

Decline of the English School System in Quebec: Trends from 1971 to 2018

Richard Y. Bourhis & Rana Sioufi

Département de psychologie, UQAM

Bourhis.richard@uqam.ca ; Rana.Sioufi@gmail.com

Panel talk presented at the QUESCREN Education Forum :
Minority Community Vitality through Education

**Concordia University, Molson School of Business,
Montréal, Québec, Canada
October 28-30, 2018**

This talk is dedicated to **Victor Goldbloom**: 1924 – 2016

Montreal pediatrician. Was elected deputy in Quebec National Assembly in 1966. Was Environmental and Municipal Affairs Minister from 1970-1979.
Was Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages from 1991-1999.



« We are not the enemy and its time we stopped being perceived as such »

The Gazette Citation of the week, Sunday, March 2nd 2008

Language laws eroding access to English schools in Quebec

Up to 1960s, Francophones, Anglophones, Allophones had **freedom of choice** to attend **English** or **French** public schools. But only Catholics could attend French Catholic schools. Most non-Catholic Anglophones, Allophones and Francophones were assigned to English Protestant schools.

Bill 63 (1969) enshrined **right to freedom of choice to attend French or English schools**. Québécois nationalist decried freedom of access to English schools for Allophones and Francophones

Bill 22 (1974). The Québec Liberal Party government adopted **Bill 22** to **partially limit access to English schooling**. Immigrants had to pass an English language test to gain access to English schooling.

Bill 22 alienated **Anglophone & Allophone minorities** against language tests. **Bill 22** angered Francophone nationalists advocating that immigrants should only attend French schools. These French-English tensions resulted in the **St Leonard school crisis** of 1974.

Language laws eroding access to English schools in Quebec

Bill 101 (1977). The **Parti Québécois Government** adopted the *Charter of the French Language* ruling that the Francophone majority and international immigrants had no right to attend English schools at primary & secondary level (grand-father clauses applied to siblings; Mallae 1984)

Bill 101 stipulated that **Anglophone pupils** could attend English schools if **one parent** had spent most of its primary schooling in English within **Quebec**.

Following supreme court challenges by Anglophones, access to English school was possible if **one parent** had spent most of its primary schooling in **English** from anywhere in **Canada** (Canada clause)

Language laws eroding access to English schools in Quebec

Bill 104 (2002). **Parti Québécois Government** adopted **Bill 104** to close the 'loophole' allowing Allophone and Francophone pupils to attend full fee paying English '**bridging schools**' (**écoles passerelles**) for a year, to then gain access to free **English public schools**. It was estimated that **400-500** pupils per year used 'bridging schools' from 1997 to 2002

In **2007** Allophone and Francophone parents *challenged Bill 104* in **Quebec Court of Appeal**.

In **2008** **Quebec Court** rules that Allophones & Francophones could attend English schools on grounds of **Article 23 of Canadian Constitution**. **Next day, Liberal Government** challenged the Quebec ruling in the **Canadian Supreme Court**. The **Québec Attorney General** submitted its Brief to the Supreme Court defending **Bill 104** on grounds that the **French language was threatened in Quebec**.

In **2009, Canadian Supreme Court** ruled that **Quebec** had a **right to protect French language** but gave the Province one year to craft a **new law** to limit access to English Schools **without violating Article 23 of Canadian Constitution**.

Language laws eroding access to public English schools in Quebec

Bill 115 (2010) was adopted by Liberal government . It allows Allophones & Francophones to attend English public schools *after* studying **3 consecutive years** in private non-funded English schools. **Four public servants** from Quebec Education Ministry use a point system to determine if pupil was engaged in « **legitimate educational pathway** »

Bill 115 makes it almost **impossible** for an Allophone or Francophone « **non rights holder** » pupils to attend English schools.

Liberal Minister of Education **Michèle Courchesne** stated on June 3rd 2010 « **I won't deny that the objective is to have as few as possible (approved)** »

Language laws eroding access to English schools in Quebec

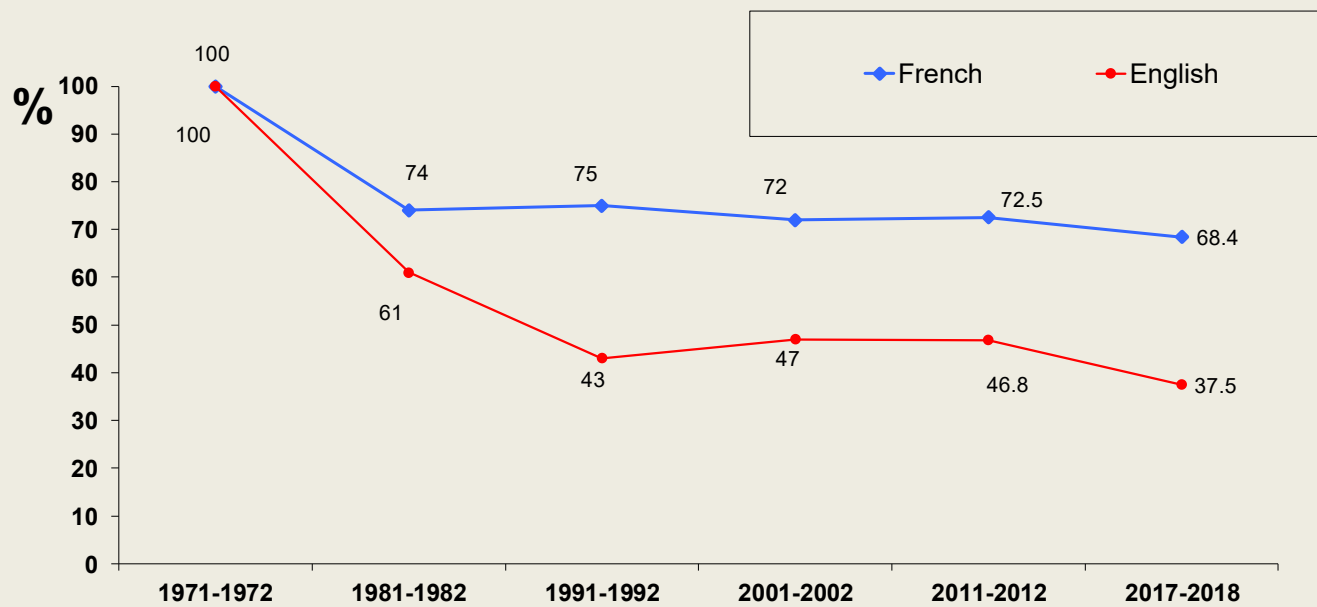
2010. Leger poll in May 2010 showed that **61%** of **Francophones** & **87%** of **Allophones** & **Anglophones** want their children to have **more access to English Schools** (Hubert Bauch, Montreal Gazette, May 11, 2010; Ariane Lacoursière, La Presse, 12 mai, 2010 .

<http://www.pressreader.com/canada/montreal-gazette/20100511/textview>

Yet Bill 22 + Bill 101 + Bill 104 + Bill 115 reduced access to English schools

What impact did Quebec Government laws restricting access to English Schools have on school enrollments in English and French schools in Quebec?

Fig.1. Number & % of pupils in primary & secondary *French* and *English* school systems in Quebec Province (public & private): 1971-2018. School enrollment in 1971 before Bill 101, is used as 100% benchmark for subsequent years up to 2018. (Ministère de l'Éducation: MELS, 2013; Sébastien Rodrigue-Piché, Direction services à la Communauté anglophone, MEES, 2018)



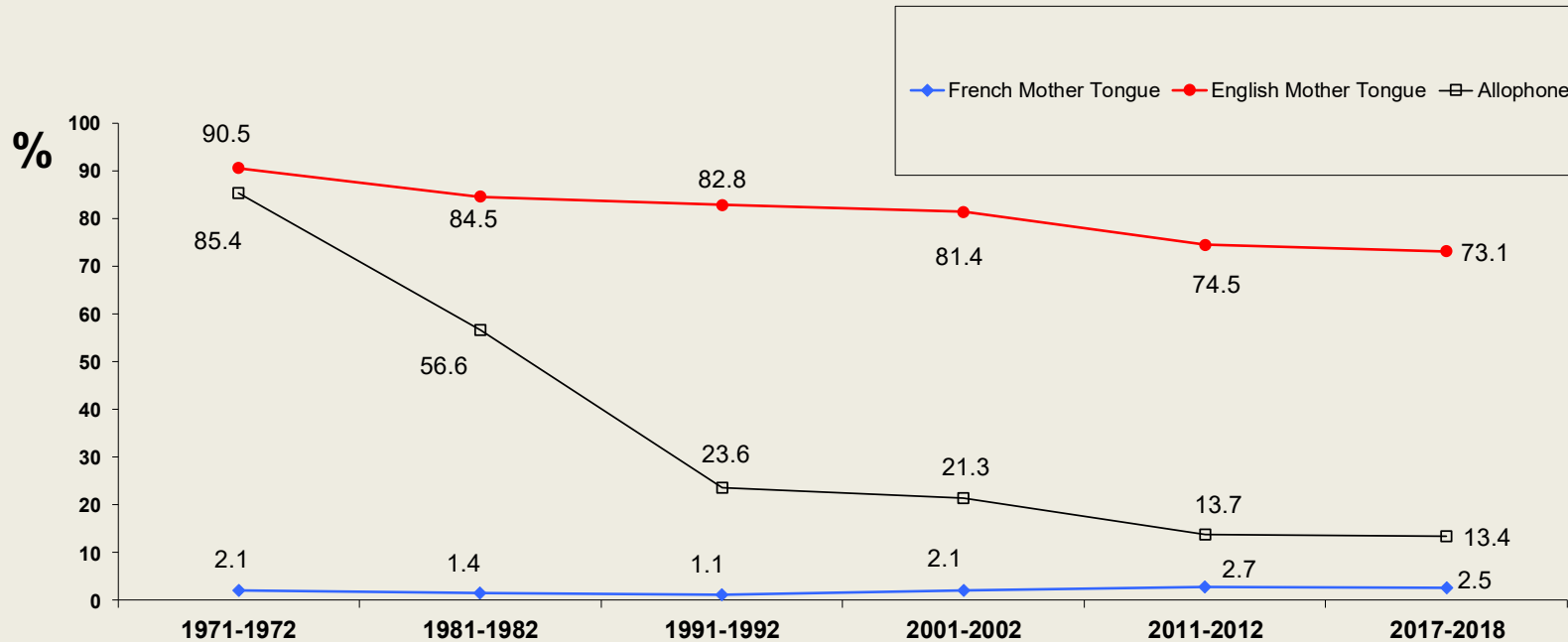
◆ French Schools	1,378,788	1,026,951	1,035,358	997,358	999,976	943.381
● English Schools	256,251	155,585	111,391	121,225	119,974	96,235

Decline of the French & English public School System in Quebec Fig 1

1. Pupils in both French and English schools systems **declined** from 1971 to 2018 in Quebec
2. **Drop in birth rate & low immigration to Quebec** help account for French and English school enrollment decline
3. **Bill 22 , Bill 101, Bill 104 & Bill 115** contributed to **steeper enrollment decline** in **English school system by limiting access to English schools**
4. Net **Departure of Anglophones from Quebec** to Rest of Canada (ROC) also account for decline of English school system.
Net out-migration of Anglophones= **-310K**; Allophones = **-120k**; francophones - 55k from 1966 to 2016
5. From **100%** baseline of **256,000** pupils in **English schools** in 1971 there are only **96,235** pupils left in the system by 2018 or only **37,5%** of original baseline (**i.e. 62.5% drop**). This is largest drop in an English medium school system in Canada

Fig. 2. Number & % of pupils in *English* primary and secondary *public* schools system in *Quebec* province by mother tongue of pupils: 1971 to 2018.

(Ministère de l'Éducation: MELS, 2013; Sébastien Rodrigue-Piché, Direction services à la Communauté anglophone, MEES, 2018)



◆ French	28,700	13,839	10,361	19,505	20,451	17,591
● English	171,175	101,695	79,004	76,818	63,946	52,500
□ Allophones	56,376	37,264	19,508	22,199	18,853	12,144

Decline of the public English primary & secondary School System in Quebec (Fig. 2)

1. Consider all the **Allophone** pupils enrolled in French and English schools in Quebec. In **1971** the % of **Allophones** enrolled in English school system was **85.4%** (56,376). But by **2018** there were only **13.4%** Allophone pupils (12,144) left in the English school system. **YES, Bill 101 succeeded in reducing Allophone access to English school system!**

2. Consider all the **Francophone** pupils in the French & English school system in Quebec. We note that less than **2.5 %** of Francophones were enrolled in English schools in Quebec between 1971-2018. **YES, Bill 101 kept Francophones out of the English school system**

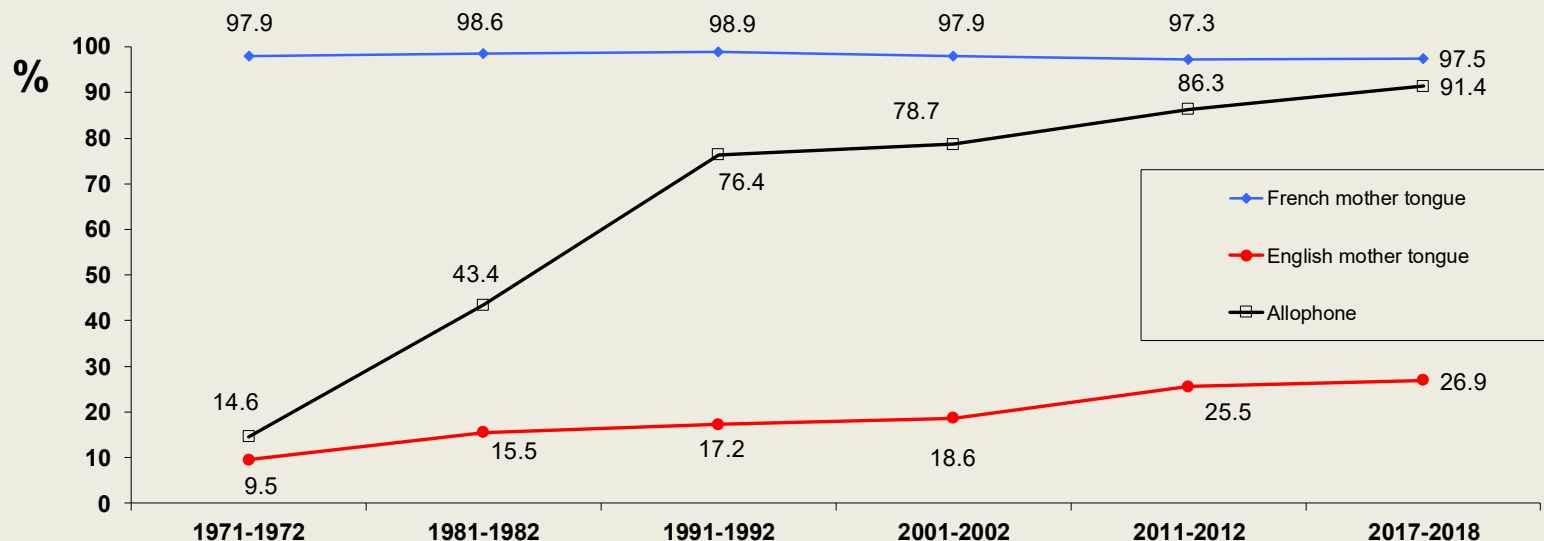
3. The few **Allophones & Francophones** pupils in English school system are mostly due to progeny of **mixed marriages** with **Anglophone** spouses whose children become 'rights holders' to English schools

4. **Anglophone** pupils enrolled in **English schools** dropped from **90.5%** in **1971** (171,175) to only **73.1%** in **2018** (52,700).

Where are the missing Anglophone pupils?

Fig 3. Number & % of pupils in *French* primary and secondary public schools in *Quebec* by mother tongue of pupils: 1971-2018

(Ministère de l'Éducation: MELS, 2013; Sébastien Rodrigue-Piché, Direction services à la Communauté anglophone, MEES, 2018)



◆ French	1,351,212	975,897	951,220	893,105	742,669	685,961
● English	17,924	18,708	16,414	17,585	21,835	19,387
□ Allophone	9,652	28,595	62,995	81,831	119,060	128,361

Mother Tongue (MT): First language learned at home as a child and still understood at census time

Public primary & secondary French School System in Quebec (Fig 3)

1. Consider all the Francophone pupils in French and English schools in Quebec. Francophone pupils in French schools is stable: **97.9%** in **1971** and **97.5%** in 2018. **YES! Bill 101 succeeded in keeping most Francophone pupils within French school system**
2. **Allophone** pupils in French school system increased from only **14.6%** Allophones (**9,652**) in 1971 to **91.4%** Allophones (**128,361**) in 2018. **YES! Bill101 succeeded in shifting Allophones to French school system**
3. **Allophone** input in French schools did not offset impact of **Francophone** student **decline** of **665, 251** pupils from 1971 to 2018 due mainly to **Francophone** **low birth rate**.

Public Primary & secondary French School System in Quebec

4. **Anglophones** in **French school system** increases from **9.5%** in 1971 to **26.9%** in 2018.
5. Many **Anglophone** parents choose to send their children to **French schools** to **improve their mastery of French language & culture** despite availability of **French immersion** in English schools
6. **Anglophone** parents also send their kids to **French schools** because these are often **closer to home** than **English schools** on **very long school bus drives**
7. This **Anglophone shift** to French schools for **individual mobility, undermines** the **collective institutional vitality** of the English school system. This **English school attrition** results in **fewer jobs** for **Anglophone** teachers, administrators and support staff.

Victor Goldbloom (2012) on reduced access to English schooling

« Quebec's English-speaking communities have been prevented from reinforcing their numbers by the channeling of students from elsewhere to the French-Language school system. Efforts to obtain more equitable balance have had virtually no success.

A small shift would have helped the Anglophone side considerably, while making a very small dent in Francophone enrollments. The painful closing of schools has become inevitable »

Goldbloom, V. (2012) Building Bridges.

Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press

Page: 381



CONCLUDING NOTES

Anglophones who stayed in Quebec have shown they **accept** the French fact by becoming French/English bilinguals.

The 2016 Census shows that **69%** of all L1 **anglophones** are **French/English bilingual**. In the 18-24 age range, **78%** of **Anglophones are bilingual**. In Quebec, **38.6%** of all L1 **Francophones** are **bilingual** as of 2016 census

The ***English speaking communities of Quebec*** are **not responsible** for the substantial **status** and **spread** of the **English language** in the **world** including within Canada and **Quebec**

Eroding the **status** and **institutional vitality** of the **English speaking minority** in Quebec will **never be sufficient** to **neutralise** the **international drawing power** of the **English language** in Quebec

Concluding notes

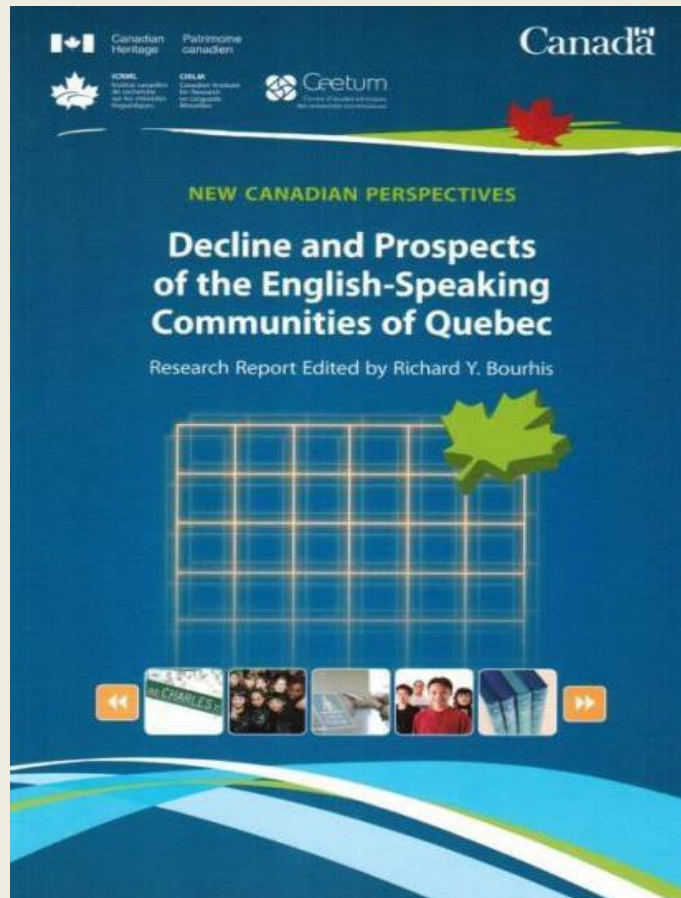
Leaders of « **besieged communities** » such as the **Anglophones** of Quebec, have an interest in developing organizations and leadership styles that promote coherent and consistent approaches to the **development of their institutional vitality** in: education, health care, social services, business, justice, cultural industries...

This is important in Québec where the:

Québécois francophones are a dominant majority imbued with the psychology of a minority group

Though the English language is not threatened in Quebec, there is strong evidence that the **vitality** of *English speaking communities of Quebec* (ESCQ) **is declining** demographically & institutionnally

What future for the English-speaking communities of Quebec ?



- Bourhis, R.Y. (2012) *Decline and prospects of the English-speaking Communities of Quebec*. Ottawa: Canadian Heritage & ICRML

MERCI

THANK YOU

GRACIAS GRAZIE

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Obrigado

What can be done about the decline of the English school system in Quebec ?

1. **Quebec Anglophones** must seek to reclaim English 'right holders' currently in French schools back to **English schools**

2. Need **power of attraction** measures to maintain English right holders in English schools

3. English teachers, School Board Administrators and parents must **BRAG** about the **success** of English Schools in Quebec!

4. English school boards are often **BEST**:

Of top 10 performing school boards in Quebec six were English boards (2013)

English schools have **lower drop out** rates than French schools

Provincial exam scores in **French** show that in Montreal **English school pupils** score **9.4% better than French school pupils** ! (Jennings Report, 2015)

What can be done about the decline of the English school system in Quebec ?

English schools contribute to the French language integration of allophone and anglophone pupils

Could Quebec Governments help the English school system thrive rather than seek its demise via laws that reduced access to primary & secondary schools.

Why should Quebec Government reduce institutional support of English schools by closing English school boards ?

Increasing access to English schools is a key measure needed to limit the continuing decline of the excellent English school system in Quebec !

Jennings (2015) report proposes following students to enter English school system:

1. English speakers from other provinces of Canada
2. English speaking immigrants from countries where English is an official, national or majority language (US, UK, India)

The English school system needs more pupils from Canada and abroad to survive as a dynamic contributor to Quebec society economically, linguistically and culturally.

English & French Private schools in Quebec: 1998 & 2018

English Private schools

Total pupils in 1998 = **12,924**; 2018 = **13,780**

L1 English:1998 = 8,956 (69%); 2018 = 7,612 (55%)

L1French: 1998= 1,071 (8.3%); 2018 = 2,417 (17.5%)

L1Allo : 1998= 2,877 (22.2%); 2018 = 3,742 (27%)

French Private schools

Total pupils in 1998 = **89,880** ; 2018 = **109,672**

L1 English: 1998 = 3,095 (3%); 2018 = 5,686 (5.2%)

L1 French:1998 = 76,083 (85%); 2018 = 83,944 (76.6%)

L1Allo: 1998 = 10,641 (12%); 2018 = 20,015(18.2%)

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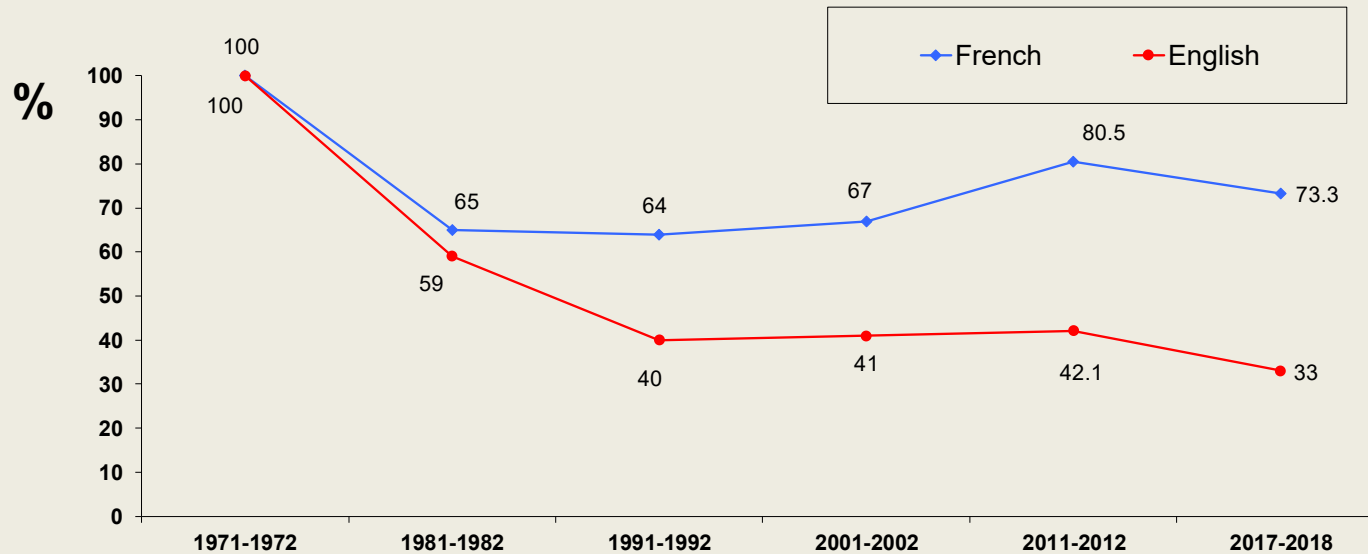
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Bourhis, R.Y. Sioufi, R. (2018). Acculturation and Linguistic Tensions as predictors of Quebec Francophone and Anglophone desire for internal migration in Canada. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 37, 136-159

Bourhis, R.Y. & Landry, R. (2012). Vitalité communautaire, autonomie culturelle et bien être des minorités linguistique. Dans R.Y. Bourhis (dir.) *Déclin et enjeux des communautés de langue anglaise au Québec*. (pp 23-73). Ottawa: Patrimoine canadien. CIRLM, CEETUM. www.pch.gc.ca

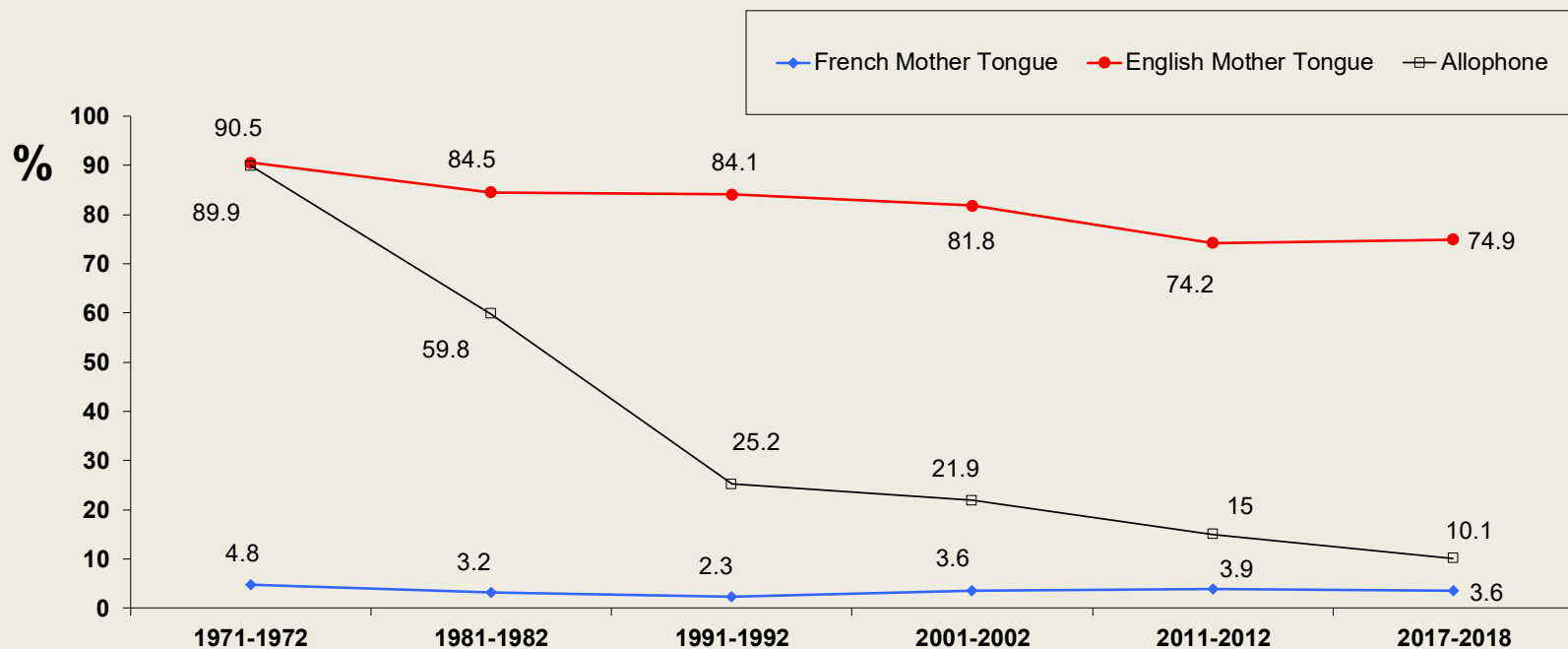
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◆ French Schools	271,753	177,704	172,762	181,713	218,742	199,187
● English Schools	154,338	90,898	61,955	63,812	65,066	51,003

Fig. 4. Number & % of pupils in *English* primary & secondary *public* schools on Island of Montreal by mother tongue of pupils: 1971 to 2018.

(Ministère de l'Éducation: MELS, 2013; Sébastien Rodrigue-Piché, Direction services à la Communauté anglophone, MEES, 2018)

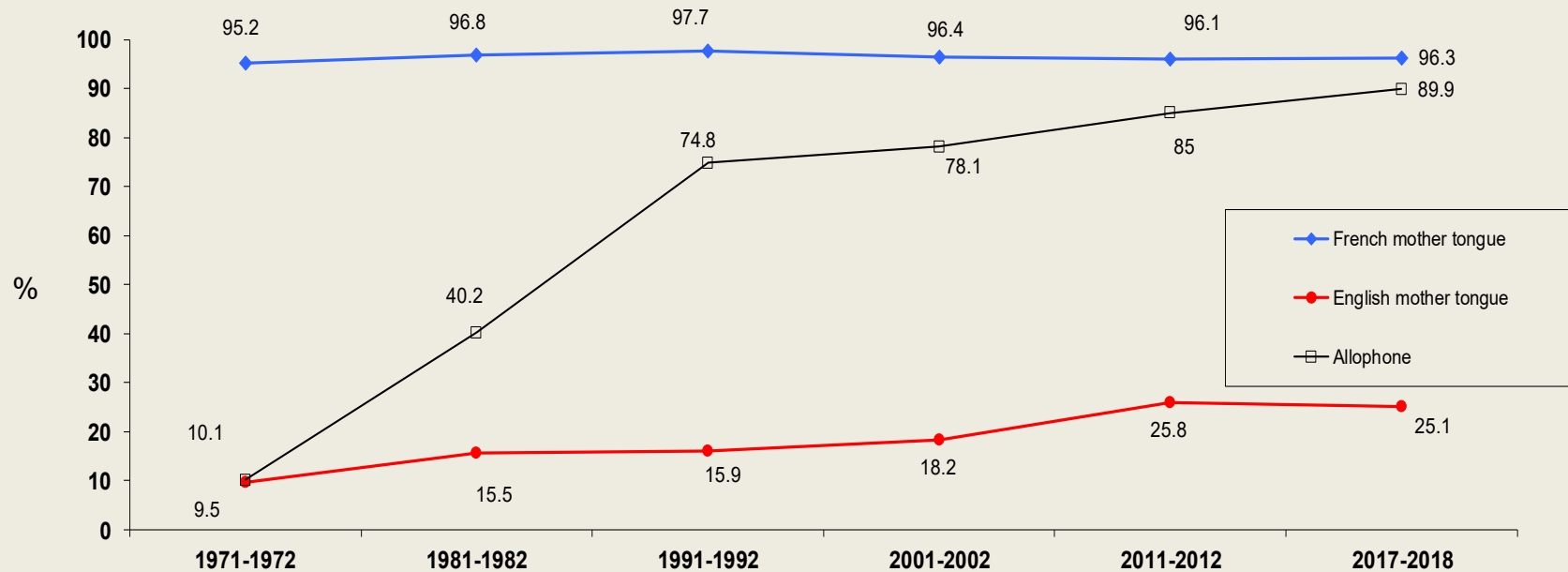


◆ French	12,180	4,811	2,814	4,087	3,563	2,706
● English	92,911	54,691	43,161	42,079	34,888	27,966
□ Allophones	48,617	31,172	15,908	17,572	13,890	8,499

Mother Tongue (MT): First language learned at home as a child and still understood at census time

Fig 6. Number & % of pupils in *French* primary and secondary public schools on *Island of Montreal* by mother tongue of pupils: 1971- 2018

(Ministère de l'Éducation: MELS, 2013; Sébastien Rodrigue-Piché, Direction services à la Communauté anglophone, MEES, 2018)



◆ French	256,535	146,632	117,233	109,712	87,458	71,225
● English	9,783	10,051	8,153	9,384	12,141	9,362
□ Allophones	5,435	20,929	47,323	62,556	78,909	75,610

Mother Tongue (MT): First language learned at home as a child and still understood at census time