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Valérie Amireault

Université du Québec à Montréal, amireault.valerie@uqam.ca

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Identity construct of adult immigrants learning French in Montreal⁵

Valérie Amireault (l'Université du Québec à Montréal)

Abstract

This article presents the highlights of a study about the cultural identity of adult immigrants from various ethnic backgrounds learning French in Montreal. This empirical study uses quantitative and qualitative survey instruments in order to examine the different elements characterizing the redefinition of these newcomers' cultural identity. Findings suggest that participants experience a "me-them" cultural duality referring to a hybrid identification. They feel as if they are in a cultural in-between within which they change and evolve while trying to alter their own identity when in contact with their host society and a new language. While newcomers are aware of being in such a cultural in-between, they don't all express or perceive it the same way. Two main tendencies seem to stand out. Some immigrants maintain characteristics from their culture of origins and integrate characteristics from their host culture whereas others feel a cultural emptiness, not belonging anymore to their culture of origins but not belonging yet to their host culture. Distinctive components of both tendencies are presented, as well as data on these newcomers' sense of belonging towards their own cultural group and towards French-speaking Quebecers.

Résumé

Ce texte présente les faits saillants d'une étude portant sur l'identité culturelle d'immigrants adultes de différentes origines culturelles apprenant le français à Montréal. Cette étude empirique fait usage d'instruments d'enquête quantitatifs et qualitatifs pour examiner les différents éléments qui caractérisent la redéfinition de l'identité culturelle des nouveaux arrivants. Les données suggèrent que les participants vivent une dualité culturelle «moi-eux» faisant référence à une configuration identitaire hybride. Ils se situent dans un entre-deux culturel au sein duquel ils changent et évoluent en tentant de remanier leur propre configuration identitaire au contact de leur société d'accueil et d'une nouvelle langue à apprendre. Si les nouveaux arrivants sont conscients de vivre dans un entre-deux culturel, ils ne l'expriment ni ne le perçoivent pas tous de la même manière. À cet effet, deux tendances semblent se dessiner. Certains immigrants conservent des éléments de leur culture d'origine et intègrent des éléments de leur culture d'accueil, alors que d'autres se sentent plutôt dans un vide culturel, n'appartenant plus à leur culture d'origine mais n'appartenant pas encore à leur culture d'accueil. Nous discutons des éléments caractéristiques de ces deux tendances ainsi que du sentiment d'appartenance des nouveaux arrivants envers leur propre groupe culturel et envers les Québécois francophones.

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

With an increasing number of newcomers every year, the province of Quebec has become the host society of immigrants from diverse cultural backgrounds. In this respect, it seems pertinent to look at the phenomenon of migration in an attempt to better understand these newcomers who become key actors in our plural society. It is particularly important to understand the identity development of these newcomers and how they redefine their identity during their immigration

⁵ This study was conducted through grants from l'Office québécois de la langue française and the Centre de recherche Immigration et métropoles.

process. Indeed, the immigrants' cultural identity is defined by their experience of many years in their culture of origins. In Quebec, their identity is confronted with the culture of the host society and they must find a balance that will allow them to create a new identity in order to achieve their integration.

Integration into the host society, closely linked to the learning of French and to all the cultural aspects that lie behind the mastery of the official language of Quebec, is a process likely to cause a stir within the cultural identity of adult immigrants. The Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles du Québec (MICC) offers French courses to immigrants in order to facilitate their integration process. Learning French also helps them to better understand the Other and the culture of the host society. Language is more than a communication tool and is the most obvious link uniting members belonging to the same cultural group by being the first medium through which communication of cultural information is made possible (Noels, Pon & Clement, 1996). Language is not a neutral medium of communication but is closely related to the social context in which people use it (Norton, 2000). For an individual or a group, language is a symbolic marker and a manifestation of identity (Rampton, 1990, 1995) since it is one of the most important factors used to categorize others and to define ourselves. As language is a manifestation of cultural identity, the language a person speaks bears the imprint of the cultural community to which it belongs (Byram, 1989).

So by learning the main language of their host society, how do newcomers redefine their identity and categorize themselves in relation to their own cultural group and their host society? By looking at different configurations of identity experienced by immigrants who are learning French in Quebec, we believe that it is interesting to know how the French language plays a role in redefining the identity of these individuals. The aim of this research is to identify the main elements characterizing the cultural identity of newcomers who learn French. Furthermore, this study is part of a wider research project which sought to look at the linguistic, cultural and social experiences of newcomers, their motivation to learn French as well as their cultural representations towards French-speaking Quebecers and the French language. In this wider study, the question of cultural identity was identified as research question Q4.

CULTURAL IDENTITY AND HYBRID IDENTITY

Cultural identity can be described as what is common to an individual and other members of his/her cultural group in terms of values, beliefs, ways of living, etc (Guerraoui & Troadec, 2000). It enables individuals to develop culturally appropriate knowledge, skills and *savoir-être*. According to Collier and Thomas

(1988), cultural identity is defined as follows: "identification with and perceived acceptance into a group that has shared systems of symbols and meanings as well as norms / rules for conduct" (p.113). When an individual identifies with a cultural group, he/she is able to understand and manipulate its system of symbols and beliefs and act in a culturally appropriate manner.

Cultural identity is dynamic: it is built and modified in contact with Otherness, with the difference. It is formed, negotiated, modified and challenged by communication and contacts with others (Collier & Thomas, 1988). Identity is constructed and changed by contacts with the Other, with the difference. The development of cultural identity not only involves the recognition of similarities with our own group, but also the recognition of differences with other groups (Hall & Du Gay, 1996). By recognizing who we are, we also recognize who we are not. When we live in a pluralistic society in which several groups have different cultural characteristics, such as language or religion, we use these features to classify others in a cultural way and to position ourselves in relation to our own cultural identity. As suggested by Hall and Du Gay (1996), "identity is a structured representation which only achieves its positive through the narrow eye of the negative. It has to go through the eye of the needle of the other before it can construct itself" (p.89). Therefore, an individual in contact with other cultural groups will construct his/her identity by becoming aware, for example, of different values and lifestyles of other groups.

The immigration context creates many contact opportunities with others, with difference, and is likely to lead to a questioning, a redefinition of the newcomers' cultural identity. Identity redefinition in the immigration context is a dynamic process since the newcomer' identity is enriched by new cultural elements and challenged by the new realities of the host culture. The construct of identity in our pluralistic societies is a complex process that is never completed as it depends largely on the environment in which we operate (Yon, 2000). The theory of hybrid identity focuses on the identities arising from intergroup contact. Fine (1994) presents hybrid identity as a constant negotiation between the self and the Other. The author suggests the existence of a hyphen between self and others to represent a world at the border of these two realities. Similarly, Bhabha (1994) argues that hybridity refers to a space "in-between" (p. 38), a space within which two or more cultures are recombined and rearranged by an individual. Taking into account different cultural values and practices leads to a reorganization of the individual's identity. This cultural reorganization involves and requires a whole new set of cultural representations. Since theories on hybrid identity focus mainly on identities within intercultural societies (Guilherme,

2000), it is closely linked to intercultural contacts experienced by newcomers in their host society.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The sample of this study is composed of adult immigrants from various ethnic backgrounds. Participants were learning French in Montreal in different educational institutions (universities, colleges and *centres de francisation*, or French learning centers). They were all enrolled in a French course (intermediate level) approved by the Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles du Québec (MICC). On average, these newcomers had arrived in Quebec 11 months ago when they participated in the study. In total, 110 participants from 30 different countries answered the written questionnaire. The countries most frequently mentioned include Romania (28 participants, 25.4%), China (13 participants, 11.8%) and Mexico (8 participants, 7.3%). The average age of participants was 34 years and the sample is composed of 66.7% women and 33.3% men. Moreover, 14 participants (8 men and 6 women) who had previously answered the written questionnaire also took part in an interview. The majority of the participants in the interview (8) came from Spanish-speaking countries (Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Mexico). In addition, three interviewees were from Romania, while the other three participants were from Moldova, Bulgaria and Somalia. The average age of the participants in the interview was 33 years old. All of them spoke their first language, intermediate French as well as English, except for the Bulgarian participant who could't speak English.

Survey instruments

In this empirical study, quantitative and qualitative survey instruments were used in order to better understand and characterize the newcomers' cultural identity. The survey instruments were designed in accordance with the dimension of *savoir-être* in the framework of intercultural competence development in language education (Lussier, 1997, 2005). The dimension of *savoir-être* includes self-awareness, identity and integration of new values. In the written questionnaire, two questions were designed to provide answers to the question of cultural identity. First, the degree of identification of participants to their own cultural group and to French-speaking Quebecers was observed using a scale to evaluate the participants' identity in nine different situations (Clément, Noels & Sylvestre, 1991; Clément & Noels, 1992). For example, situations included cooking, listening to music, participating in cultural activities, thinking about future projects, etc. For each of these situations, participants were required to

indicate their degree of identification with their own cultural group as well as with French-speaking Quebecers on a scale from 1 to 7 : with 1 representing not at all like my own group and 7 representing very similar to my own group and, afterwards, with 1 saying not at all like French-speaking Quebecers and 7 indicating very similar to French-speaking Quebecers.

Ex: When I listen to music, I feel...

not at all like my own group (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) very similar to my own group
not at all like French-speaking (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) very similar to French-speaking
Quebecers Quebecers

The second question on identity was open-ended and asked participants to share their personal comments on their cultural identity.

With regard to the interview, seven questions linked to the definition of identity were asked to participants:

- What does your mother tongue represent for you?
- Are there any habits or ways of thinking that seem difficult to accept from the people who speak your language? (if so, which ones?)
- Which values of your own culture are important for you?
- How would you define your cultural identity today? Why? Do you have different/ multiple identities?
- How do you position yourself with regard to your culture of origins and the cultures you've discovered in Quebec? How do you identify to these different cultures?
- Since your arrival in Quebec, have you changed your way of identifying yourself?
- In which situations do you feel good about your culture of origins, the French culture and the English culture in Quebec? Why ?

These questions were designed to provide the participants different opportunities to express various aspects of their cultural identity.

Data collection

The first stage of data collection was linked to the written questionnaire. After contacting the French teachers interested in collaborating in the project, two ways were used to introduce the questionnaire to the students. In most cases, the researcher met the students in the classroom, explained the project and gave the questionnaires to the volunteers. Otherwise, the questionnaires were handed to the teacher, who presented the project to the students and asked the volunteers to complete the questionnaire at home. In general, slightly more than half of the

questionnaires distributed to students (110 out of 211, or 52.1%) were returned for analysis.

The last page of the questionnaire included an invitation for an interview with the researcher. Interviews with 14 volunteer participants took place a few weeks after the participants had completed the written questionnaire.

Data analysis

We first used descriptive methods to analyze the data. Afterwards, we resorted to a computer software, considering it to be an effective and valuable tool (Savoie-Zajc, 2000). We chose the Alceste software to analyze textual data, i.e. to describe, classify and summarize data in order to discover the essential information contained in a text related to specific themes. The aim of the software is to quantify a text to extract the structures which have the greatest signification (Alceste, version 4.5, 2001). The software breaks down the text and extracts segments (also called contextual elementary units) that are highly related in terms of co-occurrence of words. It then creates lexical universes or groups called *classes*.

RESULTS

The main objective of this study was to understand how immigrants define their cultural identity. Results are presented in two parts, namely in connection with the written questionnaire and the interview.

Written questionnaire

The following table summarizes the descriptive statistics obtained for the items linked to the identity of the participants in relation to their own cultural group.

Table 1: Synthesis of the participants’ results in relation to their own cultural group

Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Standard deviation
1. When I participate in cultural activities, I feel...	109	1	7	4.70	1.46
2. When I listen to music, I feel...	110	1	7	5.14	1.65
3. When I cook, I feel...	110	1	7	5.78	1.40
4. When I read or write for myself, I feel...	109	1	7	5.36	1.56
5. When I think about politics, I feel...	108	1	7	4.71	1.92
6. When I think about future projects, I feel...	110	1	7	4.46	1.76
7. In my way of being, thinking and acting, I feel...	110	1	7	4.94	1.69
8. When I think about the way I dress, I feel...	110	1	7	5.01	1.55
9. When I am with my friends, I feel...	110	2	7	5.59	1.31

Answers range from 1 to 7 for all items, except for item 9, whose minimum answer is 2. By observing the mean associated with the different situation presented, we tend to think that respondents feel particularly similar to their own cultural group when they cook (5.78), when they are with their friends (5.59) and when they read or write for themselves (5.36). Furthermore, the lowest means were obtained for items 6 (4.46) and 1 (4.70), which refer to situations in which participants think about future projects and participate in cultural activities.

The following table summarizes the descriptive statistics obtained for the same items, but this time about the identity of participants in relation to French-speaking Quebecers.

Table 2: Synthesis of the participants' results in relation to French-speaking Quebecers

Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Standard deviation
1. When I participate in cultural activities, I feel...	109	1	7	4.09	1.63
2. When I listen to music, I feel...	110	1	7	3.95	1.77
3. When I cook, I feel...	110	1	7	2.85	1.66
4. When I read or write for myself, I feel...	109	1	7	3.09	1.63
5. When I think about politics, I feel...	108	1	7	3.52	1.82
6. When I think about future projects, I feel...	110	1	7	4.06	1.63
7. In my way of being, thinking and acting, I feel...	109	1	7	3.59	1.58
8. When I think about the way I dress, I feel...	110	1	7	3.97	1.74
9. When I am with my friends, I feel...	109	1	7	3.66	1.58

These results indicate that the participants feel more like the French-speaking Quebecers when they participate in cultural activities (mean=4.09) and when they think about future projects (mean= 4.06). Furthermore, the lowest means were obtained for items 3 (2.85) and 4 (3.09), which refer to situations when participants cook as well as read and write for themselves. It is interesting to note that these two items obtained strong means with regard to the identity in relation to their own ethnic group of the participants. Tables 1 and 2 show that for all situations, the means in relation to the own cultural group of the participants are higher than the means in relation to French-speaking Quebecers. Moreover, the overall mean of the identity of participants for all situations in relation to their own cultural group is 5.08, compared to an overall mean of 3.64 in relation to French-speaking Quebecers.

In addition, participants' comments about their identity suggest that several newcomers have a dual identity. Most participants mentioned that they greatly identify with their culture of origins when they meet people from the same cultural background and when they have contacts with their family and friends in

their first language. Newcomers also seem to identify with their host society when they interact with French-speaking Quebecers, when they study French, when they visit Montreal and when they read French books and listen to French music. The definition of identity in the context of immigration seems complex and is characterized by a state of cultural in-between, i.e. between the culture of origins and the host culture. One participant actually feels as if he is now in an empty space : «*Je ne suis ni roumain ni canadien c'est très difficile parfois de vivre comme ça entre deux mondes*» ("I am neither Canadian nor Romanian it is very difficult sometimes to live like that between two worlds"). Another participant summed up his dual identity as follows: «*Ma identité a changé depuis j'arrive ici. Je ne me pense pas comme mon propre groupe ethnique mais je ne suis plus un Québécois francophone. C'est la folie*» ("My identity has changed since I arrived here. I do not feel like my own ethnic group but I am not a French-speaking Quebecer. This is crazy."). These comments clearly show feelings of a state of cultural in-between that is related to the integration process.

Interview

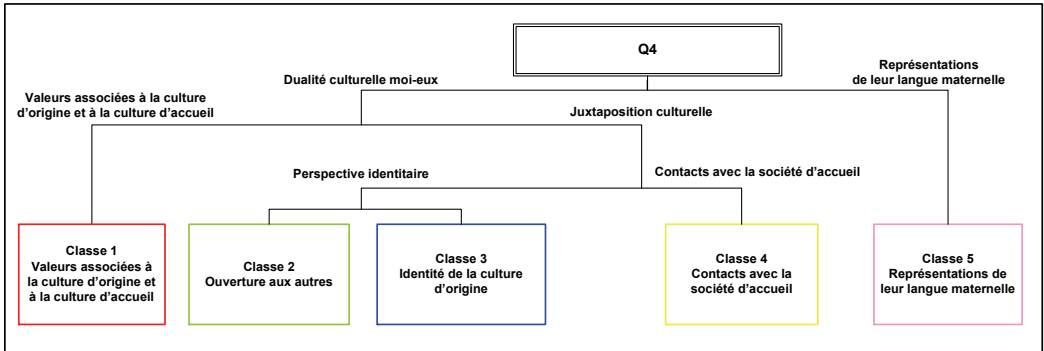
The descriptive analysis of the interview data suggests that some themes are recurrent to characterize newcomers' identity experiences. First, findings show that the representations that the participants have of their mother tongue are crucial for defining their own cultural identity. Indeed, their first language is intrinsically linked to their origins, their homeland, their culture, and their family. This cultural characteristic has a major impact on the definition of identity for most participants. Also, most of them feel as if their cultural identity is actually in a state of duality between their culture of origins and the culture of their host society. However, not all participants express this duality in the same way and two tendencies seem to stand out. First, some believe that this cultural blend is made of the culture of origins and the host culture, so in this case a new culture is added to the one they had lived in for many years. In this regard, some participants mentioned that they greatly identify with their culture of origins when they have contacts with family members and friends in their first language, when they cook typical dishes or participate in activities involving elements of their culture of origins, such as music, dance or cinema. On the other hand, they feel quite close to French-speaking Quebecers when they discuss with them, when they discover the arts in Quebec, when they do activities that Quebecers enjoy or when they take French classes. Therefore, newcomers seem to express and feel their cultures of origins and of the host society more or less strongly depending on the circumstances.

While remaining deeply attached to their culture of origins, the participants generally advocate a philosophy «à prendre et à laisser», i.e. the preservation of cultural elements in their culture of origins that characterize them and the integration of new cultural references from the Quebec society. They keep what they consider important in terms of cultural characteristics and leave what doesn't appeal to them. This acculturation strategy implies that immigrants identify with some elements that belong to the culture of the host society and with some others that belong to the culture of origins (Berry, 1990). By being receptive to their host culture, newcomers are able to appropriate elements of this culture that are interesting for them, as this participant explains: *Ce que je trouve intéressant je le prends et ce que je trouve pas intéressant, je le laisse. Mais c'est bon pour l'identité, la différence (Cla-Col)* (I take what I find interesting and I leave what I don't find interesting. But difference is good for identity). These participants note that their cultural identity is undergoing a period of deep change and that it is redefining itself by being in contact with different cultures.

In addition to this blend in which some elements of the host culture are added to the culture of origins, many immigrants indicate that they feel as if they are now in an empty state between two cultures. According to the results, the second tendency we can observe seems to be characterized by the loss of cultural references of the original culture and the difficulty of appropriating new references found in the host society. Immigrants feel as if they don't belong to any culture. Indeed, these participants do not feel as much attached to their culture of origins as when they lived in their homeland, but they do not consider themselves as belonging to their host culture either: «*Je suis encore une immigrante. Oui je suis entre les deux. Je ne suis pas roumaine mais je ne suis pas québécoise aussi*» (Mar-Rou). This participant feels neither Romanian nor Quebecer, she feels like she is "still" an immigrant. This difficult state of cultural in-between is experienced as follows by a participant coming from Colombia: «*Je suis perdu maintenant... Peut-être nous sommes au milieu de la mer maintenant. Je ne suis ni en Colombie ni ici*» (Dar-Col) ("I'm lost now ... Maybe we are in the middle of the sea now. I am neither here nor in Colombia"). The use of the verb *perdre*, or to lose, indicates the lack of cultural references, the current absence of an identity, of a sense of belonging to a particular culture.

The results of the descriptive analysis are corroborated by the analysis performed using the Alceste software. The latter classified the interview data into five distinct groups or *classes*. The software presents a figure summarizing this classification, which provides an overview of the data obtained from the analysis and which shows the connections and oppositions between *classes*.

Figure 1: Classification for the cultural identity of the participants (Q4)*



*In the general research, Q4 refers to research question 4 about identity

With the typical words of each category (*classe*) and segments of text in which these words are found, we were able to identify the following categories generated by the software:

- Classe 1*: Values associated with the culture of origins and the host culture
- Classe 2*: Openness to others
- Classe 3*: Identity of the culture of origins
- Classe 4*: Contacts with the host society
- Classe 5*: Representations of their mother tongue

Looking at this classification, it is possible to notice that some *classes* correspond to similar lexical categories. For example, *classes* 2 and 3 are similar in that they both offer a perspective of identity, on the first hand related to the culture of origins (*classe* 3) and on the other hand in connection with the openness to others (*classe* 2). The classification also suggests that there is a link between «Perspective identitaire», or identity perspectives, (*classes* 2 and 3) and *classe* 4, "Contacts with the host society". *Classe* 4, which encompasses various kinds of contacts with the host society, represents the interactions experienced by immigrants with their host culture. We identify this branching between *classes* 2, 3 and 4 as «Juxtaposition culturelle» or cultural juxtaposition, namely the combination between the way newcomers define their identity towards the culture of origins and the others and concrete contacts with the culture associated to Quebec society. According to the classification, this cultural juxtaposition is also linked to *classe* 1, values associated with the culture of origins and the host culture. Indeed, the branching between the four *classes* appears to refer to the definition of identity in relation to the culture of origins and the host culture,

which may result in a «Dualité culturelle moi-eux», or a me-them cultural duality.

Thus, the identification of *classes* shows that the concept of cultural identity includes, on the one hand, cultural duality between the society of origins and the host society (*classes* 1, 2, 3 and 4) and, on the other hand, the importance of the newcomer's representations of their mother tongue (*classe* 5). It is therefore clear that the me-them cultural duality is central to the definition of cultural identity of the participants, as we had previously seen in the descriptive analysis of data. Indeed, the classification suggests that this duality includes a cultural juxtaposition of the host culture (*classe* 4) and the culture of origins (*classe* 3), in addition to all the values associated with the culture of origins and the host culture (*classe* 1). In this context, the contribution of the culture of origins and the host culture seems to be present in order to allow newcomers to redefine their identity. Besides, we believe that this cultural juxtaposition between *classes* 2, 3 and 4 does not distinguish between the mixture of the culture of origins and the host culture and feelings of emptiness and loss of identity experienced by the participants. In both cases, cultures are juxtaposed, but according to the descriptive analysis, not all participants express this juxtaposition in the same way. Also, analysis using the Alceste software emphasizes the importance of openness to others (*classe* 2) for the definition of identity, a theme we had not seen so clearly in the descriptive analysis. To sum up, the descriptive analysis and the analysis using the software provide complementary perspectives with regard to the cultural identity of the participants.

DISCUSSION

Results from the written questionnaire and the interview help us to better understand how immigrants who participated in this study define their cultural identity. Data from the questionnaire show that the newcomers's identity towards their own cultural group is very strong. This strong sense of identity in relation to the culture of origins is particularly observable when immigrants cook, when they are with their friends, when they read or write for themselves, when they listen to music or even in the way they dress. In addition, immigrants feel closer to French-speaking Quebecers when they participate in cultural activities and when they think about future projects. The open-ended comments collected in the questionnaire also suggest the dual identity experienced by the participants, a central concept in the interview analysis.

Findings also highlights the "me-them" cultural duality among newcomers. Their identity, which is in a process of redefinition, constitutes a duality between two cultures, their culture of origins and their host culture. However, it seems

that immigrants express this duality in two distinct ways. For some, the culture of the host society is added to their culture of origins. In this case, the redefinition of identity often implies that the individual must make choices and focus on certain elements of the host culture while retaining some elements of its culture of origins. For other participants, the juxtaposition between the two cultures has resulted in a state of cultural in-between rather difficult to live, where they no longer identify themselves completely to their culture of origins, but do not consider themselves as being totally part of their host culture either. This feeling is expressed by several participants, who seem to live a period of uncertainty and emptiness about their cultural identity. Results also suggest the importance of some characteristics for identity definition. For example, the representations of the participants towards their mother tongue, the values of the target cultures and the contacts with the culture of origins and the host culture seem essential to define newcomers' cultural identity. Also, openness to others seems to be an important attitude for the definition of cultural identity.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the fact that newcomers are in a constant identity negotiation process (Collier & Thomas, 1988). In a migration context, living in another culture inevitably requires some adaptation on the part of immigrants, which is reflected in their cultural identity. The latter is then in a process of redefinition since newcomers need to position themselves. As a consequence, they feel as if they are in a constant "me-them" cultural duality, which results in a hybrid definition of their cultural identity. Results suggest that this cultural duality implies a reorganization of the individual's identity (Fine, 1994). As mentioned by several participants during the interviews, the redefinition of their identity is often a complex and painful process. While some newcomers feel as if they are in a cultural in-between (Bhabha, 1994; Fine, 1994; Pieterse, 1995), others perceive their identity as a blend between their original identity and the identity of the host culture.

Findings show that the "me-them" cultural duality experienced by newcomers inevitably refers to a process of identity redefinition in their migratory experience. Intercultural reality faced by immigrants allows them to give meaning to the new definition of their identity. They establish the boundaries between oneself, one's own cultural group, the Other and the other cultural groups. Results suggest the complexity and, in some cases, the difficulty of defining identity for newcomers. The question of cultural identity has resulted in a great deal of deep thinking on the part of newcomers and has also served to

highlight the uniqueness of each definition of identity. As mentioned by the following participant when referring to his dual identity, «*ce mélange c'est un mélange original*» (Gab-Rou), which shows the "original blend" of his identity.

Finally, the study points out the importance of being aware of the identity redefinition of immigrants entering a new culture. Recommendations include setting up more efficient linguistic and cultural exchange opportunities between immigrants and Quebecers so that we can understand each other better. It may also be a good idea to create listening and accompanying groups in order to provide newcomers an opportunity to discuss their main cultural identity concerns. Learning the main language of the host culture is a great and essential starting point for immigrants who want to be part of a new society and it seems essential to take into account the complex linguistic, psychological and social factors involved in identity redefinition.

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Valérie Amireault is an Assistant Professor in the Département de didactique des langues, Faculté des Sciences de l'éducation, l'Université du Québec à Montréal where she works in the area of French language education and pedagogy; she can be contacted at amireault.valerie@uqam.ca.