



ACESQ

Advisory Committee for
English-Speaking Quebecers

Portrait of the Clientele

Qualitative Research



Method



Method

- Sample: 30 English-speaking Quebecers
- Demographic survey
- Semi-structured interviews



Semi-structured Interviews



Semi-structured Interviews

Two central questions organized the interviews:

- “What are the **experiences** of English-speaking Quebecers on the **labour market**?”
- “What are their **stories**?”



Semi-structured Interviews

Two answer these central questions, I asked participants about :

- Mother tongue
- First language spoken
- Knowledge of French
- Educational and professional trajectories
- Confidence using French in a professional context
- Access to French classes
- Sense of belonging and outmigration



Results: Recurring themes from interviews



Barriers to Employment



Barriers to employment: *French-language skills and self-confidence*

- 21 of the 30 participants cited [French as a barrier to employment](#).
- This was true even for those with high levels of bilingualism.



Case Study

“I get along and I get by really well in both languages. But if it was something where I needed to, uh, write in French and, you know, read documents in French [...] I don't think I would feel comfortable enough taking on the job.”

Name: Kelly*
Region Montérégie
Age: 45-64



Barriers to Employment : *Challenges learning French*

- Several participants experienced **difficulties accessing French classes** as working adults.
- **Obstacles** included cost, scheduling conflicts, childcare obligations and a lack of classes adapted to those in the labourforce.



Case Study

“I went [to classes] when my son was six months old and [...] I breastfed. So, I would breastfeed him, I would hop in the car and then he would take bottle milk after that from my husband. And I did French classes, I did evening classes two days a week [for] two or three sessions. I didn't feel like I was learning much. I felt that I would be leaving every night with a headache, and I was giving up time with my newborn son.”

Name: Eva

Region: Capitale-Nationale

Age: 25-44



Barriers to Employment: *Limited opportunities*

- Overall, participants had **negative perceptions of the employment opportunities** available to them as English-speaking Quebecers.
- Many participants felt that their only options for employment were in English-speaking organizations or in **non-qualified or precarious positions**



Case Study

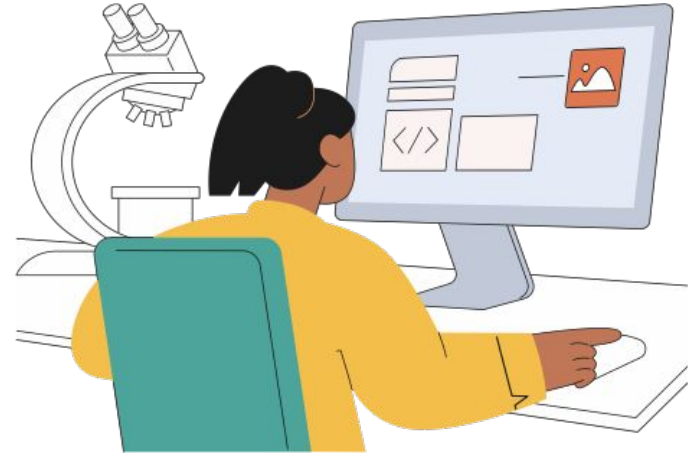
“When I came here, I met with an employment counsellor to translate my resume and figure out where my skills would be useful. But the career counsellor basically told me that my options were to work as a cleaner in a local hotel or to pick mushrooms on a farm. That was really hurtful and it really took a huge toll on my mental health. I felt like I had to start from the bottom careerwise, even though I already built a successful career elsewhere.”

Name: Nina
Region: Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean
Age: 25-44



Barriers to Employment: Linguicism

- **Linguicism:** prejudice or discrimination against those who speak a different language or with a different accent.
- Multiple participants stated that linguicism had an impact on their job search.
- Others said that they experienced linguicism once they started working in French.



Case Study

“[My boss] would imitate my accent [...], like an Anglo-French accent, you know? And [I] got so mad one time. I went, I calmed myself. Then I gathered my courage and I went down to talk to him. And I said that it really hurt. And I started crying because, you know, I was so upset. And like, it really is upsetting to do this and it's insulting.”

Name: Faye

Region: Capitale-Nationale

Age: 45-64



Positive Experiences and Opportunities



Positive Experiences and Opportunities: *Fluency and comfort in French*

- Those who described themselves as **perfectly bilingual** in French and English said that they **many opportunities** for employment in Quebec.
- However, some participants said that they **still experienced difficulties** in some workplaces as **they speak French with an English accent**.



Positive Experiences and Opportunities : *Learning French through immersion*

- Participants with **positive experiences** learning French overwhelmingly cited situations wherein they were **immersed in the language**.
- Participants said that immersion was **the best way to learn French**.



Positive Experiences and Opportunities : *Learning French in a supportive workplace*

- Several participants who had **the opportunity to work in French** said that the immersive experience improved their **level of bilingualism**.
- These participants said that this was due to the fact that they worked in a **supportive environment**.



Case Study

“[My job] gave me the opportunity [to improve my French], and over time I just started changing into different dossiers and [t]hen I was writing more. Again, my writing got better. [...] So if I look back, probably sometimes it was horrific, but I got through, I got better, I wrote more and just got more confidence. But I had the opportunity and I really believed [...]. And my boss was just very proactive and he [...] accepted me for that. [...] They believed in me and, uh, and [...] then [I] proved [myself.], you know? [Y]ou just need that chance.”

Name: Sonia
Region: Capitale-Nationale
Age: 45-64



Positive Experiences and Opportunities : *Positive attitudes towards learning French*

- Participants had **extremely positive** attitudes towards learning French.
- Participants were especially interested in **on-the-job learning opportunities**.



Case Study

“My understanding is that it's really fast and quick and easy to pick up the lingo, business terminology while you're actually doing the job. But if you don't get hired, you're never going to have that opportunity to grow.”

Name: Laura
Region: Estrie
Age: 25-44



Conclusions : Links between the quantitative and qualitative research



Conclusions : *Links between the quantitative and qualitative research*

- English-speaking Quebecers make up 14.9% of the population.
- The unemployment rate among English speakers is 10.9 %.
- Despite higher levels of educational attainment among English speakers, they earn 7.6% less than French speakers.

- Several participants felt that they had **limited** employment opportunities.
- This could indicate that English speakers interact with a **much smaller** portion of the labour market.

Conclusions : *Links between the quantitative and qualitative research*

- The unemployment rate and proportion of part-time work is very high among English speakers in [Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine](#) and [Côte-Nord](#).
- The regions with the largest salary gaps between English speakers and French speakers are [Nord-du-Québec](#), [l'Estrie](#), [l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue](#) and [Côte-Nord](#).

- Participants living in rural areas said that there were [few opportunities to work in English](#).
- According to these participants, there were [fewer opportunities to learn French](#).

Conclusions

- English-speaking Quebecers face unique employment challenges.
- The community needs targeted employment services:
 - Francization that is adapted to the needs of labour force
 - Employment services aimed towards the English speakers





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Thank you.

