



International Conference on Communication in Multicultural Society, CMSC 2015, 6-8 December 2015, Moscow, Russian Federation

French speaking on the situation of multiculturalism and nationalism in Quebec during 1980-2010

Ke Zhang*

Hong Kong Baptist University, CVA914, CVA Building, 5 Hereford Road, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong

Abstract

As the colonization of Britain for hundred years and the situation of being a province of Canada federal state, identity of Quebecois faced various historical and environmental pressures. Nationalism is the main issue which has been considered seriously by the public and the government for a long period. The policy of the government to the nationalism is the key solution in protecting the multi-ethnic and multi-culture in Quebec as well as promoting the autonomy and identity of Quebecois.

© 2016 Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Peer-review under responsibility of the National Research Nuclear University MEPhI (Moscow Engineering Physics Institute).

Keywords: Quebec; French; multiculturalism; nationalism; identity

1. Introduction

Quebec in Canada is the biggest French region except France on the world. The French residents living there are the people whose ancestors came from France. However, four hundred years of history created a unique language and culture in Quebec with distinctions from that of France (Ransom, 2009), which gained much attention of linguists in a long period.

Most of the Quebecois speak French. But they themselves admit that they don't speak pure French (Bibeau and Germain, 1983), which is caused from two aspects, the influence of traditional French language and the interference of English language.

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: home101010@sina.com

In the past hundred years, the French speaking groups in Canada have acted positively to defend the national language and to maintain the purity of it. The status of French speaking in Canada sparked sharp ethnic conflicts which has changed into a sensitive and tough political problem and also has intensified the nationalism in Quebec.

Nationalism in Quebec was the sediment in the history of development of Canada with the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural background (Gougeon, 1994). The separatist movement in Quebec was derived from the collision in politics, economy, and culture between the two nations of France and Britain, which is a deep-rooted problem that is difficult to solve in short period.

The report will focus on the situation of the French language in Quebec and the policy of the government in addressing nationalism to strength the identity of Quebecois. In this report, these questions will be answered. What are the internal and external pressures on French speaking in Quebec? What are the main problems and possible solutions of them in Quebec?

2. History of the development of French speaking in Quebec and Canada

Canada is a bilingual country with English and French as its official languages. Quebec is the largest province of Canada, which is located in North America with 85% of French residents living inside (Ransom, 2009).

From a historical point of view, during the period of New France (1603-1763), because of the integration between French tradition and the environment of North America, French speaking in Quebec gradually formed its own characteristics. Until 1700, about 15,000 French immigrants lived in Quebec, which became into two classes in the long process of development gradually, the elite group and the peasantry. The elite group was composed of administration officials and senior pastors, which lived in the cities. Nevertheless, the peasantry lived in small rural generations, which gradually formed a natural way of life with the characteristics of Quebecois who speak French (Satzewich, 1992). In 1760, Quebec's population engaged in agriculture accounted for 75%. In 1825, 88% of the residents were living in rural, which number was still high in 80% in 1871 (Driedger, 1996). Even the French Revolution in 1789 also made almost no impact on the isolated Quebec (Guindon, 1988).

Since the end of the Seven Years' War (1763), the Quebec issue had been the focus of Canadian politics because of its historical continuity and complexity (Ransom, 2009). Quebec inherited the tradition and culture of France, also followed the parliamentary system of Britain.

Because of over a hundred years of colonization by Britain during 1763 and 1867, French speaking groups in Quebec were in the vulnerable position of economy and society. The local French entrepreneurs were in a few numbers, and the economic decision-making centers were controlled by the economic elites who speak English in Montreal. Among the 11 big industrial companies in Quebec in 1973, only one of them was belonged to Quebecois, and most of the local French manufacturing enterprises were small factories (Bradbury, 1982).

Related to this, in Quebec, French speaking groups were in a vulnerable position. In the view of English speaking group and most of other immigrants groups, the French culture was the synonymous of backwardness and closed. The Quebecois who received French education suffered apparent discrimination in aspects of job-hunting, promotion and treatment (Rioux, 1978). Division of labor marked by language and ethnic was quite general and prominent in Quebec.

However, although French speaking groups were in a vulnerable position in economy and society, even in culture, they got the upper hand in politics. French people accounted for more than 80% of the total population in Quebec, whose ballot paper were large enough to elect a cabinet of which majority are French (Ransom, 2009).

There were even no English people in the cabinet of Parti Quebecois which came to power in 1976 Quebec Model was formed during the period of administration of Parti Quebecois (1976-1985), which aimed at pushing ahead with democracy and supporting the expansion of French capital levels.

During the 1960s and 1980s, Quebec gained significant achievements under the governance of Quebec Model. The inferior status of French speaking groups in Quebec reversed. Because of the language legislation of Quebec government in 1970s, the usage of French language extended to all aspects of life in Quebec, accessing to various areas of society, culture, economic and politics. The dominant position of French speaking in Quebec had been established and the economic status of French speaking groups was raised. For example, the wage level of French speaking groups was at the bottom of all the wage levels across the province in Quebec at the beginning of 1960s, which had caught up with and surpassed that of English speaking groups in 1980s (Warren, 2003).

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/5125832>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/5125832>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)