the common thread or sense of unity the individual ascribes to his experiences when he tells his story (field of competence, life experiences, various commitments, etc.);
- A SENSE OF TEMPORAL CONTINUITY that enables an individual to see the different component parts of his personal history as a continuum and to think of them as stages of life (family, professional, migratory and health history, etc.);
- A SENSE OF BELONGING that results from the process of integrating social values and corresponds to the opportunity to communicate, if not be in communion, that human beings feel with peers (belonging to a linguistic community, a sports team, an institution, etc.);
- A SENSE OF DIFFERENCE that is related to the sense of belonging and contributes to identity awareness. When an individual is confronted to what he is not or is thrown into a world that is completely unfamiliar, he learns to recognize his identity referents (for example by taking part in a festival of cultures, visiting a foreign country, interacting with a different age group, etc.);
- A SENSE OF VALUE that is associated with the ability to see various points of view, thereby understanding different perceptions. Such conscious superimposition of another person's perception of oneself allows an individual to not only judge his own value, but also question prevailing values (taking a stand on issues related to justice, gender equality, the environment, peace, etc.);
- A SENSE OF AUTONOMY which is the opposite of the sense of belonging as it corresponds to human beings' need to assert their identity in relation to the group with which they identify (French-Canadian, of Acadian or Québécois descent, global citizen, etc.);
- Finally, at the heart of these different feelings is THE SENSE OF CONFIDENCE AND EXISTENCE (believing in the future of a people is also believing that we are part of it).

IDENTITY EMERGES FROM WITHIN AND ASSERTS ITSELF IN THE SOCIAL SPHERE¹ [TRANSLATION]

OPTIMAL SENSE OF IDENTITY DEFINED BY THE SENSE OF:

- one's material being
- unity and coherence
- temporal continuity
- belonging
- difference
- value
- autonomy
- confidence and existence

Though the sense of one's material being meshes with the ability to trust others, it is nonetheless the essential foundation upon which rests the main focus of the sense of existence, thereby helping the individual to feel that his actions have purpose. Conditioned to one another, the different feelings form a system and they can foster what Alex Mucchielli calls the optimal sense of identity.

Identity is built through a collective psyche

ACCORDING TO PATRICK CHARAUDEAU, RESEARCHER AT THE CENTRE D'ANALYSE DU DISCOURS DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DE PARIS, THE INDIVIDUAL AND GROUPS BUILD THEIR IDENTITY THROUGH A COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCE AND PSYCHE [TRANSLATION]. ²

THIS PSYCHE PERTAINS TO:³

- **territory**, demonstrating how individual members of a social group see it, move within it, structure it and find their way within it (the perception of a fragmented francophonie within Canada).
- **time**, demonstrating how individuals see the links between the past, the present and the future, which determines the symbolic role of the ages and generations within a society (the role of elders in the Aboriginal culture).
- **the body**, demonstrating how individuals see the place it occupies within the social space, which influences health and hygiene practices and the connection to dress and nudity, among other things (hypersexualization phenomenon in American cultures).
- **social relationships**, demonstrating how individuals see what behaviours they must adopt in a society, which gives rise to rituals surrounding greetings, apologies, courteousness, taunts and insults, humour, irony or derision (the informal "tu" that has supplanted the formal "vous" among French-Canadians).
- **social categorization** and the privileges afforded to certain groups (the right to speak granted to elders, women or children).

¹Mucchielli, A. (2013). *L'identité* (vol. 9). Presses Universitaires de France.

²Patrick Charaudeau. « L'identité culturelle entre langue et discours ». *Revue de l'AQEFLS* vol 24, no 1. Montréal, 2002. – Books, articles, publications.

Heritage (lineage) is another facet of the collective psyche. It influences the symbolic value that individuals assign to their parentage (dynastic models in economics, politics or justice). Finally, there is a psyche related to language, demonstrating how individuals see themselves as belonging to a given linguistic community (the Francophone, bilingual, French-dominant bilingual, English-dominant bilingual, multilingual, francophile or Anglophone identity variables).

UNDERSTANDING IDENTITY BUILDING

Identity building is a process as complex as the notion of identity. In order to better understand it and intervene more effectively, we must address it from a social and an individual point of view. It is in this spirit that the Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF) fuelled a collective dialogue on identity building by creating a guiding framework that helps Canada's social, educational and community institutions to share the same vision and commit to a single mission while using the same vocabulary and the same parameters to define and describe their actions and interventions.

According to the ACELF's guiding framework, "identity building is a highly dynamic process during which the person defines and recognizes himself through his way of thinking, acting and wanting in social contexts and the natural environment in which he evolves." [Translation]

The reflection conducted by the ACELF focusses on building an overall identity that integrates different layers which contribute to defining the person. These include several identities, for example, social, family, sexual, political, professional and religious.



ACCORDING TO THE ACELF'S RESEARCH, ANY INTERVENTION UNDERTAKEN TO FOSTER BUILDING A FRANCOPHONE IDENTITY HAS OPTIMAL IMPACT WHEN IT IS PLANNED IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT :

1. Is grounded in contemporary Francophonie
2. Builds on creativity and innovation
3. Promotes diversity
4. Encourages families, communities and schools to work together
5. Develops a positive relationship with the French language
6. Creates connections within the Francophonie
7. Fosters engagement
8. Aims for lasting effects



These principles are a major step forward in understanding identity building and developing initiatives aimed at fostering Francophone identity building.⁴

As part of the ACELF's work, interventions to support identity building place particular emphasis on the Francophone identity whose indicators are both cultural and linguistic. Though the ACELF developed the identity-building model mainly with youth in mind, as it is based on a highly dynamic and lifelong process, it can be applied to people of all ages.

LINKS BETWEEN LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND IDENTITY



Languages are symbols of identity; their speakers use them to mark their belonging to a group that shares the same language. Each group has its own language or variation of a language. Thus, a regional group uses a regional dialect (which is a variation of a language); similarly, an age group has its own way of expressing itself (speaking in the manner of young people).

The birth of virtual social networks requires a language specific to their users. English is obviously the most widely used language on such networks. The use of such conventions creates a sense of belonging to the group. Each individual can belong to many social groups and have several social identities and therefore master many forms of a language or several languages. In addition to acting as a marker of group belonging, language serves as an instrument to infiltrate the group and claim ownership of the group's referents and culture (understanding and speaking an ethnic group's language provides access to its culture).

³ According to the ACELF, any school-based intervention must take account of the fact that schools are not the only source of influence over the development of a Francophone identity among youth. As a result, educators must seek to act in tandem with these other meaningful social contexts.

⁴ To learn more about the ACELF's 8 principles, consult the [Relevance indicators](#) section.

BILINGUAL OR HYBRID IDENTITY

Many researchers have observed the phenomenon of [bilingual identity or hybrid identity](#) in minority settings in Canada. Christine Dallaire and Josianne Roma from the University of Ottawa state that: “the common finding from studies that have looked at the way youth describe themselves is their insistence on their bilingualism in their self-description.”⁵ [Translation]

For her part, Diane Gérin-Lajoie from the University of Toronto’s Centre de recherches en éducation francophone describes bilingual identity as “[a new state of identity](#).”⁶ [Translation] However, based on their analyses of some 4,000 young people living in different ethnolinguistic vitality contexts, Rodrigue Landry, Kenneth Deveau and Réal Allard, from the Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, have demonstrated that bilingual or hybrid identity exists along an identity continuum and that hybrid identity is not without consequences for young Francophones’ Frenchness. Researchers are also able to show that while bilingual identity is very prominent among young Francophones, in minority settings, it is rather instable and strongly related to the Francophone community’s vitality. This is what leads [Landry, Deveau and Allard](#) to say that in order to escape from social determinism, community revitalization and collective awareness efforts are both essential and urgent, given the decreasing vitality of Francophone communities in minority settings.⁷

In addition, according to research by Phyllis Dalley, educator and sociolinguist involved in minority-setting education, Francophone identity building among youth is fostered through the use of the French language and the level of fluency in speaking it. She feels there is a “[direct] link between how students relate to French, regardless of their proficiency level, as an element of Francophone identity. It would therefore seem that teaching methods that are sensitive to identity building must ensure the development of a sense of proficiency in oral communication.”⁸ [Translation]

Pour ce faire, il y a un effort de sensibilisation à mener au niveau du personnel enseignant face à leur rôle dans la construction identitaire et leur rôle en tant que passeur culturel. L’établissement scolaire se doit d’offrir des occasions de perfectionnement professionnel qui met de l’avant le lien entre langue et identité.

Selon Phyllis Dalley, le personnel scolaire doit redéfinir l’identité francophone afin de la rendre plus inclusive ; « la définition modifiée de la langue qui inclut la diversité de ses variétés est un élément à privilégier lorsque l’objectif de la construction identitaire est en jeu. De fait, l’accueil de cette diversité ouvre la voie à des pratiques pédagogiques qui sécurisent davantage les élèves à l’égard de leur compétence en français les rendant plus à même de participer aux activités porteuses de construction identitaire. »⁹

⁵ Dallaire, C. and Roma, J. (2003). « Entre la langue et la culture, l’identité francophone des jeunes en milieu minoritaire au Canada. Bilan des recherches », (pp. 30-46). In R. Allard (Dir.) Actes du colloque pancanadien sur la recherche en éducation en milieu francophone minoritaire : Bilan et perspectives. Moncton, NB : Association canadienne d’éducation de langue française (ACELF) and Centre de recherche et de développement en éducation (CRDE), Université de Moncton.

⁶ Gérin-Lajoie, Diane. *Parcours identitaires de jeunes francophones en milieu minoritaire*. Sudbury. Éditions Prise de parole, 2003.

⁷ [Landry Rodrigue, Kenneth Deveau and Réal Allard \(2006\). « Vitalité ethnolinguistique et construction identitaire : le cas de l’identité bilingue ». Éducation et francophonie, vol 31, no 1.](#)

⁸ Dalley, P. (2012). *Recherche en construction identitaire et communication orale (CI-CO)*. Monographie de la théorie à la pratique.

⁹ Ibid. p.201

THE CONTRIBUTION OF FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRATION

Canada's Francophone immigration policy outside Québec has impacted on the development of Francophone and Acadian minority communities in Canada. While its effects were felt more acutely in certain hotspots throughout the country, Francophone immigration and the acceptance of immigrants in French-language schools have put young Francophones in direct contact with cultural and linguistic diversity.

Youth therefore build their identity in a context of cultural diversity at the very heart of francophonie. Cultural diversity is increasingly perceived as a source of development and enrichment for the collective Francophone culture, especially by youth. The contributions of cultural groups represented in the Francophone community accelerate the renewal of the collective culture, ensuring its place in the global Canadian francophonie.

Charles Castonguay, mathematician and demographer, has produced figures showing that the contribution of immigration to the demographic sustainability of Francophone populations in minority settings falls short of policy aspirations. He explains this finding by the fact that "Francophones from abroad and from Québec are anglicized very quickly, sometimes even faster than Francophones from the provinces in question." [Translation] However, the urgent need to act to escape from social determinism referred to by Landry, Deveau and Allard also applies to Francophone immigration policy.



THE ACELF BUILDS STAKEHOLDER BUY-IN FOR A GUIDING FRAMEWORK ON IDENTITY BUILDING:

- where the focus is on Francophone identity whose indicators are cultural and linguistic
- whose model, based on a highly dynamic, lifelong process, applies to people of all ages

LANGUAGE IS A SYMBOL OF IDENTITY

- it marks a belonging to a group that shares the same language
- bilingual or hybrid identity exists along an identity continuum and is strongly related to the Francophone community's vitality
- socializing on virtual social networks happens mostly in English

CULTURAL DIVERSITY IS A SOURCE OF ENRICHMENT FOR THE COLLECTIVE FRANCOPHONE CULTURE

- youth build their identity in a context of cultural diversity at the very heart of francophonie
- Anglophone assimilation is a threat for Francophones

* Castonguay, C. (2008). Apport de l'immigration aux populations francophones hors Québec. *Francophonies d'Amérique*, (26), 235–247

LINGUISTIC SECURITY

Linguistic identity in identity building

Many Francophones in minority settings suffer from linguistic insecurity, which is defined as a “feeling of not being competent, not being able to keep up or not measuring up to the Other, or the fear of making ‘mistakes.’”¹⁰ [Translation]

According to the Fédération de la jeunesse canadienne-française (FJCF), linguistic insecurity is a feeling that is present throughout the country, among all age groups and across all sectors.

Linguistic insecurity becomes a barrier to identity building when, fearing he will be mocked or bullied, a person doesn’t dare communicate in French or even associate with the French-language community.

This phenomenon “corresponds to an awareness of an exogenous standard, associated with an outer region, that is superior to the linguistic variety in use in one’s own area.”¹¹ [Translation]

In order to ensure the emergence of linguistic security at the national level, it is essential to create identity-building actions that promote an inclusive and diversified francophonie: a francophonie that shines through its multiple accents.

The FJCF is currently developing a [national strategy for linguistic insecurity](#) that will be unveiled in the spring of 2020. It will propose a series of initiatives and actions that can be implemented by different sectors of society to ensure the development of a sense of linguistic security among Francophone citizens.

INTERVENTION IN THE FAMILY, EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SETTINGS

Though a personal endeavor resulting from a free and considered decision, for its fulfillment, identity building requires conditions that can be put in place by mobilizing the family, the school and the community. Such mobilization contributes to what Landry calls “the cultural autonomy project.”¹² [Translation]

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IS VITAL IN THEIR CHILDREN’S IDENTITY BUILDING

The family is the first social structure in which the markers of individual ethnolinguistic identity manifest themselves in a prevalent manner. Parents have a vital role in creating the essential conditions for Francophone identity building.

“IN ORDER TO MAKE APPROPRIATE CHOICES AND TAKE WELL-INFORMED DECISIONS, PARENTS OFTEN NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE CONDITIONS THAT FOSTER THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE AND FRANCOPHONE IDENTITY. MUCH LIKE PROFESSIONALS IN THEIR FIELD NEED TO UPGRADE THEIR SKILLS, PARENTS ALSO NEED TO BE INFORMED, SUPPORTED AND ACCOMPANIED.”¹³
[TRANSLATION]

According to the ACELF, French-language minority schools that recognize and value parents’ expertise, as cultural transmitters, are able to distinguish themselves from majority schools.

¹⁰ Koscielniak, Hélène. *Le tarois*, revue Liaison, printemps 2016, p. 13.

¹¹ Gérin-Lajoie, Diane, et Normand Labrie (1999). « *Les résultats aux tests de lecture et d’écriture en 1993-1994 : une interprétation sociolinguistique* », p. 87.

¹² Landry, Rodrigue. (2012). *Autonomie culturelle, cultures sociétales et vitalité des communautés de langue officielle en situation minoritaire au Canada*.

¹³ *La collaboration avec les parents*, L’ACELF. Comprendre la construction identitaire 9.



EXOAMY A “HIDDEN POTENTIAL” FOR FRANCOPHONIE

An increasing proportion of Francophones form a couple with an Anglophone or an allophone spouse. These families reproduce a microcosm of Canada’s linguistic duality model.

Though exogamy poses a threat to francophonie, it is also a “hidden potential” according to Landry, particularly for French-language schools. According to Landry and Allard, the threat referred to by many researchers is not directly caused by exogamy, but more so by the linguistic dynamic chosen by the family. This suggests that the future of the francophonie lies in large part in the choices made by parents of both exogamous and endogamous families in instilling a linguistic and cultural dynamic within the family.

THE ISSUE OF FRANCOPHONIE RESTS UPON THE FAMILY’S CULTURAL DYNAMIC

Identity building among young Francophones is increasingly complex nowadays because it is characterized by different dimensions of diversity, not only cultural diversity, but also a diversity of origins, genders, family structures, ethnocultural backgrounds, etc.

Francophone culture therefore exists in a crossroads of different identity dimensions. In order to ensure a healthy school-family relationship, it is important to redefine Francophone identity and to train educators in the development of cultural and intercultural competencies*.

When educators understand individual and ethnic cultures, as well as the Francophone community as a whole, the relationship with immigrant families is strengthened. This relationship fosters not only the recognition of difference, but also a cultural uniformity at the linguistic level.

Intervention in the family setting is therefore the result of a dialogue between parents and an awareness of the impact of the linguistic dynamic and family culture on the value and the emotional significance attached to language and the culture of origin.

* ACCORDING TO ÉMILIE DESCHÊNES, A CONSULTANT SPECIALIZING IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND INTERCULTURAL MANAGEMENT, THERE IS NO CONSENSUS ON THE DEFINITION OF CULTURAL COMPETENCE. HOWEVER, BASED ON HER EXPERIENCE AND BY MERGING AUTHORS’ DEFINITIONS, SHE DESCRIBES IT AS “THE ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND A SPECIFIC CULTURE AND TO ADAPT TO IT RELATIVELY, BY BROADENING ONE’S SPECTRUM OF INTERPRETATION AND ACTION.” [TRANSLATION]

INTERVENTION IN THE EDUCATIONAL SETTING

ACCORDING TO THE SURVEY ON CULTURAL APPROPRIATION BY YOUTH IN FRENCH-LANGUAGE MINORITY HIGH SCHOOLS¹⁴:

“Youth rarely describe school as a cultural environment, seeing it only from a linguistic perspective. Initiatives and experiments must be launched to act on this finding. If students do not perceive the school as a place where culture is at the heart of the action, perhaps it has not yet embarked upon this course.” [Translation]

However, based on a survey on the impact of youth participation in events that focus on sports and culture, such as the Jeux franco-ontariens, Jeux de l'Acadie and Jeux francophones de l'Alberta, Christine Dallaire has shown that youth become Francophones by “doing” Francophone. “The more teenagers engage in and repeat linguistic and/or cultural activities that define Frenchness, the more they strengthen their Francophone sense of belonging.”¹⁵ [Translation]

French-language schools must operate on this premise in order to integrate culture into its school and extra-curricular programs. Youth themselves are calling for greater participation in the planning, organization and execution of cultural and social activities that would allow them to exchange, reflect, acquire knowledge and have fun in French.

Through the stratégie d'intervention jeunesse developed by the Fédération de la jeunesse canadienne-française, youth clearly express this need to equip themselves, to commit and to be supported and encouraged. Through their spokesperson organization, young people are claiming their right to civic participation “by and for youth.”

Over the past few years, a movement of growing awareness has been observed among educators regarding their role of supporting identity building in young people. This movement is not foreign to the many initiatives that are emerging at the regional and national levels to promote identity-building and cultural action in French-language minority schools.



¹⁴ Boudreau, R., Deveau, K., & Dallaire, C. (2009). *L'appropriation culturelle des jeunes à l'école secondaire francophone en milieu minoritaire* (Publication). La Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants (FCE) Repéré à : https://www.ctf-fce.ca/Research-Library/appropriation-culturelle_3_synthese-de-l-enquete.pdf

¹⁵ Dallaire, C. (2008). *La stabilité des discours identitaires et la représentation de la culture dans la reproduction de l'appartenance francophone chez les jeunes*. Francophonies d'Amérique, (26),

INITIATIVES AND RESOURCES



RESOURCES TO BETTER UNDERSTAND AND SUPPORT IDENTITY BUILDING AMONG YOUTH

Resources include the [Trousse des enfants en art](#) kit, the series [Comprendre la construction identitaire](#), the collection [Voir grand](#), the self-training tool [Mieux comprendre, mieux intervenir](#), the [Banque d'activités pédagogiques \(BAP\)](#), the guide [Pour une jeunesse active et fière](#), the educational activity booklet to celebrate [National Francophonie Week](#), the [Trousse du passeur culturel](#) and the [Cadre d'orientation en construction identitaire](#).



PEDAGOGY FOR FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOLS (LA PÉDAGOGIE À L'ÉCOLE DE LANGUE FRANÇAISE; PELF)

The project by the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) includes over 160 videos modelling the [PELF](#) principles, a resource database of Canada-wide initiatives designed for French-language schools, and a virtual collaboration space made available to teaching staff.



PAN-CANADIAN FRAMEWORK FOR CULTURAL APPROPRIATION IN FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

This project introduces the principles of the cultural approach to teaching and includes a foundation document on [the cultural approach to teaching](#), a pan-Canadian database of significant cultural referents for the francophonie, a database of teaching strategies that integrates the cultural approach to teaching, and a training website on the cultural approach to teaching.



COMMUNICO TRAINING

This [professional development kit in oral communication](#) for French-language minority schools aims to put into practice educational interventions that foster oral communication in the classroom to support students' identity development. In addition to a range of activities to be integrated in the classroom, the kit suggests ways to mobilize the school, teaching staff, students, families and communities around the development of French language proficiency and educational success.

ALL OF THESE INITIATIVES CONTRIBUTE TO SUPPORTING EDUCATORS IN THEIR MISSION TO GUIDE YOUTH IN THEIR IDENTITY BUILDING. THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE LIES IN THE PROMOTION AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE RESOURCES AND IN EDUCATORS' OWNERSHIP OF THE CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES EXPLORED THEREIN.



INTERVENTION IN THE COMMUNITY SETTING

The CTF survey on cultural ownership titled L'appropriation culturelle des jeunes à l'école secondaire francophone en milieu minoritaire¹⁶, shows that, outside the school's control, cultural activities among youth regularly take place in English. Furthermore, when such activities are aimed at promoting Francophone culture, young people are often absent.

According to Christine Dallaire, survey research associate, identity strength stems from the repeated and frequent execution of activities that define and build it. This is why all of the community's resources, including those of educational institutions, must be leveraged to offer the young and not-so-young opportunities to build a strong Francophone identity. To ensure they are attractive to youth, the activities must be developed with and for them, based on their own cultural code.

In an article titled Au-delà de l'école : le projet politique de l'autonomie culturelle¹⁷, published in 2008 in the magazine *Francophonies d'Amérique*, Rodrigue Landry makes the case that: "education in French can only play its full role for these communities if it is an integral part of a comprehensive collective project, a cultural autonomy policy project." [Translation] Based on this theory, schools alone cannot sustain community vitality and maintain ethnolinguistic revitalization.

Francophone civil society must take responsibility for the future of Canada's Francophone and Acadian communities by creating the conditions that are essential to the development of francophonie and to Francophone identity building for members of these communities. Community intervention is part of a process to expand the Francophone space through a commitment by community members and the promotion of the French language and Francophone culture in the public sphere.

¹⁶ Boudreau, R., Deveau, K., & Dallaire, C. (2009). *L'appropriation culturelle des jeunes à l'école secondaire francophone en milieu minoritaire* (Publication). Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) Retrieved from: https://www.ctf-fce.ca/Research-Library/appropriation-culturelle_3_synthese-de-l-enquete.pdf

¹⁷ Landry, R. (2008). *Au-delà de l'école : le projet politique de l'autonomie culturelle*. *Francophonies d'Amérique*, (26), 149–183. <https://doi.org/10.7202/037980ar>

CIVIC COMMUNITY SCHOOL

It is in this spirit that members of the Table nationale sur l'éducation have committed to developing, promoting and implementing the unifying civic community school project. This project is a concrete way for Canada's Francophone and Acadian community members to take an active part in the growth and development of the francophonie by committing to the promotion of French language learning and by fostering the emergence of a comprehensive awareness of solidarity.

A French civic community school is a place for learning, socializing and identity building, in harmony with the community it serves. It is a space for consciousness raising and the collective appropriation of the French language and the Francophone culture, a place that is conducive to building Francophone identities.

Moreover, as part of the [Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-2023](#), the federal government has pledged financial support for the enrichment of community schools through cultural and identity-building activities

INTERVENTIONS TO CREATE THE IDEAL CONDITIONS:

IN THE FAMILY SETTING

- The role of parents is vital in their children's identity building
- Exogamy is both a threat and a "hidden potential" for the francophonie
- The issue of francophonie rests in large part upon the parents' choices and the family's cultural and linguistic dynamic

IN THE EDUCATIONAL SETTING

- Youth rarely describe school as a cultural environment, seeing it only from a linguistic perspective
- "Doing" in French trains young people to become Francophones
- Young people are claiming their right to civic participation "by and for youth"
- A movement of growing awareness has been observed among educators throughout Canada
- Many initiatives under way are making new resources that foster identity building among youth available to educators
- The promotion, deployment and ownership of these resources remain to be carried out

IN THE COMMUNITY SETTING

- Youth's involvement in the planning, organization and execution of the francophonie's cultural and social events is not sufficiently sought out and as a result, they are often absent
- Schools alone cannot sustain community vitality and maintain ethnolinguistic revitalization
- The prime movers in the community must be rallied together to take responsibility for the cultural and linguistic destiny of Francophone and Acadian communities
- There is a national consensus in favor of the implementation of the concept of civic community schools.

STRENGTHS

THE NEXT SECTION PRESENTS THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS, GAINS, SUCCESSES AND ABILITIES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.

A COMMON UNDERSTANDING

Though identity and the process of building it are complex concepts, the work of researchers and practitioners, and in particular that accomplished by the ACELF, helps the entire francophonie network to share a common understanding and vision of identity building.

Such an understanding gives rise to an increasing awareness of the issues related to identity building among education stakeholders.

Based on this understanding and awareness, identity building is recognized by all as a priority area for Canada's Francophone and Acadian communities.



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SUPPORT RESOURCES

The identification of identity building as a priority area by all francophonie networks has resulted in the development of a set of initiatives and resources. When they are known, deployed and integrated, such initiatives and resources contribute to fostering identity building and supporting those who play a direct or indirect role in fostering identity building.

GROWING EXPERTISE

As a result of such resources, teams of experts on identity building (networks of champions) are slowly being created within ministries of Education, school boards and even communities.

BETTER TARGETED INTERVENTIONS

While identity-building intervention methods have yet to be spelled out, the increased expertise in the field has contributed to better targeted interventions in the school setting and to visible gains.

A CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC FRAMEWORK

Some jurisdictions in Canada decided to create more formal frameworks for cultural and linguistic action in the education system. The initiatives put in place have resulted in cultural and linguistic coaching strategies which became policies in some provinces. The sharing of winning practices arising from the implementation of the cultural and linguistic environment frameworks is a driving force for Francophone communities in minority settings.

CHALLENGES

This section identifies the main challenges to overcome in order to achieve the strategic objectives.

DISSEMINATION OF EXISTING RESOURCES

Important identity-building resources have been developed for a variety of groups. The promotion and dissemination of these resources to ensure they are used on a large scale remains a major challenge.

REINFORCING SYSTEMIC CAPACITY

While the system's capacity to intervene in the area of identity building is increasing, reinforcing such capacity remains a challenge in the francophonie's educational and community settings. It is not enough to have quality resources: stakeholders must be convinced and able to use them efficiently.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE FAMILY, THE SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY

Identity building is often perceived as the exclusive responsibility of the education sector. One of the biggest challenges is to mobilize the family, school and community's resources such that the actions of each are coordinated, thereby making them more efficient.



BETTER COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE THREE SECTORS WOULD HELP TO OVERCOME THE FOLLOWING CHALLENGES, AMONG OTHERS:

- Increasing young Francophones' community engagement by valuing and facilitating their participation in the community.
- Valuing cultural diversity by leveraging it to build a collective Francophone identity.
- Valuing French-language studies by facilitating transitions between secondary school, college, university and the workplace.
- Valuing virtual communication in French by encouraging browsing and writing in an evolving Francophone digital space.

RELEVANCE INDICATORS

(THE RELEVANCE INDICATORS ARE BASED ON THE ACELF'S 8 GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON IDENTITY BUILDING)

Relevance indicators are statements that serve to give an opinion on a project's value. Thus, stakeholders in all education settings who play a direct or indirect role in identity building rely on such indicators to guide the design, execution, use or evaluation of all interventions, resources, initiatives or strategies aimed at achieving the strategic plan's objectives on French-language education.

IDENTITY-BUILDING RELEVANCE INDICATORS

ANY INTERVENTION UNDERTAKEN TO FOSTER BUILDING A FRANCOPHONE IDENTITY HAS OPTIMAL IMPACT WHEN IT IS PLANNED IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT :

1. IS GROUNDED IN CONTEMPORARY FRANCOPHONIE

The intervention is part of a modern vision of a Francophonie that is open to the world and takes into consideration today's realities.

2. BUILDS ON CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

The intervention offers an innovative and participative process involving reflection, construction of meaning, and individual and shared creation. It succeeds by bringing into play the arts, culture and technology, among others.

3. PROMOTES DIVERSITY

The intervention reflects an inclusive Francophonie, built within a wide variety of contexts (social, cultural, religious, historical, geographical, etc.), and draws upon the rich diversity of people and communities.

4. ENCOURAGES FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES AND SCHOOLS TO WORK TOGETHER

The intervention contributes to the coherence of actions from early childhood, school, family and community services while generating significant and sustainable experiences that build identity.

5. DEVELOPS A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FRENCH LANGUAGE

The intervention fosters an awareness of the power of the French language in all aspects of life. It offers inspiring historical and current models which confirm the appropriateness of displaying pride in and attachment to French as a means of expression and personal fulfilment.

6. CREATES CONNECTIONS WITHIN THE FRANCOPHONIE

The intervention focusses on French as a unifying element and on increased mutual knowledge of all aspects of a diverse Francophonie as it is lived at all levels: local, provincial and territorial, regional, national, and international. It encourages the establishment of networks that energize efforts to increase community vitality.

7. FOSTERS ENGAGEMENT

The intervention takes advantage of existing synergies by encouraging participation in and commitment to a collective approach to community vitalization.

8. AIMS FOR LASTING EFFECTS

The intervention stimulates the growth of individual and collective leadership exerting a positive and lasting impact on the development of Francophone communities.

EVALUATION

HOW TO EVALUATE THE IMPACT OF OUR IDENTITY-BUILDING ACTIONS?

The construction of a Francophone identity is a process that cannot be evaluated formally like a school subject. However, the double mission of French-language schools forces us to consider this aspect from the perspective of the quality of the progress made. (...) There needs to be a conscious intention on the part of teaching staff if the goal is to support the student in his personal development.¹⁸ [Translation]



ACCORDING TO THE **ACELF**, FRANCOPHONE IDENTITY CANNOT BE EVALUATED.

HOWEVER, THERE ARE MEASURABLE OR OBSERVABLE ELEMENTS. EDUCATORS CAN THUS ENSURE THAT STUDENTS:

- ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE THAT SERVES AS A FOUNDATION FOR FRANCOPHONIE;
- UNDERSTAND THE ISSUES THAT WILL STIMULATE THEIR ANALYTICAL INSIGHT AND HELP THEM MAKE JUDICIOUS CHOICES;
- DEVELOP A POSITIVE GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARD THE FRENCH LANGUAGE AND FRANCOPHONE CULTURE.

¹⁸ *La construction d'une identité francophone et l'évaluation, L'ACELF. Comprendre la construction identitaire 5.*



THE FUTURE OF THE IDENTITY-BUILDING SNAPSHOT*

This identity-building snapshot is constantly evolving in order to respond to the current context of French-language minority schools.

Looking to the future, the Tripartite Committee, responsible for implementing the strategic plan for French-language education, will look at the issue of intersectionality.

THE ISSUE OF IDENTITY BUILDING IS INCREASINGLY COMPLEX

Education stakeholders must allow students to build their Francophone identity while leaving room for them to integrate the other aspects of their identity (place of origin and place of birth, religions and belief systems, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, family structures, socio-economic profiles, races and ethnocultural heritages, disabilities, other languages, etc.)

Because individuals exist at a crossroads of different identity dimensions, it is essential to redefine Francophone culture to make it representative of the diversity of French-language schools (move away from the folkloric perspective that is not current for students).

Training in identity building for educators must therefore include the development of cultural teaching practices that take into account the minority Francophone culture, ethnocultural diversity and multiple identities.

Such practices will help foster discussion among students and educational experiences outside the classroom in order to respond to the double mandate of French-language schools: student learning and identity building.

The Tripartite Committee will also analyze the impact of new technologies on identity building for students of French-language minority schools.

* Inspired by presentations to the Tripartite Committee in May 2019 by: Nathalie Sirois, equity and human rights leader at the Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario (CEPEO), Émilie Deschênes, consultant and school management and intercultural management specialist, and Mona Moquin, Métis teacher at the Franco-Manitoban School Division.

Definition

In the context of the Strategic Plan for French-Language Education, the term resource means:

Any means – foundation document, training strategy, implementation guide, model of an initiative, research reports, expertise, etc. – likely to support the implementation of an intersectoral strategy for French-Language education put forward by Francophone and Acadian community partners.

CONSTRUCTION IDENTITAIRE (IDENTITY BUILDING)

Association canadienne d’éducation de langue française (ACELF)



DESCRIPTION

This platform on identity build-ing includes a list of identity-building resources and inter-vention tools, a virtual consult-ant that guides users in their exploration of resources, as well as a section that presents a variety of training and devel-opment activities.

TYPE OF RESOURCE

In addition to presenting the resources and training ac-tivities, the platform gives users access to a virtual consultant that guides them in their exploration of re-sources. It targets users’ needs through questions, then directs them to appro-priate resources.

INTENDED FOR

1. School and community workers

BANQUE D’ACTIVITÉS PÉDAGOGIQUES (BAP) (EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY DATABASE)

Association canadienne d’éducation de langue française (ACELF)

DESCRIPTION

This resource consists of a di-rectory of specialized Franco-phone identity-building activities that lead young people to re-flect on their personal and cul-tural identity, while developing their sense of communication, commitment and leadership.

TYPE OF RESOURCE

The resource consists of a searchable database of educational activities in the form of fact sheets arranged by theme, age group, academic discipline or identity-building criteria

INTENDED FOR

1. Teaching staff and/or youth workers (activities geared to 4- to 20-year olds)



COMMENTS

This pan-Canadian re-source can pro-vide ideas for in-tervention in the school, family or community set-ting.

IDENTITY-BUILDING RESOURCES TABLE

MIEUX COMPRENDRE, MIEUX INTERVENIR

Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF)



DESCRIPTION

This training resource is aimed at improving identity-building interventions with students.

TYPE OF RESOURCE

Individual and group self-training covering three sections:

1. Basic training (4 modules)
2. In-depth modules
3. Follow-up modules and tools (5 fact sheets)

INTENDED FOR

1. Teaching staff
2. Mentors

TROUSSE DU PASSEUR CULTUREL

Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF), Fédération canadienne des directions d'école francophone (FCDÉF), Fédération culturelle canadienne-française (FCCF)



DESCRIPTION

The kit is intended as a tool for developing the role of cultural transmitter; supporting the implementation of teaching methods in minority settings; and reinforcing the cultural and artistic dimension in order to enrich the cultural environment of French-language schools.

TYPE OF RESOURCE

The kit includes four components:

1. Website
2. Training
3. Booklet for principals
4. Registration in the directory (for artists).

INTENDED FOR

- 1. French-language school principals**

SEMAINE NATIONALE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE (NATIONAL FRANCOPHONIE WEEK)

Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF)



DESCRIPTION

Thematic week which is a celebration aimed at stimulating the development, in schools, of a dynamic Francophone cultural identity and a strong sense of belonging to the francophonie.

TYPE OF RESOURCE

Held in March each year, the week is part of the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie. Every year, the ACELF develops 20 educational activities to explore the theme chosen by les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie.

INTENDED FOR

1. Teaching staff and education stakeholders working with Francophone students from early childhood to the end of secondary school

IDENTITY-BUILDING RESOURCES TABLE

VOYAGE EN FRANCOPHONIE CANADIENNE

Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF)



DESCRIPTION

Resource that fosters the ap-propriation of historical cultural referents among youth to sup-port the development of their sense of belonging to the Ca-nadian francophonie.

TYPE OF RESOURCE

The virtual resource pre-sents a timeline denot-ing the highlights of 400 years of history of French presence in Canada.

INTENDED FOR

1. French-language school teaching staff and their stu-dents aged 14-18 years

MA VIE EN FRANÇAIS

Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF)



DESCRIPTION

Oral communication tool to help students analyze the is-sues that concern them directly as Francophones and to debate them with other Francophones their own age.

TYPE OF RESOURCE

The resource includes:

1. 10 thematic fact sheets with a comprehensive approach
2. A facilitation handbook
3. An observation checklist

INTENDED FOR

1. French-language school teaching staff and their stu-dents aged 13-18 years

STAGES DE PERFECTIONNEMENT (REFRESHER TRAINING)

Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF)



DESCRIPTION

Development opportunities to:

- learn, exchange and reflect with resource persons in identity building;
- create links with education stakeholders in Francophone minority settings throughout Canada;
- create a climate conducive to reflection and the development of winning solutions for Francophone identity building in one's area.

TYPE OF RESOURCE

Intensive 8-day training in identity building offered an-nually in July.

INTENDED FOR

1. Staff of early childhood services
2. Primary and secondary school teaching and man-agement staff
3. School principals and vice-principals
4. Guidance counsellors
5. Cultural facilitators
6. Monitors of French as a first language
7. Identity-building staff from the community setting and youth associations

IDENTITY-BUILDING RESOURCES TABLE

GUIDES VOIR GRAND (DREAM BIG GUIDES)

Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF)

DESCRIPTION

The Voir grand collection pro-poses five practical guides to foster identity building at home, at school or in the community.



TYPE OF RESOURCE

The resource consists of a set of booklets titled:

1. Voir grand, petit à petit (to guide toddlers in their first steps in French)
2. Voir grand, c'est élémentaire! (to support young children in their experience of French)
3. Voir grand à l'adolescence (to reflect on and discuss the issue of the French language and Francophone culture and identity)
4. Voir grand ensemble (to reflect on and discuss Francophone identity in a context of cultural diversity)
5. Voir grand dans le cyberspace (to cause Francophone Internet users to reflect on the way technologies can be tools for French expression and creation).

INTENDED FOR

1. Voir grand, petit à petit (for exogamous families with children 0-5 years)
2. Voir grand, c'est élémentaire! (for exogamous families with children 6-12 years)
3. Voir grand à l'adolescence (for teenagers)
4. Voir grand ensemble (for teenagers, their parents and the teaching staff)
5. Voir grand dans le cyberspace (for Francophone Internet users 10 years + and adults who accompany them)

COMMENTS

Each kit includes a copy of the booklet, an animation CD and a printed animation booklet that can be ordered from the ACELF website.

TROUSSE DES ENFANTS EN ART

Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF), Fédération culturelle canadienne-française (FCCF), Commission nationale des parents francophones (CNPF)

DESCRIPTION

The counterpart of the Trousse du passeur culturel aimed at very young children, this kit is a practical tool to accompany children in the development of their sense of belonging to the francophonie by integrating arts and culture to the program-ming.

TYPE OF RESOURCE

The kit includes:

1. A booklet that provides an overview of the cultural transmitter's role with children and the importance of that role in the development of their Francophone identity
2. Three types of practical fact sheets (Je découvre..., Je réfléchis..., Je passe à l'action...)

INTENDED FOR

1. Professional early childhood staff



COMMENTS

The Des enfants en art kit is complements the Trousse du passeur culturel kit and its components.

IDENTITY-BUILDING RESOURCES TABLE

COMPRENDRE LA CONSTRUCTION IDENTITAIRE (UNDERSTANDING IDENTITY BUILDING)

Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF)

DESCRIPTION

Training tools offering teaching and other staff involved in French-language education short texts on basic identity-building principles and various related subjects.

TYPE OF RESOURCE

Set of 12 booklets titled:

1. La définition et le modèle
2. Les itinéraires identitaires
3. L'intention pédagogique
4. Les 8 principes directeurs
5. L'évaluation
6. Le rôle du personnel enseignant
7. Le rôle de la direction d'école
8. Le rôle du personnel professionnel en petite enfance
9. La collaboration avec les parents
10. Les compétences transculturelles
11. Le rôle des monitrices et des moniteurs de langues de français langue première
12. Vivre pleinement la construction identitaire à l'école de langue française



INTENDED FOR

1. Teaching staff and the different education stakeholders in Francophone minority settings
2. Parents
3. Community stakeholders



ÉCHANGES FRANCOPHONES

Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF)

DESCRIPTION

A program that helps young Francophones to experience identity building by way of an exchange trip whose goal is to discover a new Francophone community in Canada and experience its language and cul-ture.

TYPE OF RESOURCE

There are two formulas to the program:

1. The exchange trip: an 8- to 10-day exchange trip between two groups of same-age students, between March and May.
2. The cyber-exchange: on-line matching of groups from French-language schools in Canada in safe digital environments conducive to promoting the community approach and citizenship in the digital age. Among others, the environments are:
 - the VIA videoconferencing tool
 - the KF (Knowledge Forum) for on-line collaboration
 - videoconferencing educational support



INTENDED FOR

1. The exchange trip:
French-language school teaching staff and students aged 11-14 years (French immersion schools are not eligible)



2. The cyber-exchange:
French-language school teaching staff and students in Canada (no restrictions re: students' ages and grade levels)

STRATÉGIE D’INTERVENTION JEUNESSE

Fédération de la jeunesse canadienne-française (FJCF)

DESCRIPTION

Implemented by and for French-speaking youth across Canada, the resource is a first-rate reference for youth civic engagement that guides the actions of government interest bodies and community stake-holders in order to encourage a culture of social involvement among some 1.7 million French-speaking youth in Can-ada.

TYPE OF RESOURCE

The strategy focuses on youth identity by encouraging them to:

- become empowered;
- get involved; and
- obtain support and encouragement.

INTENDED FOR

1. Young French-Canadians wishing to participate as citizens and get involved in their communities

TARGETED RESOURCES FROM OTHER STRATEGIC PRIORITIES THAT IMPACT ON IDENTITY BUILDING

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: TEACH-ING/LEARNING

- Pédagogie à l’école de langue française (PELF) – p. 3
- Cadre pancanadien pour l’appropriation de la culture dans les écoles de langue française – p. 3
- Éducation postsecondaire de langue française – p. 5

AREA: EARLY CHILDHOOD

- La qualité, ça compte! – p. 11

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: CULTURAL DIVERSITY

- L’immigration francophone: une diversité qui nous unit – p.14