IN OTHER WORDS:
AN EXPLORATION OF FRENCH NEWFOUNDLAND LANGUAGE IDENTITY IN CAPE ST. GEORGE

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IN OTHER WORDS:
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by

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Abstract

In the 20th century, a process of language shift took place among French Newfoundlanders living in Cape St. George, Newfoundland. This involved a consolidation of English and French being inscribed with diglossic values – with English as the high variety and French the low. A French revitalization movement was formed at the Cape in the early 1970s with the goal of reversing the effects of language shift. It took the form of resistance of reversal, adopting the oppositional logic of diglossia but inverting the relative power of each language. Language activists with the French movement have been guided by the oppositional one language/one people ideology, an ideology which equates group identity with a single language and tends to favour linguistic purism. The influence of this language ideology is most clear in the acquisition and evolution of French education at the Cape, a process which, ironically, introduced a second language hierarchy into the community.

Language shift and language revitalization have transformed Cape St. George into a linguistically heterogeneous speech community, where varieties of English and French are spoken with varying degrees of competence and willingness by residents there. I argue that unmarked codeswitching between French and English, regardless of a person's French language ability is the quintessential language pattern of French Newfoundlanders.

Criticisms of the French movement are generally criticisms of the exclusionary practices and policies engendered by the oppositional one language/one people

ideology. People object to these polices and practices because they do not match their experience of their community or their more plurilingual definition of French Newfoundland identity. This popular rejection of the French movement may be considered a form of radical resistance.

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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother Madeleine Barter (née Benoit) and to her sister Helena Churchill, who inadvertently planted the seed for this project over a cup of tea one afternoon.

Table of Contents

Abstract.. ii

Acknowledgements.. iv

Table of Contents.. vi

List of Abbreviations.. viii

List of Appendices.. ix

Chapter One – Introduction.. 1
    1.1 – Cape St. George/*Cap-Saint-Georges*.. 4
    1.2 – Theoretical Approach.. 15
    1.3 – Methodology.. 35
        1.3.1 – Participant Observation.. 35
        1.3.2 – Photographic Documentation.. 39
        1.3.3 – Unstructured and Semi-Structured Interviews.. 40
        1.3.4 – A Methodological Post-Script.. 43
    1.4 – A Note About the Researcher.. 43
    1.5 – Thesis Outline.. 46

Chapter Two – A History of Language Shift in Cape St. George.. 49
    2.1 – Settlement.. 50
    2.2 – Language Shift.. 55
        2.2.1 – The Emergence of English, The Marginalization of French.. 55
        2.2.2 – Rural Decline and Out-Migration: Language Shift by Absence.. 63
    2.3 – Conclusion.. 73

Chapter Three – French Newfoundland Language Activism: The Impact of the Oppositional One Language/One People Ideology........................... 75
3.1 – A Brief History of the French Language Movement in Cape St. George... 75
3.2 – French Education: Resistance of Reversal............................ 84
3.2.1 – French Immersion.. 85
3.2.2 – New Language: The Argument for French First Language Education...................................... 90
3.2.3 – Contemporary French Education at the Cape............ 97
3.3 – A New Linguistic Code: Standard French............................ 100
3.4 – Conclusion.. 107

Chapter Four – The Legacies of Language Shift and Language Revitalization: Language Use Patterns at the Cape... 110
4.1 – Language Varieties Spoken at the Cape.............................. 112
4.2 – Codeswitching in Cape St. George................................... 118
4.2.1 – Code Choice: Space and Relationship...................... 121
4.2.2 – Unmarked Conversational Codeswitching at the Cape... 132
4.3 – Metadiscourse.. 136
4.3.1 – The Lingering Diglossic Impact........................... 136
4.3.2 – French Language Revitalization and Revaluation......... 140
4.4 – Conclusion.. 152

Chapter Five – Everyday Language Activism and An Alternative Model of French Newfoundland Identity... 155
5.1 – Defending Newfoundland French.................................... 155
5.2 – Calls for Inclusion.. 163
5.3 – Conclusion.. 179

Chapter Six – Conclusion.. 182

References Cited... 190

Appendix A – Map of Newfoundland Showing the Port au Port Peninsula...... 205

Appendix B – Map of the Port au Port Peninsula................................. 206

Appendix C – Census Material for Cape St. George-Petit Jardin-Grand Jardin-De Grau-Marches Point-Loretto: Population & Maternal Language............. 207

List of Abbreviations

ACELF	*Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française*
ACOA	Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
ARCO	*Association Régionale de la Côte Ouest*
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
FFHQ	*Fédération des francophones hors Québec*
FFTNL	*Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador*
FPFTNL	*Fédération des Parents Francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador*
MP	Member of Parliament
NAFO	Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization
PAPEDA	Port au Port Economic Development Association
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RDÉE	*Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité*
RLS	Reversing Language Shift

List of Appendices

Appendix A Map of Newfoundland... 204

Appendix B Map of the Port au Port Peninsula................................ 205

Appendix C Census Material for Cape St. George-Petit Jardin-Grand Jardin-De Grau-Marches Point-Loretto: Population & Maternal Language.. 206

Chapter One

Introduction

When I tell people I did my master's fieldwork among French Newfoundlanders on the Port au Port Peninsula, they often ask one of two questions: either "Do you speak French?" or "You were out there with the jacotars?" The assumption behind the first question is that French Newfoundlanders speak French (and that I would need to know French to communicate with them). The second question was most often posed playfully with a smile, but it nonetheless contains a once-powerful othering slur that differentiates French Newfoundlanders from 'the rest of us' (see Chapter Two for a discussion of this term and its use). Embedded in these two questions are the ideological currents that have been at play in various ways in Cape St. George in the past several decades. The dominant language ideology that has informed a process of language shift and over three decades of language activism at the Cape links one language with one people; it is reinforced by an oppositional logic that pits 'us' against 'them'. In this thesis, I discuss how this language ideology has been enacted, experienced, and resisted by French Newfoundlanders in Cape St. George through language shift and a language revitalization movement.

A process of language shift from French to English reinforced a somewhat diglossic[1] situation in Cape St. George, with English as the high register and French as

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[1] The language situation in Cape St. George does not meet all the criteria for diglossia set forth by Ferguson (1959), but it is characterized by status and function differences between English and French. The diglossic character of Cape St. George is quite similar to the situation Jaffe (1999) describes on Corsica.

the low. Despite these diglossic values attached to the two languages, language use at the Cape is far from the fluent, systematic use of two idioms prescribed by Ferguson's 1959 model of diglossia. Instead, speaker competence in French varies, language use is heterogeneous, and the use of each language "spills over" (Jaffe 1999) the diglossic boundaries. Switching between English and French as an overall unmarked choice (Scotton 1986) is the quintessential language practice among contemporary French Newfoundlanders (see similar examples cited in Jaffe 1999).

A French language revitalization movement (Dorian 1994b) emerged in the 1970s, which attempted to reverse the effects of language shift and encourage the use of French within the community once again, especially among the younger generations. Language activism at the Cape was a "resistance of reversal" (Jaffe 1999): language activists attempted to embed the French language into the institutions of power in the community that were once dominated by English (i.e., education, the church). Though they upset the language *within* these institutions, they did not challenge the actual structures of dominance.

I will demonstrate that the decisions taken by some French language activists toward autonomy and the separation of English and French suggest that this oppositional model is in place. This oppositional ideology is a manifestation of a dominant Western language ideology that links one language, one group, one nation. Political (and scholarly) commitment to this ideology has seen the literal and conceptual erasure of linguistic plurality from populations (Gal and Irvine 1995,

Kroskrity 2000). The French movement has operated according to an ideology of opposition, French versus English, which was entrenched during language shift and reproduced during its attempts to reverse the diglossic allocation of languages and replace English with French in domains of economic and political power.

The vernacular French spoken on the Port au Port Peninsula is known as Newfoundland French. It is an oral language that has evolved from the varieties of French spoken by the Acadians and the fishermen from Brittany and St. Pierre who settled in the area. Unlike minority and minoritized language situations described elsewhere (e.g. Jaffe 1999, McDonald 1989b, Roseman 1995) where a contentious aspect of language planning is the standardization of a modern written code, French Newfoundland language activists had access to an already well-defined, globally recognized written code ready to import: standard French. Moreover, the French movement at the Cape had the ideological and financial support of the federal government, which had established a program promoting bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada with funding to nurture official language minority communities. While the adoption of standard French buoyed their cause, expedited the establishment of French language education, and strengthened their claims, it simultaneously inserted another language hierarchy into the community: that between an already existing written standard and an oral vernacular. Thus, language activists' planning efforts, though designed and intended to raise the esteem of French Newfoundlanders, ironically exposed them to another form of linguistic

hierarchization in a similar way to the process described by Roseman (1995) in the case of vernacular and standard Galician.

Despite general support for the continued revitalization of the French language at the Cape, there is nonetheless significant criticism of and resistance to the oppositional ideology and to the subjugation of the Newfoundland French vernacular. Taken together, these critiques of the French language movement and various forms of everyday activism which challenge the oppositional ideology may be seen as a radical form of resistance (Jaffe 1999) which moves beyond the oppositional one language/one people ideology, rejects the structures of dominance, and calls for a plurilinguisic definition of French Newfoundland identity which more accurately reflects the post-language shift speech community and does not refuse in-group identity based on French language proficiency.

I begin this chapter with a portrait of Cape St. George, followed by a discussion of the key concepts I employ in my analysis, namely diglossia, codeswitching, language shift, and language ideology. Next, I discuss my methodology and situate myself within the research. I conclude this chapter with a detailed outline of this thesis.

1.1 – Cape St. George/ *Cap Saint-Georges*

Cape St. George/*Cap Saint-Georges* is a small community located on the most westerly tip of the Port au Port Peninsula, on the island of Newfoundland, Canada

(see Appendices A and B). The community stretches along the main road, which runs parallel to the shore. Driving west up the road toward the mouth of Bay St. George, you are greeted by tidy, well-kept houses scattered here and there and fields that shift from snowy barrens to lush green meadows to golden brush as the seasons change. To the south, a bank rises above the ocean's edge. Well-worn tracks run along the top of the bank, forming a path perfect for coastal wandering. North of the road, set back behind the community, is a forested embankment that stretches into the country in the interior of the peninsula. Back there, people hunt moose, pick berries, and ride snowmobiles or all terrain vehicles as the season dictates.

In 1969, Cape St. George became an incorporated town, joining with other communities down the road. From west to east, they are Cape St. George proper, Degrau, Red Brook, and Marches Point. The incorporated town also includes Loretto, a small settlement nestled in the country behind the major communities. Once a year-round community, Loretto has become a popular location for cabins. At the time of my research, these communities were home to just over nine hundred people (see Appendix C for census statistics on population and maternal language). The area was settled in the 18th and 19th centuries by French fishers primarily from Brittany and Normandy, Acadian migrants displaced after *le grand dérangement*, as well as some Mi'qmaq and Scottish people (Thomas 1993, Waddell and Doran 1993). Over time, more English-speakers settled on the Port au Port Peninsula and married French-speakers there. Due to institutional, economic, and social pressures, English

gradually replaced French as the dominant language at the Cape. In late 1970, a group of people from Cape St. George, concerned that the French language was on the verge of falling silent in their community, formed the first French association in the province, *Les Terre-Neuviens Français*[2]. The French movement flourished over time: French associations formed in other communities, old traditions were revived, new ones were born, and in 1975 the province's first French immersion program was instituted at the Cape in 1975 followed by French first language education in 1989. During that time, a French language newspaper *Le Gaboteur* was created and French language radio and television became available to people on the peninsula.

Evidence of language shift and the language revitalization movement are not only apparent in the way language is used at the Cape as I argue in Chapter Four, but also in the combination of English and French facilities throughout the community. *École Notre Dame du Cap*/Our Lady of the Cape Elementary school, Our Lady of the Cape/*Notre Dame du Cap* Roman Catholic church, the French Centre, and the town hall are all clustered together near the border between Degrau and Cape St. George proper. Further up the road in the community of the Cape are the Silverado club, Kay's Restaurant, Ozzie's store and post office, and Mel's salon, the main businesses in the community.

Near the end of the Cape, the main road takes a sharp right turn north, up and over the mountain to the neighbouring community of Mainland/*La Grand'Terre*. At

[2] My capitalization of French organizations on the Port au Port Peninsula reflects local conventions as seen on websites and signage. Though this practice is at times differs from some publishing styles, I have chosen to reproduce it here for consistency with local practice.

that bend in the road, an older road continues straight and leads to the *Boutte du Cap*, Cape St. George's foremost natural landmark. The road ends at a roundabout and a gravel path continues straight. After about a three-minute walk, you arrive at the edge of the peninsula, a steep cliff that falls to the ocean, a place where people occasionally scramble down the rocks with their rods to fish mackerel. This place is known as *La Boutte du Cap*, or simply "the Boot". Carved out of the cliff by wind and wave is a huge stone boot, there as though a giant had kicked off his shoes and waded into the Gulf of St. Lawrence for a swim. *La Boutte du Cap* is a great play on words: *le but* means 'the end', *la butte* means 'the bank', and *la boutte*, pronounced just like the English 'boot', seems to reference the giant rock landmark. This blend of French and English is a good example of the rich linguistic melange heard in the community nearby.

In the distance, just north beyond the Boot, you can see Red Island, which lies just off the coast of Mainland/*La Grand'Terre*. For years there was no road connecting the Cape and Mainland. I have seen several older maps of the province that show the forked road bracketing, but not fully encircling, the peninsula; for years, the road forked at Piccadilly and formed a giant horseshoe with Mainland and Cape St. George at either end. Until the road between the two communities was finally built, the only way to get from Cape St. George to Mainland was either by boat around the Boot and up the coast, by foot along the old mountain path, or by car all the way back to the crossroads and up the other end of the horseshoe via Piccadilly

and Lourdes. Cape St. George and Mainland, though neighbouring communities as the crow flies and through some family ties, were to a large extent separate from one another. Today, Mainland houses two convenience stores, the Seabreeze Restaurant, and a *Le Centre Scolaire et Communautaire de Sainte-Anne*, the French school and community centre. Older French students from the Cape travel to Mainland everyday to attend high school at *École Sainte-Anne.*

A distinguishing feature of the Port au Port Peninsula on the map is the long finger of land that stretches north, an extension of the coastline from the *Boutte*, Mainland, and Lourdes. That long narrow finger of land is called the Bar/*La Barre.* At the base of the Bar are the communities of Winterhouses/*Maisons-d'Hiver* and Black Duck Brook/*L'Anse-à-Canards.*[3] The latter boasts a large French Centre, which is home to Black Duck Brook's French association *Chez les Français de L'Anse-à-Canards* and an impressive collection of old photographs. The road that continues north along the *Barre* soon turns to gravel. Though it's slow-going, the prize at the end makes the ride worthwhile. Blue Beach is a scenic fishing station, where many boats are docked and cabins, lean-tos, and fishing sheds pepper the shoreline. In

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[3] Cape St. George/*Cap Saint-Georges*, Mainland/*La GrandTerre*, and Black Duck Brook/*L'Anse-à-Canards* are commonly listed as the three French communities on the Port au Port Peninsula. They home to the three French associations (*Les Terre-Neuviens Français*, *L'Héritage de l'Île Rouge*, and *Chez les Français de l'Anse-à-Canards*, respectively) and the French centres on the peninsula, and are undoubtedly the three largest centralized settlements of French-speakers in the region. Winterhouses/*Maisons d'Hiver* is sometimes listed as a fourth French community, though many people include it as part of Black Duck Brook. It should be noted, however, that there are English-speakers living in all of these communities, as well as French-speakers living in other communities throughout the Port au Port Peninsula. See Chapter Four for a more lengthy discussion of language patterns at the Cape.

2002, Blue Beach showed what many other communities on the peninsula lacked: evidence of an active fishery.

To leave the Port au Port Peninsula, you follow the road to Port au Port West, across the isthmus (known as the Gravels), and onto the main body of Newfoundland. The road leads through Port au Port East and Kippens to Stephenville. With several traffic lights, a small airport, a hospital, an active harbour, as well as many restaurants and shops, Stephenville marks its status as a commercial hub of the west coast. Located about an hour's drive from Cape St. George, Stephenville is close enough for Cape St. George residents to stock up on groceries and supplies relatively quickly, but sufficiently distant to have a distinct identity and much different atmosphere.

The communities on the Port au Port Peninsula look much like other rural communities in Newfoundland. There are no clues in the built environment – the houses, churches, wharves, and so on – to suggest that anything here is different than elsewhere in Newfoundland. Rather, it is the presence of billboards welcoming you to the French Ancestors' Route, bilingual signs marking your arrival at certain communities, schools, churches, community centres, and businesses, and the occasional *franco-terreneuvien* flag, that herald your presence among French Newfoundlanders. Perhaps most informative are the four interpretive rest stops that

have been erected around the peninsula[4]. An elaborate rest stop is located at the Gravels, the isthmus that connects the Port au Port Peninsula to mainland Newfoundland, and three more modest rest stops are situated in Cape St. George, Mainland, and Black Duck Brook. Each rest stop is set at a scenic location overlooking the ocean and the coastline. In Mainland and Cape St. George, the signs were located near important natural landmarks in each community: Red Island and the Boot. The rest stops consist of a bench or picnic table, a small boardwalk or platform, and interpretive signage that provided information about the history of the French in the area.

During my fieldwork, I heard mixed reviews of the rest stops. Some people, usually those affiliated with the French centres, pointed to the rest stops as an encouraging sign of tourism development on the peninsula. Others regarded them as a waste of money, easily overlooked or passed by altogether due to a lack of signage to direct tourists to each site, and ineffectual in the grand scheme as they did nothing to encourage tourists to spend time – and money – on the peninsula rather than simply drive through. Nonetheless, the rest stops are a key component of the tourism infrastructure on the peninsula and one of the few public sources of information about French Newfoundlanders available to tourists. Because ARCO was one of the key proponents of the rest stops, they would have had a hand in composing the

[4] The rest stops were completed shortly before my arrival at the Cape. They were a project of *l'Association Régionale de la Côte Ouest* (ARCO) (an umbrella organization that encompasses the community-based French associations from Cape St. George, Mainland, and Black Duck Brook), with financial support from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA).

information included in the interpretive signs and, consequently, the way that French Newfoundlanders are publicly represented.

The interpretive signs speak resoundingly of the distant past. They tell of Jacques Cartier visiting the area centuries ago, of the way the Treaty of Utrect (1713) carved up the coast of Newfoundland for England and France, of the importance of Red Island as both a French fishing station and a training ground for the French navy, and of the horrendous living conditions there that prompted some men to swim ashore and flee to the woods, only to be chased by the French military who regarded those men as "deserters". The interpretive signs describe the way French Newfoundland men made their living off the land and sea, and the way global economics at the end of the 19th century turned France's attention from Newfoundland to Africa and consequently led France to cede its fishing rights to England in 1904.

These signs focus on the treaty and geopolitical history that placed French Newfoundlanders on the west coast of Newfoundland and saw the territory come under the hand of England. The scenes conjured by these interpretive signs are set primarily in the 1800s. The images that accompany the text – pristine land and seascapes, a horse-drawn sleigh hauling logs, clay pipes, old coins – many of which are either sepia or black and white, erase contemporary life from the land and revert it to an undeveloped rugged terrain where strong men worked.

The only interpretive sign that mentions present-day French Newfoundlanders in any way, entitled "*Au Coeur de la Francophonie Terre-Neuvienne*/The Heart of French Newfoundland", is located at the Gravels rest stop. The sign reads:

> The Port au Port Peninsula is the heart of French Newfoundland. Of the approximately 5,000 people who live here today, more than half are the descendants of French who first settled the area more than two hundred years ago. This is a place where traditions survive. Here, on the Port au Port, the old songs are still played, Candlemas[5] is still observed, and a growing number of residents choose to speak the language of their forefathers.
>
> But the Port au Port is not a time capsule. This is not a place where the past is preserved unaltered by time. In the last century the communities of this region have experienced tremendous social, economic and cultural upheaval. They have witnessed the decline of their traditional lifestyle and have weathered the sometimes overwhelming influence of the outside world.
>
> Despite these pressures the French communities of the Port au Port persist. Through time they have adapted and developed a culture that is distinctly their own. One that is neither Acadian, nor French, but French Newfoundland.

Alongside the text are images of Émile Benoit[6] playing the fiddle in front of a microphone, a large fiddle, and a black and white photo of a middle-aged couple dancing with a pole decorated with ribbons (a scene from *La Chandeleur*). Other than

---

[5] Candlemas, known in French as *La Chandeleur*, is an old French Newfoundland custom that falls on February 2. As it was described to me, a king and a queen are chosen from the community. The king goes from house to house with a large stick or "maypole". If someone from the house plans to attend the *Chandeleur* soiree, they tie a ribbon or a string onto the pole. On the evening of the party, people show up with food: potatoes and herring, squid, salt beef, or a pot of soup. Everyone feasts and the king and queen dance with the stick. French language activists revived *La Chandeleur* shortly after the French movement began in the 1970s.

[6] Perhaps the best-known performer from the Port au Port Peninsula is internationally renowned musician and storyteller Émile Benoit, a native of Black Duck Brook (1913-1992). He has become an icon of French Newfoundland culture. See Quigley (1995) and Thomas (1993) for descriptions of Benoit's life and work; see also Dettmer (1993).

depicting them as custodians of tradition and as victims of change, this sign presents a hazy picture of French Newfoundlanders living on the peninsula today. It acknowledges that French Newfoundland culture and society have changed over time, but references these changes euphemistically, without specific mention of the types, forces, or effects of change. The reader is left with no clear images of contemporary French Newfoundlanders.

The rest stops on the Port au Port Peninsula represent French Newfoundlanders in a selective and limited way. Just as certain details have been included, so have others been omitted.

What is missing from the rest stop account of French heritage? What aren't tourists invited to discover? There is no mention of the linguistic changes that have occurred on the peninsula. Tourists are not invited to learn the history of language shift and the circumstances that led to the decline of the French language, nor are they invited to discover the story of the French movement, the efforts French Newfoundlanders made to revitalize their language and culture. Women are also absent from the rest stop account of French heritage. The interpretive signs tell only about the boys and men who fished the waters off Red Island, who 'deserted' the French navy, and who worked the land once they settled. There is no mention of the women that these men married, the Acadian migration, the intermarriage of French and English and Mi'qmaq. If historic tourism demands exciting stories and heroes, surely the recent history of the French movement could be told accordingly, with the

marginalized underdogs organizing themselves and reclaiming their language and culture through hard work and determination. Surely there are heroes to be found among the language activists, the men and women who birthed and nurtured the French movement. By omitting this recent history, the creators of the rest stops have struck a powerful moment in French Newfoundland history from the record, effectively removing an era of accomplishment from the public portrayal of this group of people. Excluding the recent history of linguistic assimilation and revitalization from the rest stop interpretation gives tourists no insight into French Newfoundlanders' agency, collective power, and activism; contemporary life for French Newfoundlanders is rendered virtually nonexistent, invisible (see also Fife 2006).

These interpretive signs scarcely mention language, what you hear spoken in these communities. The only mention occurs on a Gravels sign which notes that "a growing number of residents choose to speak the language of their forefathers". In this thesis, I attempt to fill in some of these gaps by exploring how language is used at the Cape today, the ways in which language activists have attempted to bring the French language back into the community, and how some residents of the Cape, through their critiques of those efforts, have asserted their own distinct concept of French Newfoundland identity.

1.2 – Theoretical Approach

This thesis falls under the matrix of linguistic anthropology, that branch of the discipline that examines the role of language in the production of social meaning by individuals and groups within a particular cultural context. The general aim of linguistic anthropologists is "to understand the crucial role played by language (and other semiotic resources) in the constitution of society and its cultural representations" (Duranti 2001:5). Linguistic anthropology moves beyond an examination of language as a referential system, to an exploration of its ability to index other elements of society such as identity, social values, and power relations, and the ways in which it can be used to comment upon, negotiate, resist, and alter social order. Anthropological contributions to the study of language are distinguished by a resounding emphasis on the contextualization of language within the broader matrix of the community.[7] While this emphasis on deep contextualization is characteristic of anthropology in general, it has emerged in anthropological writing on language often as an explicit response to the search for universals of language and anatomies of grammatically "perfect" speech by idealized speakers that have been the primary goals of disciplines such as linguistics (Hymes 1964, Hymes 2001, see also Gal and Irvine 1995). A central premise within linguistic anthropology is that language and society are intricately interwoven, so that one cannot be extricated from the other: "The language does not exist external to the social context of its evaluation

[7] Dell Hymes and John Gumperz placed an early emphasis on analyzing language not as an isolatable system, but as a deeply contextualized process. Hymes' (1964) prescription for "ethnographies of communication" exemplifies this approach.

and use. The language *is* the values invested in it, or the values woven into it by its speakers" (McDonald 1989a: 102-103).

Another recurring theme within linguistic anthropology is that language plays a crucial role in the creation, maintenance, reproduction, and contestation of the boundaries between groups and, because of this function, language is central in the (re)construction of identity (Urciuoli 1995). There are many ethnographic accounts of situations in which languages, language varieties, and/or differential language use[8] index and negotiate different social values, economic statuses, and ethnic identities (see, for example, Blom and Gumperz 1986, Gal 1979, Gal 1987, Heller 1982, Hill 1985, McDonald 1989b, cf Cutler 2003). Language is more than merely iconic of social boundaries: categories that are normally taken as given such as gender, ethnicity, and class are communicatively produced (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz 1982). Just as children learn grammatical rules to facilitate their appropriate use of language, so too do speakers acquire knowledge of the social values and identities that languages index as part of their communicative competence (Hymes 2001, Scotton 1988).

Language behaviour may maintain boundaries, level boundaries (Heller 1988b), or flirt with those boundaries and muddy the line between groups (Heller 1982, Woolard 1988). Because of its integral role in the creation, negotiation, and reproduction of social boundaries, language has been directly linked to the ebb and

[8] Languages need not be grammatically distinct to be socially recognized as different (Blom and Gumperz 1986); indeed, linguistic subtleties can take on great social significance and be taken up as border markers (Urciuoli 1995).

flow of power in society: "in maintaining or changing local power relations, talk unites structure and agency over time" (Gal 1989:347). Anthropologists and linguists have used concepts such as diglossia, codeswitching, language shift, and language ideology to analyze the ways that language is involved in the (re)production of boundaries in bilingual and multilingual situations, particularly those characterized by the presence of a dominant language and a minority or minoritized[9] language.

The terms "bilingual" and "multilingual" are vague: they indicate that two or more languages are used in a setting, but say little about the ways in which those languages are used, how speakers choose which language to speak, what degree of linguistic diversity exists in a given situation, and what each language means in different contexts. Even when laden with qualifying adjectives, the word "bilingual" is imprecise. As Dorian explicates, it

> is inadequate to distinguish among those who can understand a language but not speak it; dredge up a few fossilized expressions and/or some lexical items; say the little they can say in socially appropriate but linguistically flawed fashion; say little in flawed linguistic fashion but socially inappropriately as well; speak readily at some length but with many and obvious deviations from the conservative norm; speak easily in a strikingly modified "young people's" version of an ancestral tongue; be conservative in lexicon but not in phonology or morphology; be conservative in phonology but not in morphology or lexicon; speak in a fashion different from their age-mates an ancestral tongue in which they were once fully fluent but which they have latterly had almost no occasion

[9] Roseman (1995) uses the term "minoritized language" to refer to situations where a dominated language is spoken by a statistical majority. She differentiates this from the term "minority language", which she reserves for situations where speakers of a language constitute a numerical minority in a given context. "The use of *minoritized* creates analytical space for an exploration of how processes of hegemony and overt state domination define particular languages (and groups) as nonauthoritative, even in cases where speakers (and members) form the majority of the population of a specific region or country" (Roseman 1995:23-24, note 2).

> to use; and so on through the nearly limitless possibilities of combination and recombination of "capacities". (Dorian 1989:1-2)

Dodson (1986) also draws attention to the high variability in language practice that exists among "bilinguals", particularly among "developed" and "developing" bilinguals in contexts of language revitalization. There is clearly a need for careful scrutiny of linguistic practices and capacities in bilingual and multilingual settings. Linguistic anthropologists and sociolinguists have attempted to document such linguistic diversity through the concepts of diglossia and codeswitching.

The concept of diglossia was first outlined by Charles Ferguson in 1959. He used the term to describe "one particular kind of [bilingual] standardization where two varieties of a language exist side by side throughout the community, with each having a definite role to play" (Ferguson 1959:325). In his model of diglossia, there is a high variety (H) and a low variety (L). The high variety is a formal register learned through formal education, associated with "high" culture, and generally accorded more prestige. The low variety is a mother tongue used for informal encounters with friends and family which is associated with vernacular culture.[10] In Ferguson's model, the languages are highly specialized: each is used in a specific set of situations and there is very little overlap in those realms of use. Joshua Fishman (1967) later expanded Ferguson's definition of diglossia[11], suggesting that it may exist "not only in multilingual societies which officially recognize several 'languages', but also in

[10] Ferguson referred to the L variety as the "defining language", the indigenous language of the speech community. He termed the H variety the "superposed language", a linguistic variety learned in addition to the primary, "native" variety (Ferguson 1959:325).

[11] Fishman credits John J. Gumperz with laying the foundation for this expansion of the concept.

societies which are multilingual in the sense that they employ separate dialects, registers or functionally differentiated language varieties of whatever kind" (Fishman 1967:30). Fishman's redefinition of diglossia was the catalyst for a surge in scholarly publishing on the topic in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Hudson 1992).

Scotton (1986) terms Ferguson's (1959) more rigidly defined concept "narrow diglossia" and dubs Fishman's (1967) more inclusive concept "broad diglossia". She suggests that there are very few examples of diglossia that fit Ferguson's model because it specifies that every speaker's mother tongue must be the L variety and that the H variety is (almost) never used in informal conversation. This contrasts with Fishman's scheme, in which two or more varieties – including the H variety – may be mother tongues of different sections of the population and in which the H variety is almost always used in certain situations for informal conversation (Scotton 1986:409). Hudson argues that there is still "widespread disagreement as to what kinds of sociolinguistic situations should be reckoned as instances of diglossia" (Hudson 1992:618). Despite this disagreement, accounts of both narrow and broad diglossia are alike in that they describe the standardized distribution of language use in multilingual settings. The concept of diglossia has played an important role in the development of anthropological and sociolinguistic thought about multilingual language use by drawing attention to the "systematicity of the allocation of varieties" (Scotton 1986:403) and by encouraging others to pay attention to regular patterns of language use. Jaffe (1999) uses the term diglossia "as a shorthand for status and

function differences between Corsican and French… [and] the key ideological factor influencing language practices and attitudes: the existence of an oppositional model of linguistic and cultural identities" (1999:19). Diglossic arrangements impart hierarchical and often oppositional values on the high and low varieties; these values influence what people think about each language variety and, consequently, their language practice. I argue in this thesis that the association of diglossic values with English and French at the Cape coincided with the introduction of the oppositional ideology there.

Another conceptual tool for understanding language use is codeswitching. Codeswitching is the strategic switching between any socially differentiated, symbolically charged language forms (for example, languages, dialects, or styles of speech) to achieve a communicative effect. The term "code" refers to these language forms, be they different languages, dialects of the same language, or styles within a dialect (Scotton 1986). This flexibility in the definition of codes allows for the analysis of this phenomenon in both multilingual and monolingual settings. Because codes index social roles, relationships, identities, and/or situations, codeswitching has been interpreted as a conversational strategy that allows a speaker to enact social roles, to negotiate for the rights and responsibilities of a particular social role that is otherwise unavailable to them (Heller 1988b), to assert identity, and ultimately to

construct their social reality (Heller 1982). In this way, codeswitching is an important strategy for the negotiation and reproduction of social boundaries[12] (Heller 1988a).

Codeswitching is a useful tool for examining language use in particular situations and encounters. However, linguistic anthropologists have also examined longitudinal patterns of language use in different speech communities. Dorian insists that anthropologists must analyze language use within its historical context: "Individual language-choice behaviors can only be understood in terms of large-scale forces, forces that typically have long gestation periods and far-reaching effects" (Dorian 1994a:123). This approach is exemplified in the body of literature on language shift, the process by which languages and language varieties fall out of use in speech communities –sometimes disappearing altogether – and are replaced by another language variety. Language shift tends to happen gradually, with changes in language practices taking place across generations. Anthropologists studying language shift ask how, why, and under what circumstances a speech community ceases to use their "native" language, why some languages dominate, and why some minority or minoritized languages endure.

Most studies of language shift link individual and group language use to macro-level social, economic, and political conditions such as the degree of economic isolation, geographic isolation, and the language of social institutions such as the

[12] Heller (1988b) argues that the effectiveness of codeswitching as communicative strategy lies in its power to disrupt and create ambiguity around social norms. Woolard's (1988) discussion of a comedian's codeswitching in Catalonia is an important example of the way the ambiguity created by codeswitching can help level social boundaries.

school, business, religion, and government (Bradley 1989, King 1989, Watson 1989). When command of a dominant language is necessary to gain entry into the economy, to access jobs, and to succeed in school, people are often motivated to learn the dominant language, teach it to their children, and abandon their local language (Kuter 1989). Such political economic explanations of language shift emphasize the weight of structural pressures on speakers to change their linguistic practices; they paint language shift "less a choice than a desperate flight from the risk-laden prospect" (Dorian 1994a:118). These situations are often portrayed somewhat deterministically; the view is that people's options leave them few real choices:

> No one actually holds a knife to the throats of the bilinguals and threatens them with death if they do not abandon their ancestral home language immediately; but centuries of social, economic, and legal discrimination can pose a potent enough threat to make the one available route to socio-economic survival an irresistible one. (Dorian 1994a:118)

Dorian (1994a) argues that the timing of language shift may be better read as a response to a group's socio-economic prospects than as their embrace of a new identity. However, although it may allow groups to position themselves more advantageously within the broader social, economic, and political world, language shift is not without cost. Some have argued that languages are embedded with ways of knowing the world and that the abandonment of languages necessarily means the loss of this specialized, localized knowledge (Watson 1989).

Another important aspect of language shift is the prestige, power, and value systems that surround languages (Bradley 1989, Gal 1979, Kuter 1989; Woolard

1989a). As I argued above in my discussion of diglossia, the values associated with languages influence the way speakers feel about them and which language they will choose to speak in a given situation. Processes such as stigmatization and dialectalization, by which a minority or minoritized language and its speakers are cast as inferior to the dominant language and its speakers, have been documented in language shift situations and identified as contributing to the psychological motivation for shift (Bradley 1989, Gal 1979, Kuter 1989, McDonald 1989b, Mertz 1989, Watson 1989, Woolard 1989b). Woolard explains the process of dialectalization thus:

> If enough structural similarity obtains or can be created between a dominant and a minority language, that similarity may be used to convince speakers of the minority variety that theirs is a corrupted, substandard dialect, and that the dominant language is the standard variety toward which they should shift... In this model, we note that dialectalization is a political and social-psychological process as well as a linguistic one. Convergence of two languages alone is not an adequate impetus for the abandonment of one; rather, it provides a material base which is then interpreted and evaluated by interested parties as a motivation for language shift. (Woolard 1989b:357)

I argue that this process led to the diminution of Newfoundland French not only in the face of English, but additionally when the French schools introduced standard French into Cape St. George.

Language shift, from this perspective, can be seen as stemming from individual language choice as a form of impression management. Here, some of the insights derived from studies of codeswitching come into play. Macro-sociological processes change the value attached to certain languages and influence the "communicative strategies of speakers so that individuals are motivated to change

their choice of language in different contexts of social interaction – to reallocate their linguistic resources radically so that eventually they abandon one of their languages altogether" (Gal 1979:3).

This principle also pertains to language maintenance. Kuter (1989) argues that an important element in managing or reversing language shift may be the ability to harness and influence the values ascribed to languages. She posits that the future of the Breton language "will depend on its symbolic strength, the belief of young Bretons that a Breton identity can be a positive one and that the Breton language is an irreplaceable element in that identity" (Kuter 1989:88). Several anthropologists have described situations in which people continue to speak a minority language despite socio-economic pressures to speak the dominant language. In most cases, this has been attributed to the power of social networks that ascribe different values to their minority/minoritized language and operate according to alternative – that is, non-dominant – economic and social systems (Gal 1979, Woolard 1985, Woolard 1989a). When social networks play an important social and economic role in a particular context, they can compel speakers to override dominant language practices.

Other studies of language shift and minority language maintenance also emphasize the importance of social networks, but analyze them in terms of resistance, power, and oppositional politics. Woolard (1985) critiques some studies of language shift as attributing too much, sometimes near deterministic, emphasis on the role of social institutions. She emphasizes "that consciousness, the work of making

meanings in social life, responds to far more than just the messages of the formal media and institutions of communication in society. Authority and hegemony cannot be mechanically read out from institutional dominance" (Woolard 1985:743). Woolard argues that we should focus on "the effects of primary economic relations on arrangements for everyday living, and on the informal structures of experience in daily life" (Woolard 1985:742) and she calls for us to examine resistance to the apparent hegemony of the dominant language, particularly resistance which masks as compliance.

It is important to remember that opposition and resistance are not separate from dominance, rather they are born of it. The power of dominant forms may well flow through resistance to them. Community solidary linguistic norms may recognize the authority of the dominant language and simultaneously repudiate, oppose, or resist it (see Mertz 1989, Woolard 1989a). While vernacular practices of resistance may be creative responses to authority built upon the oppositional value of solidarity (Mertz 1989, Woolard 1985), several anthropologists have argued that such practices are often, paradoxically, also self-defeating (Gal 1989, Bulag 2003).

Some communities have organized minority language movements to stave off impending language shift or language loss and these movements have also come under the anthropological gaze. Dorian (1994b) differentiates between language revival and language revitalization:

> In contexts of revitalization, the language survives, but precariously. Efforts on its behalf require the mobilization of remaining speakers, as

> well as the recruitment of new speakers; in fact, the mobilization of at least some of the remaining speakers is typically crucial to the recruitment of new ones. In contexts of revival, the language is no longer spoken as a vernacular; it may have ceased to be spoken rather recently, or it may have been out of use as a vernacular for a long time. (Dorian 1994b:481)

Revitalization movements are more common than revival movements because there are many waning languages that still have some speakers and it is much easier to reinstate languages that have some speakers than languages that exist only in books. Fishman (1990) labels language revitalization movements "Reversing Language Shift" or RLS movements. Fishman (1990) argues that without family, neighbourhood, and community reinforcement of the minority language, intergenerational transmission of language is doomed and other efforts such as cultural events and formal schooling will have little impact on the language practices within the speech community. Minority language movements described by Dorian (1987) and Mougeon and Beniak (1994) support Fishman's argument.

Though there are well-documented examples of minority and minoritized languages that have rebounded or endured despite the pressures of dominant languages, the consensus among some linguists and other scholars appears to be that language revitalization movements are uphill battles (Fishman 1990) and the likelihood of languages flourishing after they have declined below a certain point is low (Dorian 1987). However, even when the prospects of "success" are grim, Dorian (1987) argues that revitalization efforts are worthwhile because they usually reverse negative attitudes toward the language and its speakers, they increase self-awareness

of ethnic history and traditions, and there are often economic benefits from the business and community development activities associated with such movements.

In some cases, minority language movements can be productively analyzed in terms of resistance, not only to language policies and practices that protect the dominant language, but also to the dominant political order and struggles for control of the means of cultural reproduction (McDonald 1989a, McDonald 1989b, Roseman 1995, Urla 1988). Some movements are structured according to pervasive, multi-faceted oppositional politics (Jaffe 1999, McDonald 1989b). The oppositional practices of minority language movements often encourage the strengthening of ethnic and national identities: "the strategies of the Basque cultural movement are best understood not as protecting a true or essential identity from power, but as forging that identity in the process of resistance" (Urla 1988:391, see also McDonald 1989b). As identities crystallize through language, so do the borders over which battles are fought and claims made. I argue in Chapter Three that in Cape St. George we can see the development of oppositional resistance and an oppositional French Newfoundland identity in the acquisition and evolution of French education.

Jaffe (1999) distinguishes three types of resistance: resistance of reversal, resistance of separation, and radical resistance. Resistance of reversal entails the insertion of the minority language into the domains of power. Resistance of separation is more protectionist and involves keeping the minority language in its traditional spheres, separate from interference from or the 'polluting' influence of the

dominant language. Jaffe argues that these are weak forms of resistance because they do not question the structures of dominance. Radical resistance, by contrast, opposes the dominant language by challenging and reimagining the very bases for language identities. In this thesis, I demonstrate that the French movement has put up an oppositional resistance of reversal. However, I also demonstrate that critiques from within and outside the movement, as well as everyday activism, suggest a leaning toward radical resistance.

Many analyses of language movements examine the work of language activists and organizers, and focus on the way they perceive the language and the population they (purport to) represent, the internal debates about the way language planning should unfold, and the discourse strategies they employ in their work (England 1998, McDonald 1989a, McDonald 1989b, Urla 1988). McDonald (1989a, 1989b) discusses the ways that Breton militants romanticized the countryside and objectified Breton peasants; she argues that through their work, these language activists actually disempower those they supposedly represent. Bulag (2003) warns anthropologists to be careful how we depict language organizers in such cases and calls on us to look carefully at the social context in which they make such apparently damaging or ironic decisions. This approach to studying language activists is reminiscent of David Whisnant's (1983) account of the creation, management, and ultimate demise of the White Top Folk Festival in Virginia, 1931-1939. He conceptualizes the work of

people who orchestrate cultural movements as *systematic cultural intervention.* By this, Whisnant means

> ...simply that someone (or some institution) *consciously and programmatically* takes action within a culture with the intent of affecting it in some specific way *that the intervener thinks desirable.* The action taken can range from relatively passive (say, starting an archive or museum) to relatively active (like instituting a cultural revitalization effort). Its intent can be either positive (as in a sensitive revitalization effort) or negative (as in the prohibition of ethnic customs, dress, or language). Moreover, a negative effect may follow from a positive intent, and vice versa. (Whisnant 1983:13-14, emphasis is mine)

Analyzing language movements as processes of systematic cultural intervention helps to draw our attention toward the actions of prominent figures, the ways in which they might manipulate culture or language, their rationales and visions, and the overall impact of their actions. My analysis of the evolution of French education at the Cape in Chapter Three exemplifies this approach.

Many studies of language movements also analyze the ways in which members of the minority (or minoritized) language group interpret and respond to organizers' language planning efforts (Jaffe 1996, Jaffe 1999, McDonald 1989b, Roseman 1995). Some anthropologists have examined explicit responses to language planning efforts as they come under scrutiny and criticism both within organizing circles and among the community of speakers. Others have noted the subtle effects language movements have on the lives and behaviour of members. Urla (1988) argues that the political effects of language movements affect the subjectivity and everyday practices of members of the minority language group. Dodson's (1986) description of Welsh

language revitalization in Wales is an important reminder that the existence of grassroots language activism and government support of minority languages does not necessarily mean that people will want to abandon the "originally-usurping H language" altogether: "Nobody in Wales, with the possible exception of a handful of extremists, would wish their children to grow up without being able to speak English, but an increasing number of those living in Wales would like their children to grow up bilingually in English and Welsh" (Dodson 1986:390). It is important to consider how language revitalization movements respond to and compete with lingering economic, social, and cultural effects of language shift, and to examine how both language shift and language revitalization together influence the linguistic choices of speakers.

An important task for many language activists is language standardization (England 1998, Jaffe 1996, McDonald 1989b, Roseman 1995, Urla 1988). Standardizing languages is often undertaken to improve the status of a minority language vis-à-vis the dominant language. Decision-making about the details of standardization is often a source of contention and debate among language activists. The imposition of standardized languages sometimes alienates the people who speak vernaculars and makes them self-conscious about speaking their language variety (McDonald 1989b). Though perhaps counterintuitive to some language activists, it has been suggested that language purism may further language obsolescence, whereas linguistic compromise may enhance the likelihood that a language will survive (Dorian

1994b). The persistence of vernacular speech despite the proliferation of standards can be interpreted as an act of resistance and as evidence or assertion of the primacy of localized and class identities (Roseman 1995, see also Jaffe 1996 and 1999).

In recent years, many linguistic anthropologists have analyzed the issues discussed above – language use, language activism, language planning, language policy, standardization, and the role of language with respect to ethnic borders and identity – in terms of language ideology. The concept is not altogether new (see Kroskrity 2000, Woolard and Schieffelin 1994), but its adoption and exploration has gained momentum since the mid-1990s. Studies of language ideology bring to the fore two important, previously neglected elements: "the linguistic 'awareness' of speakers and the (nonreferential) functions of language" (Kroskrity 2000:5); our attention now turns to emic perspectives on language and the indexical nature of language. As Woolard explains, language ideologies

> envision and enact ties of language to identity, to aesthetics, to morality, and to epistemology. Through such linkages, they underpin not only linguistic form and use but also the very notion of the person and the social group, as well as such fundamental social institutions as religious ritual, child socialization, gender relations, the nation-state, schooling, and law. (Woolard 1998:3)

Language ideologies come into sharper relief when we focus on the boundaries of linguistic difference and the ideas people employ to understand linguistic variety. Gal and Irvine refer to these ideas as ideologies "because they are suffused with the political and moral issues pervading the particular sociolinguistic field, and because they are subject to the interests of their bearers' social position" (Gal and Irvine

1995:971). The emphasis on ideology draws our attention to "the cultural and historical specificity of visions of language", it reminds us that "the cultural conceptions we study are partial, contestable, and contested, and interest-laden" (Woolard and Shieffelin 1994:56, 58), and it provides another means of examining the ways in which power relations influence the construction and function of cultural forms.

Although there is some disagreement as to the nature of language ideology – whether it is neutral or critical, explicit or implicit – most researchers share an understanding of it as "rooted in or responsive to the experience of a particular social position" (Woolard and Shieffelin 1994:58). Language ideologies may be best conceived as "a cluster concept consisting of a number of converging dimensions" (Kroskrity 2000:7). The members of an advanced seminar on language ideology in 1994 identified four interconnected features. First, language ideologies represent the interests of a specific group. A speaker's notions of what is good or morally upright about language are usually tied to their social experience and their political and economic interests. Language ideologies affirm and reinforce the worldviews of the people who espouse them. This is true of speech communities as well as scholars of language (Kroskrity 2000:8-12, see also Gal and Irvine 1995). Second, it is useful to regard language ideologies as multiple, so as to account for "the multiplicity of meaningful social divisions (class, gender, clan, elites, generations, and so on) within sociocultural groups that have the potential to produce divergent perspectives

expressed as indices of group membership" (Kroskrity 2000:12). This focus on the multiplicity of language ideologies draws our attention to resistance, contestation, and oppositional ideologies that may coexist with dominant ideologies (Kroskrity 2000:12-18, see Jaffe 1996 and 1999). Third, group members may display different degrees of awareness of language ideologies; some language ideologies may be stated explicitly, others may be ideologies of practice, discernable only though actual behaviour. This recognition of speakers' awareness and perceptions of language ideology is an important reversal of previous dismissals of folk understandings of language and metadiscourse as "superfluous" and "misleading" (Kroskrity 2000:21). Finally, language ideologies mediate between language and social structure. This point references the indexical quality of language ideologies. Group members are selective in which aspects of language and sociocultural experience they choose to focus upon and to link.

Gal and Irvine identify three semiotic processes by which people create "ideological representations of differences in linguistic practices" (Gal and Irvine 1995:973): iconicity, recursiveness, and erasure.[13] When we examine linguistic

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[13] Iconicity refers to the process by which the linguistic practices that index a sociocultural element become iconic of the group, "as if a linguistic feature somehow depicted or displayed a social group's inherent nature or essence" (Gal and Irvine 1995:973). Through this process, connections that are merely historical, contingent, or conventional, come to be portrayed as necessary. Recursiveness involves "the projection of an opposition, salient at some level of relationship, onto some other level" so that the processes of "dichotomizing" and "partitioning" are used to (re)draw the boundaries between groups, sometimes to emphasize connections and similarities, other times to reinforce difference (Gal and Irvine 1995:974). Erasure is the semiotic process by which elements inconsistent with the ideology are rendered invisible, so as to create a false impression of uniformity and consistency. Erasure is a process by which diversity and complexity are overlooked and exchanged for imagined homogeneity.

difference in light of these three semiotic processes, we gain fresh insight into the way language can be used in the (re)production of ethnic boundaries between 'self' and 'other':

> This is a familiar kind of process, one by now well known in the social sciences: the "other," or simply the other side of the contrast, is often essentialized and imagined as homogeneous. The imagery involved in this essentializing process includes, we suggest, linguistic practices and images of such practices – in which the linguistic behaviors of others are simplified and are seen as if deriving from those persons' essences, rather than from historical accident. (Gal and Irvine 1995:975)

The "self", just as easily as the "other", can be essentialized. Kroskrity (2000) argues that the concepts of iconicity, recursiveness, and erasure, together with attention to "metadiscursive strategies", can help to denaturalize language, to make language ideologies plain, and to explore the connections between language and the political economic world of its speakers.

Because they are linked to political conditions, language ideologies can shift "in new conditions in which social positions change, resources are redistributed or change in accessibility or value, and struggles are displaced onto new territory, often with new types of actors" (Budach, Roy, and Heller 2003:625). When ideological shifts occur, people can find themselves caught between contradictory sets of values and competing identities. Because language ideologies involve and enact powerful connections between language and identity, they often prescribe and govern the terms of authenticity. Budach, Roy, and Heller (2003) remind us that in contexts of ideological shift, it may be difficult to define what it means to be "authentic".

1.3 – Methodology

I conducted fourteen weeks of fieldwork in Cape St. George in the late summer and early fall of 2002. During that time, I employed several anthropological methods, namely participant observation, photographic documentation, and unstructured and semi-structured interviews, to learn about the history and current activity of the French language movement and the politics of language in the community. In this section, I discuss my use of each method.

1.3.1 – Participant Observation

Participant observation was my primary research method for approximately the first half of my fieldwork. Participant observation "is a method in which an observer takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of the people being studied as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their culture" (DeWalt and DeWalt 1998:260). It can be as formal as attending official events or as naturalistic as simply 'hanging out'. By immersing her/himself in a different culture, society, or community and building relationships with people, the anthropologist tries to develop an appreciation of what it means to inhabit another person's world, "to take his or her common sense for our common sense, and to learn to solve existential problems in locally appropriate ways" (Fife 2005:71). Participant observation also requires extricating yourself from that world every night "so you can intellectualize what you've seen and heard, put it into perspective, and write about it convincingly" (Bernard 2002:324). Hence, participant observation

entails juggling the intuitive and the intellectual, managing both nearness and distance from a world. Though this balancing act can sometimes be awkward, participant observation yields rich rewards: the tacit understanding it offers the anthropologist provides an important counterpoint to other types of information (such as government reports, census statistics, and even interviews) and inevitably deepens our analysis.

An important aspect of participant observation, alluded to above, is the way we record our observations. Some anthropologists advocate taking short-hand jottings while in the field to help jog their memory later in the day when they sit down to write elaborated fieldnotes. Openly jotting notes can help remind research participants that the anthropologist is conducting research in an otherwise casual setting (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 1995, Fife 2005), but open jotting may not be appropriate in all circumstances and may threaten the rapport between anthropologist and research participant. Anthropologists must assess the situation to decide if open note-taking is appropriate (DeWalt and DeWalt 1998). Regardless of whether the anthropologist takes open jottings or not, research participants must be aware of the on-going research.

Early in my fieldwork, I engaged in general participant observation (Fife 2005), which in the context of my research involved developing an overall sense of what life was like at the Cape: the daily pace of the community, the patterns of language use, and the key issues on people's minds. In the context of my research,

participant observation consisted simply of living in the community, going for walks, chatting over countless cups of tea, and socializing at the Silverado (the local club) and at people's homes. I took open jottings on some of these occasions when I had my notepad with me and when doing so seemed appropriate.

In addition to this general 'hanging out', I also attended several formal events, including mass at *Église Notre Dame du Cap*/Our Lady of the Cape Roman Catholic Church, a planning meeting for the Cape St. George French folk festival *Une Longue Veillée*, and a meeting hosted by a regional economic development association and a representative from ACOA regarding the funding application process for the 2004 celebrations.[14] A bilingual mass is celebrated in Cape St. George and I was particularly interested in the way English and French were used throughout the service. Mass was an important social occasion as well, a time to meet and chat with members of the community. I never took jottings at church as I deemed that inappropriate; instead, I wrote detailed fieldnotes upon my return home afterward. The two meetings gave me insight into the way language is used in other institutional spaces among different groups of language activists and community leaders. At the first meeting, I participated in preparations for the festival and chatted in French with some of the language activists and volunteers from *Les Terre-Neuviens Français*. The

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[14] The year 2004 marked a number of anniversaries in the history of French Canada. It was the 500th anniversary of the first French presence in Canada (Jacques Cartier), the 400th anniversary of the founding of Acadia, and the 100th anniversary of the French ceding their fishing rights in Newfoundland. Throughout 2004, there were celebrations across Atlantic Canada marking French history and culture.

second meeting was a formal presentation followed by a discussion, both of which I observed and took notes throughout.

During my fieldwork, I also attended three French folk festivals that took place in the late summer of 2002: *Une Longue Veillée* held on August 4th in Cape St. George; *Le Plaisir du Vieux Temps*, held August 10th and 11th in Black Duck Brook; and *Une Journée dans l'Passé*, which ran from September 13th to 15th in Mainland. Conducting participant observation at these events was intense as the events were long and there was much to absorb. On each occasion, I made open jottings about the types of events that were taking place, the different attractions, the performers, the music played, the size and rough demography of the festival crowds, the layout of the festival space, and, of course, the language(s) that I heard and saw on signs throughout the festival spaces. *Une Longue Veillée* took place about a week after I arrived at the Cape. I believe that my appearance there, visibly taking notes throughout the afternoon, established my identity as "note-taker" (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 1995:22), as researcher, and, at least to one woman whom I later befriended, as a "busy-nose".

The French folk festivals were among the very few community social events that took place during the course of my fieldwork. These festivals were important opportunities to observe the public performance and distribution of languages by the language activists who, through the community French associations, hosted the festivals. The festivals also provided excellent opportunities to meander through the

crowd and listen to the way people attending the festival used language amongst themselves. The festivals were great places to meet and socialize with different people and they provided an ideal context for discussing the French movement, language politics, people's personal language practices, and their thoughts about the French language.

1.3.2 – Photographic Documentation

In addition to fieldnotes, I used photographs to document some of what I experienced and saw in the field. Collier and Collier (1986) remind us that the camera, unlike a person, has impartial vision. Though the photographer decides what is included in (and excluded from) a given shot, whatever is captured in a photograph is there. In this way, "[t]he memory of film replaces the notebook and ensures complete quotation under the most trying circumstance" (1986:9), be that difficulty due to the unfamiliarity of a new field site or the complexity of the environment. I took photographs of the French folk festivals to help document the richness and density of the events. The photographs were essentially a different type of jotting to facilitate my creation of elaborate fieldnotes about the event.

Photography is also beneficial for its efficiency; it is "a means of recording large areas authentically, rapidly, and with great detail, and a means of storing away complex descriptions for future use" (Collier and Collier 1986:16). I took a couple of days to document the French tourism infrastructure on the Port au Port Peninsula. I took photographs to capture the physical lay-out of the rest stops and the content of

interpretive signs, and made jottings about my impressions of the sites, the smells, the sounds, and other details impossible to capture on film. Together the photographs and jottings helped me to create more complete fieldnotes.

The photographs I took during my fieldwork pertained to my research and rarely depicted scenes or details of interest outside the parameters of my project. Nevertheless, I showed my photos to some people at the Cape, which proved to be informative as the people viewing the photos frequently noticed details I had overlooked and supplemented my understanding of the images with relational information (see Collier and Collier (1986) on the use of photos as a way to build rapport and knowledge about a field site). This time spent looking at photographs was always enjoyable and informative. Sharing copies of my photos with people at the Cape was a small way to reciprocate their kindness and help with my research.

1.3.3 – Unstructured and Semi-Structured Interviews

I conducted both unstructured and semi-structured interviews during the course of my fieldwork. As Fife explains, "In its simplest form, unstructured interviewing occurs every time a researcher participates in a conversation and, upon hearing a subject come up that interests her/him, decides to try to keep that particular conversation alive for a period of time" (2005:101). Because they are casual and informal, most people are comfortable with unstructured interviews, whereas the formality of other types of interviews might make them uncomfortable or self-conscious. Unstructured interviewing "can help lead us to topics that we might not

have thought of before but which [research participants] think about and discuss at great length amongst themselves" (Fife 2005:102). I conducted unstructured interviews throughout my fieldwork, but I found them especially important during the initial stage of research as a way to develop my understanding of the issues that concerned residents of the Cape. Later, as my fieldwork progressed and became more focused, I also began to conduct "directed" unstructured interviews (Fife 2005:102-106), usually to confirm or clarify my understanding of different topics.

At about the mid-point in my fieldwork, I began to conduct semi-structured interviews with various language activists. Semi-structured interviews typically take place in a mildly formal setting, such as a quiet room, away from everyday distractions and interruptions. They have some direction thanks to a prepared list of questions and they are open-ended so that the interviewee "is given the opportunity to shape his or her own responses or even to change the direction of the interview altogether" (Fife 2005:95). I created my interview schedule halfway through my fieldwork and based it upon the main issues and themes about the French movement that had emerged in my research up to that point. I asked each person to tell me (1) how they became involved with the French movement; (2) the different roles they had played in the various French organizations, institutions, and events over the years; (3) what developments or changes they had noticed within the French movement and the community since the French movement began; (4) what struggles or challenges they experienced personally in their work with the French movement; (5) what struggles or

challenges the French movement had encountered over the years; and (6) what they thought about the future of the French language, culture, and movement in their community and on the Port au Port Peninsula. On almost every occasion, people's answers included descriptions of their personal use of French and English, as well as discussions of language use in their families and in the community at large. Many people's answers also contained implicit and explicit statements about their personal language politics and appraisals of the language movement. Most often I followed their lead and probed the topics they introduced, but I would always eventually return to the interview schedule. I concluded each interview by asking if there was anything I had missed or anything they would like to add.

I conducted twenty semi-structured interviews in total with language activists who were currently or had once been involved with the French movement. I spoke with thirteen women and seven men, ranging in age from their late-twenties to their late-sixties. The interviews varied in length from thirty-five minutes to two and a half hours. I tape-recorded fifteen of the interviews with the free and informed consent of each participant (Canada Tri-Council Policy Statement 1998) and took notes during the remaining five interviews, four due to circumstances that found me without my tape recorder, the other at the request of the research participant. Due to the richness of the interviews and a shortage of time, I conducted a single interview with each person.

1.3.4 – A Methodological Post-Script

Anthropological fieldwork is a strange alchemy of design and serendipity. In addition to a thorough command of the social scientific methods described above, an anthropologist requires flexibility and a sense of openness to experience the breadth and spontaneity of life in the field. The richness of our research experience often depends upon being in the right place at the right time and our willingness to follow opportunity's lead. I agree with Vered Amit who argues that "To overdetermine fieldwork practices is therefore to undermine the very strength of ethnography, the way in which it deliberately leaves openings for unanticipated discoveries and directions" (Amit 2000:17). Throughout my fieldwork, I clung to the rudder of my research plan, but I also allowed the winds of fortune to billow my sails and guide me.

1.4 – A Note About the Researcher

The way we conduct research, how others interact with us, how we report what we experience and observe, and, therefore, the limits of our research, are affected by our gender, ethnic, religious, and class identity, by our sexual orientation, and by our marital and family status. Methods such as participant observation help us to overcome our subjective orientation to some degree, but as DeWalt and DeWalt caution, "all of us bring biases, predispositions, and hang-ups to the field with us, and we cannot completely escape these as we view other cultures. Our reporting, however, should attempt to make these biases as explicit as possible so that others may use these in judging our work" (DeWalt and DeWalt 1998:288). In this brief

section, I present some information about myself that may facilitate the reader's interpretation of this work.

I am a white woman from St. John's, the capital city of Newfoundland and Labrador. At the time of my research I was single and in my early twenties. I learned standard French in school and speak it at a conversational level; in other words, I am not fluent but I do understand a good deal and can communicate my thoughts, albeit sometimes in an inelegant manner. I struggle to comprehend other varieties of French, such as Newfoundland French, Acadian, or colloquial varieties of French spoken in Quebec. I am most comfortable speaking English. During the course of my fieldwork, I used my French whenever the situation permitted. In all but one instance, however, I conducted interviews in English to ensure my comprehension.

I grew up in St. John's but my mother's family all hail from the west coast of Newfoundland. My maternal grandmother, Madeleine Barter (née Benoit) was a francophone from a small village named Back the Pond, near what is now Stephenville. When the American military arrived during World War II to build the Ernest Harmon Air Force Base, they transformed that once quiet area into the bustling town of Stephenville. Back the Pond was levelled to build an airstrip.

The construction and operation of the Base required a large English-speaking labour force; English quickly became the dominant language in Stephenville. Many of my French-speaking aunts and uncles took work on the base. Like many others, they stopped speaking French in public. Madeleine married Clem Barter, an English-

speaking man from the Codroy Valley, and theirs was an English language home. My grandmother didn't speak French to any of her children. Neither did any of her brothers and sisters. My mother grew up speaking English, as did all of her cousins.[15] Throughout her life, Madeleine continued to speak French with her siblings, but not with her children. My mother picked up a little French from overhearing conversations between her mother, her aunts, and her uncles, but she did not learn enough to carry on a conversation. There was no French spoken in my home.

I have no relatives from Cape St. George save one aunt and one great aunt by marriage. Nonetheless, over the course of my fieldwork I learned of several connections between my family and the people with whom I lived and worked at the Cape. I met several men who, years before, had worked in logging camps run by my grandfather. Many people knew three of my great-uncles, brothers of my grandmother, who had hunted and fished in the area. On one of my first evenings in the Cape, the couple with whom I lived told me that during the 1990s whenever they went to visit their relatives in the senior citizen's complex in Stephenville Crossing, they would pay a visit to my grandfather who was there at the same time. It was always a delight for me to make these family connections. They invariably left me with a warm, nostalgic ache for my deceased grandparents and created (for me, at least) a special bond with those people who knew my family in a time and a way that I never will. Making these kinship connections tied me to the Cape and helped ease my

[15] Of my mother, her siblings, and all of their first cousins, there is only one cousin who speaks French. She is the exception because she was raised by her grandparents – Madeleine's parents – who both continued to speak French at home and whose English was quite poor.

transition into 'the field'. I believe that these more personal family connections helped others to locate me within their community and to identify me as more than merely a researcher from Memorial University.

My family history piqued my interest in issues of language shift and language use. When I learned about the French language movement on the Port au Port Peninsula, I became curious about the ways in which a language revitalization movement might influence language use in a post-language shift environment. I am critical of the colonial measures that strip people of their language and I am generally sympathetic to minority language speech communities who struggle to reclaim their language. However, as this thesis illustrates, I believe it is important to critically examine the way language revitalization movements are carried out, the ideologies they enact, and the ways they are resisted.

1.5 – Thesis Outline

In Chapter Two, I present a history of language shift in Cape St. George. I discuss the social, economic, and institutional factors that led to changes in the way French and English were used in the community. I argue that through the process of language shift, English and French developed diglossic associations: English became the language of power, prestige, work, and politics, whereas French became restricted to being little more than the language of hearth and home. I explore how more recent demographic trends have perpetuated this diglossic division, despite the mitigating influence of the French movement.

In Chapter Three, I demonstrate how the French movement at the Cape took the form of a resistance of reversal: the French language usurpation of dominant, previously English-language domains. I argue that this type of language planning and language activism has been informed by the oppositional one language/one people ideology, an ideology which makes little room for linguistic heterogeneity and favours 'purer' linguistic forms. I illustrate these points through my analysis of the acquisition and development of French language education at the Cape.

In Chapter Four, I explore the linguistic legacies of language shift and linguistic revitalization through a detailed discussion of language use patterns at the Cape. I discuss the language varieties spoken, the way they are distributed among the population of the Cape, patterns of codeswitching, and the values attached to each language variety. I argue that echoes of language shift and the politics of linguistic revitalization combine to make Cape St. George a complex linguistic environment both in terms of language practice and the different values attached to both English and French.

Chapter Five examines the ways in which some people in Cape St. George critique and resist the French language movement. I argue that many people at the Cape, including some language activists, are critical of the oppositional language ideology and the exclusionary differentiation it prescribes. They call, instead, for a more inclusive plurilingual definition of French Newfoundland identity which recognizes a wider range of French language ability and validates the Newfoundland

French vernacular. I argue that their opposition to the French movement constitutes radical resistance as it challenges the structures of dominance that privilege the ascription of a single language with a group of people.

In Chapter Six, I synthesize the arguments made in the previous chapters. I demonstrate that language shift and the language revitalization movement have shaped the linguistic practices, values, and identity of French Newfoundlanders in Cape St. George. I argue that a simple one language/one people ideology is contested at the Cape because it attempts to render invisible (or inaudible) a complex linguistic reality that people experience every day and because it denies what they feel deep in their core to be a valid French Newfoundland identity.

Chapter Two

A History of Language Shift in Cape St. George

To understand the French language movement, contemporary patterns of language use, and identity politics at the Cape, it is important to understand the process by which English became the dominant language in that community. In this chapter, I document the language shift that took place in Cape St. George over several decades. As discussed in the previous chapter, language shift is the process by which a language or a language variety gradually falls out of use in a speech community and is replaced by another language or language variety. Anthropological approaches to language shift often adopt a political economy perspective, analyzing the influence of macro-level social, economic, and political conditions on individual and group language use (Bradley 1989, King 1989, Watson 1989). Other anthropologists examine the way that the prestige, power, and value systems that surround languages influence language use patterns (Bradley 1989, Gal 1979, Kuter 1989, Woolard 1989a). I incorporate both approaches in my analysis of language shift in Cape St. George. I argue that the process of language shift was associated with a somewhat diglossic relationship between English and French at the Cape. I begin this chapter by outlining the settlement of the Cape by French fishers and Acadian migrants and discussing the institutional, economic, and social factors that contributed to language shift over time. I explore how people at the Cape experienced the changing language patterns and discuss how recent waves of out-

migration contribute to language shift, despite the mitigating influence of the French language revitalization movement.

2.1 – Settlement

In 1783, the boundaries of the French Shore shifted with the Treaty of Versailles to include the entire west coast of Newfoundland.[16] By the mid-19th century, the French had concentrated their fishery around the Port au Port Peninsula, in part because the St. Pierre company Campion-Théroulde had acquired a monopoly on Red Island (Lamarre 1973), in part because its isolation increased France's ability to conduct an independent fishery and decreased the likelihood of English encroachment[17] (Magord 2002b). The majority of French fishermen who came annually to Newfoundland were from Brittany.[18] France had a double investment in the fishery as it supported trade and provided training ground for the French navy. Men hired to participate in the French fishery were given a bonus, which essentially served as a contract for service in the French military (Wilkshire 1994); after working

[16] The "French Shore" refers to the stretch of Newfoundland coastline officially considered to be French fishing territory. The boundaries of the French Shore were first set out in the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. At that time, the French Shore extended from Cape Bonavista to Pointe Riche. In 1783, the boundaries were redrawn in the Treaty of Versailles such that the French Shore ran from Cape St. John to Cape Ray. Though French fishermen had worked the waters off Newfoundland for hundreds of years, it wasn't until 1783 that they were officially located along the west coast of the island. For more information on the French fishery, see Hillier (2000), Janzen (2002), Magord (2002b), and Wilkshire (1994).

[17] In the latter part of the 19th century, the French confined themselves to six fishing stations along the French Shore – Red Island, Codroy, Black Duck Brook, Port au Choix, Petit Havre, and Port au Port – all of which they guarded carefully and allowed settlement only to hired fishing masters (Lamarre 1973).

[18] Biays (1952) suggests that many of the men who settled in Cape St. George came from Roche-Derrien, near Tréguier. Thomas (1993) cites the Breton communities of St. Malo and St. Brieuc, as well as Granville in Normandy, as the birthplaces of many of the 19th century French fishermen who fished Newfoundland waters.

several years in the fishery and gaining sailing experience, the men would then be conscripted into the French navy. The working and the living conditions in Newfoundland were trying:

> Young men were obliged to work for six months or more on an isolated coast, without diversions of any kind, with conditions as unsanitary and as improvised as were the habitations they had to occupy. They were daily menaced by the consequences of untended cuts and by the diverse sicknesses which were rife. (Thomas 1993:30)

Perhaps as a consequence of these conditions, some men abandoned the French fishing operations and settled in Newfoundland. Most would have done so covertly, however, as their "desertion" was a breach of contract and they would have had to evade French naval patrols.[19] It is difficult to ascertain the total number of these settlers (Wilkshire 1994), but there is some indication that those who settled in Cape St. George and Mainland did so between 1837 and 1895 (Biays 1952).

The terms of the French fishery outlined in the Treaty of Utrecht stipulated that while the French had fishing and drying rights, they were not permitted to establish permanent settlements. They did, however, employ several people as caretakers over their fishing installations, their gear, and their supplies of salt. Some of these caretakers were English (Wilkshire 1994), others French (Magord 2002b). These would have been among the early settlers of the region as well.

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[19] A similar explanation has been given for the settlement of English Newfoundland (Staveley 1968). Staveley (1968) and Wilkshire (1994) warn that these explanations may well have been exaggerated over time: "The absence of hard data has left the way wide open to the creation of myth and folklore, with half-remembered tales being embroidered on as they are passed down from generation to generation" (Wilkshire 1994:3).

The wars between England and France that so frequently shifted the boundaries and terms of the French fishery also affected the fate of Acadians, who were originally based around the Baie Française (known now as the Bay of Fundy) in what is contemporary New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. There were many waves of Acadian migration throughout the 18th century (Leblanc 1993). We know that Acadian family groups from Cheticamp, Margaree, and Mabou (Cape Breton) came to Newfoundland aboard their own schooners in the 18th and 19th centuries, sometimes via the Magdalen Islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence (Waddell and Doran 1993).[20] These Acadians sought good agricultural land, hence they were drawn to larger bays and inlets such as Bay St. George and the Codroy Valley. Eventually, thriving Acadian communities emerged in St. Georges, Stephenville (formerly known as l'Anse-aux-Sauvages), and Stephenville Crossing (known as le Goulet) (Biays 1952, Waddell and Doran 1993). Once established, the Acadians began to forge relationships with the French on the Port au Port Peninsula, "providing services to the fishing captains, exchanging winter supplies for fishing products, lodging deserters, and entering into matrimonial ties" (Waddell and Doran 1993:219). The settlers on the western part of the Port au Port Peninsula were disproportionately

[20] The precise timing of the Acadian arrival in Newfoundland is uncertain. Leblanc (1993) states that Acadians established communities in Newfoundland between 1850 and 1900, but a reading of Waddell and Doran suggests settlement would have taken place somewhat earlier, as around 1850 "the Acadian community was sufficiently vigorous to request a resident priest, who arrived from the Magdalen Islands" (Waddell and Doran 1993:219). Magord (2002b) and Janzen (2002) point out that Acadians could settle peacefully in Newfoundland as far back as the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, but they note a surge in Acadian migration to Newfoundland after the Acadian deportation (*le grand dérangement*) of 1755.

men; they found wives among the Acadians in Newfoundland (le Goulet) and Cape Breton (Cheticamp) (Biays 1952). Some French men in the Bay St. George region also had families with Mi'qmaq[21] women (Wilkshire 1994), some of whom migrated to Newfoundland from Nova Scotia with the Acadians; other men had relationships with English women (Magord 2002b). Of the 63 patronyms listed in the 1921 census (the first census to list names), 22 were of French (mainly Breton) origin, five originated in St. Pierre, 21 were French names unique to the west coast of Newfoundland, and eleven were of Acadian origin (Magord 2002b:22-23).[22] These original settlers are known and remembered as *les Vieux Français* (the Old French).

In 1904, France ceded its fishing rights to Britain. The people settled on the Port au Port Peninsula found themselves in communities inaccessible by land and almost completely isolated, save some connections they maintained with people in

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[21] Mi'qmaq language and identity have been stigmatized over the years in much the same way as French. The Mi'qmaq language is spoken in other parts of Atlantic Canada. In the context of Newfoundland it has significantly declined to the extent that, in some cases, it has been lost altogether (http://www.heritage.nf.ca/society/language.html). A Mi'qmaq revitalization movement began in Conne River on the south coast of Newfoundland in the mid-1970s (http://www.rural.gc.ca/decision/conne/conne_e.phtml) and in recent years a similar revitalization movement has begun among people of Mi'qmaq descent in the Bay St. George area. At the time of my fieldwork, many people living in Cape St. George were beginning to reclaim their Aboriginal heritage. When the topic of Mi'qmaq identity arose, several people reported having genaeological connections to known Mi'qmaq ancestors. Others showed me black and white photographs of these ancestors and pointed to their high cheekbones as evidence of their Aboriginal heritage. One French language activist worried out loud that the current emphasis on Mi'qmaq identity might lead to diminished interest or involvement in the French movement at the Cape. Nevertheless, people's embrace of their Mi'qmaq identity is accommodated by the plural concept of identity espoused by many French Newfoundlanders at the Cape (see Chapter Five). For a discussion of the history of the Mi'qmaq in Newfoundland, see Anger (1988). For a comprehensive view of the Mi'qmaq revitalization movement and accompanying ethnopolitics in the Bay St. George region, see http://www.jasenbenwah.ca.

[22] Of course, these numbers underrepresent the Acadian presence because the majority of Acadians who settled in Cape St. George were women who would have lost their surnames upon marriage.

St. Pierre and some English merchants. Because money was scarce, the survival of these original settlers depended on their self-sufficiency and their ability to live off the land and sea. Their dietary staple was fish, primarily cod supplemented by other fish and seafood such as lobster, herring, capelin, eel, and seal. Agriculture quickly developed and provided the local population with vegetables, meat, and dairy products such as milk and butter. Hunting (rabbit, partridge, duck, and moose) and gathering berries rounded out the diet. People traded dried cod for other essentials such as tea, molasses, sugar, tobacco, and tools (Magord 2002b).

The social structure, based on collective work and strong family relations, reinforced group cohesion. People had large families and many of them were connected through marriage and a system of patrilocality (Magord 2002b). A collective identity and group cohesion were also reinforced through culture. *Les Vieux Français* shared their culture, stories, songs, sayings, and supernatural beliefs[23], but it seems they did not transmit their personal histories, their birthplaces, or the Breton language[24] to their children[25] (Magord 2002b). This may have to do with the fact that some of them were in hiding and did not want to stand out; it may also have been a deep reverberation of the linguistic oppression they had faced in Brittany.

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[23] For discussions of French Newfoundland folk culture and how it has evolved, see Butler (1990, 1995) and Thomas (1993).
[24] Several scholars have suggested that there are elements of Breton in the French spoken by Newfoundlanders on the Port au Port Peninsula (Brasseur 1995, King 1989), but it has not endured there as a separate language.
[25] Because many of the old French did not share these details of their personal histories, many French Newfoundlanders are not able to trace their ancestry back beyond *les Vieux Français*. One person who has uncovered the origins of some of *les Vieux Français* is Don Bennett, who describes the lives of some of these men in his book *The Trail of French Ancestors* (2002).

Magord argues that *les Vieux Français* emphasized independence and cultivated a new, unique identity based on the adaptation of their knowledge and cultural references to their new environment (Magord 2002b:24).

2.2 – Language Shift

Language shift in Cape St. George was a multifaceted process. In this section, I discuss the economic, social, and cultural changes that contributed to language shift at the Cape and the association of diglossic values with English and French. I describe the conditions that led to language shift in the mid-20th century and explore the way more recent demographic changes have furthered language shift.

2.2.1 – The Emergence of English, The Marginalization of French

From about 1910 onward, men from the Bay St. George region began to cut wood in logging camps around Corner Brook to feed sawmills that were established in the early part of the 20th century (Lamarre 1973, Waddell and Doran 1993). In 1940, the Ernest Harmon American Air Force Base was built in Stephenville[26]. The construction and subsequent operation of the base required a substantial work force; the construction of a road network on the Port au Port Peninsula allowed men from the area to access this work. Magord (2002a) argues that the shift from subsistence fishing and farming to wage labour affected language practices in several ways. First, the displacement of men from the family-centred fishing economy weakened the collective identity that 'traditional' activity engendered. Second, the exposure to

[26] See Benoit (1995) and George (2000:33-40) for detailed accounts of the impact of the American Base on Stephenville and surrounding area.

American culture and the new availability of cash saw the introduction of a new way of life at the Cape. Fishermen who could not provide modern amenities were devalued. Third, wage labour was English-language labour: those who worked on the base or in the sawmills had to speak English (Magord 2002a). A shift in economic structure meant a shift in linguistic values: "Through wage labor it became evident that English was the language of work, of the majority, and of power" (Waddell and Doran 1993:222). This was an important step in the establishment of English as the diglossic high variety.

Thus, the family-centred fishing economy at the heart of French Newfoundland society was undermined. Collective work dwindled, partly because it was abandoned, partly because of mechanization. Salaried work and government support (which became available after Newfoundland joined Canada in 1949) rendered subsistence and self-sufficiency less necessary (Magord 2002a, Waddell and Doran 1993). The arrival of electricity in 1960 brought televisions and their exclusively English language programming into the homes of French Newfoundlanders. This reinforced the change in lifestyle and language and led to the decline of French Newfoundland cultural forms such as the *veillée*,[27] which had been important in maintaining social cohesion and reinforcing French Newfoundland ethno-linguistic identity (Magord 2002a, Thomas 1993).

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[27] The *veillée* is a social evening characterized by lively storytelling. Once an important form of entertainment for French Newfoundlanders during the long winter nights, the *veillée* has been described as a dying practice (Thomas 1993).

The construction of roads and wage labour brought French Newfoundlanders outside their communities and into regular contact with other groups, primarily English-speakers who were linguistically, economically, and numerically dominant. These encounters were not always peaceful. Inter-group contact in many cases was marked by the stigmatization of the French: "With the end of the period of relative isolation and the beginning of cultural and linguistic marginality, the francophones came to encounter situations more and more frequently in which their own language was not only inadequate but also scorned" (Waddell and Doran 1993: 223). French Newfoundlanders were labelled "jacotars", a racist shorthand used against people of mixed French and Mi'maq ancestry to make fun of their French accent when they spoke English and to ascribe them with negative traits such as drunkenness, immorality, and laziness (Magord 2002a, Thomas 1993)[28]. One man from the Cape told me that the term jacotar was so loaded a slur that for some the mere mention was enough to start a fistfight. This stigmatization and negative ethnic and linguistic

[28] Thomas (1993) suggests that the term jacotar has been used since the 19th century. Though the etymology of the term is unclear, the hostility it contains may well be tied to the longstanding conflict between the French and the English over fishing rights in Newfoundland. Staveley (1968) notes that English Newfoundlanders felt a great deal of resentment and envy over the good fishing grounds that the French controlled on the west coast of Newfoundland. Hillier (2000) suggests that these sentiments were strong around the turn of the 20th century and that English Newfoundlanders' collective sense of injustice over the "French Shore Question" was one of the building blocks of Newfoundland nationalism at the time. He argues that many Newfoundlanders believed "that so long as French fishermen remained on the coast, and so long as the treaties remained, the island's full potential would never be realised. Newfoundland nationalism, in this phase, had a definite streak of francophobia, which seems to have faded after the 1904 convention" (Hillier 2000:14). While these sentiments may have died down after 1904, I suggest that they may have provided the underpinning of the discrimination against French Newfoundlanders in the Bay St. George region in the decades that followed. While still used to some degree today, the term jacotar has lost much of its edge thanks to the French movement whose work helped to sculpt a new public image of French Newfoundlanders and foster an empowered group identity.

self-awareness contributed to language shift at the Cape by encouraging some French Newfoundlanders to stop speaking French altogether (Magord 2002a) and by engendering a sense of linguistic inferiority that has kept some French Newfoundlanders from speaking French in public or with anyone other than kin (see Chapters Three and Four for more detailed discussions of this point).

The Roman Catholic Church played an integral role in introducing and imposing the English language in Cape St. George. There appears to have been only one French-speaking priest that served the Port au Port Peninsula to any significant extent. Father Alexis Bélanger (1808-1868) came to the West Coast of Newfoundland from Quebec, having previously served on the Magdalen Islands. After Father Bélanger's death in 1868, his successor Monsignor Thomas Sears made a lasting impression on the region: he increased the infrastructure of the region, building roads, churches, and schools, and effectively anglicized those institutions. Though French-speaking priests occasionally passed through the area after Father Bélanger's death,[29] English became the language of the church and the school from then on. The subsequent absence of French priests echoes in the religious practice of some French Newfoundlanders. According to Thomas,

> ...oral testimony speaks eloquently, at least on the peninsula. Prayers recited by informants in French were often so garbled as to be scarcely recognizable: for lack of French-speaking priests and instruction in French, prayers had only been transmitted orally. (Thomas 1993:34)

[29] Waddell and Doran (1993:221) make brief mention of a French-speaking Acadian priest from Prince Edward Island who served in Lourdes from 1912 to 1928.

One woman from the Cape explained other implications of an English-language spiritual life:

> Some of the older people couldn't really go to confession properly because they couldn't speak English and the priest couldn't speak French. There was never any effort on the part of the Church to, you know, maybe bring in a French priest from somewhere or something like that. It was just considered, well, if the priest spoke English everybody else better learn to speak English.

The Roman Catholic Church was a powerful institution in the community. Because English was the language of the church, it would have almost certainly assumed some of the Church's prestige by association. Here, again, English fits the diglossic scheme as high variety.

In addition to their spiritual work, parish priests played an important record-keeping role, particularly in the maintenance of baptismal records. We know priests were responsible for the anglicization of French surnames in the creation of baptismal certificates, but there is some debate about the extent to which priests encouraged the name changes. Thomas argues that the anglicization of French surnames was a choice by French Newfoundlanders "due in part to the absence of a literate tradition, in part to the effects of assimilation" (Thomas 1993:27). Waddell and Doran note that "Priests urged parents to baptize their babies with English names and to speak only English to them" (Waddell and Doran 1993:222). Magord suggests that while some families voluntarily anglicized their family names as English-language dominance grew, others had no such desire. Based on written documents from the St. Georges diocesan register, Magord argues that some priests intentionally anglicized

French surnames as a way to exercise their power[30] (Magord 1995:112). Regardless of whether parents gave their children English names due to the power of suggestion or because of their personal volition, each time a parish priest anglicized a French surname they contributed to the language shift by erasing French from the written record of the community and from people's public identity. One man from the Cape argued that an anglicized name is not a translation: it is the disappearance of an important part of a person's identity.

> Every time you change your name, you're losing something. You know? To me, if your name is Benoit, it's Benoit. It's not Bennett. It's Benoit. It's as simple as that.

This man underscores how integral a name is to identity: to lose one's name is to lose a part of one's self. Surnames are also an important genealogical tool; they are the conduit by which people trace their roots and follow their family line. Changes in surnames can create barriers for people as they follow the path to their ancestors. The anglicization of French surnames has had long-term effects by making it difficult for subsequent generations to trace their French roots. The anglicization of surnames was, thus, one of the most enduring mechanisms of language shift. As one parish administrator remarked:

> When they go back to get their own birth certificates or baptismal certificates, the spelling of the names is so complicated. In the same family, the last name is spelled in different ways and they might have

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[30] "Cette anglicisation des noms, orchestrée par les prêtes, s'applique également à des familles qui ne le désirent pas. Différents témoignages et les documents écrits du registre diocésain de Saint-Georges laissent penser que l'attitude des prêtes est plus due à une tentative d'assimilation que leur dicte leur désir de mieux asseoir leur pouvoir, qu'à un problème de compréhension phonétique des noms" (Magord 1995:112).

> problems with that, you know, to prove that that really is their family, because their name is spelled differently.

French surnames were anglicized so inconsistently that there are often several 'English' versions of the same French name.[31]

As mentioned briefly above, education also fell under the jurisdiction of the Church and, like mass, schooling took place exclusively in English. This meant that people had to know English at a very young age: "With the creation of a network of church schools, competence in the English language was required at age five rather than at the time of seeking a first job. A child entering school without a working knowledge of English was simply sent home" (Waddell and Doran 1993:223-224). This was the case for Marilyn[32], a woman in her sixties.

> Myself, at seven years old I started school. I didn't understand a gosh-darn word of English. So I was sent back home to learn English. I got my [cousin to teach me] and she had some hard time trying to get me to talk English, right? And Mom at home started talking to us in English. She had no other choice, right? You know? ...That's where the French got lost.

English was clearly the high variety, the language of work, religion, and education. Some families adopted a pattern of diglossic bilingualism, speaking French in private at home or at the wharf where the links between work, culture, and history in some cases were still strong (Magord 2002a:189). In other cases, the pattern of language

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[31] See Thomas (1999) for a thorough collection of French Newfoundland surnames and variations thereof. Beyond being an intriguing account of the variations that have occurred to French surnames over time, it may also be a useful tool for solving some French Newfoundlanders' genealogical riddles.

[32] In order to protect the confidentiality of my research participants, I have used pseudonyms and, in some cases, modified or omitted biographical details.

use was not so clear-cut. Many people told me that their parents continued to speak French when among adults, but as in Marilyn's case, they spoke with their children in English. In some cases, the language patterns did not fall evenly along generational lines, as in Fred's family:

> I'll explain to you. My first language at home was English, for obvious reasons, because of education, ok. Because the first six members of the family went to school, couldn't speak English, and some of them were severely punished because they couldn't speak English. So when my parents realized this, they said 'well we better start speaking English to the rest of the family'. So when we [younger children] came along they spoke to us in English. And I didn't actually speak French to my parents, my mom and dad, until I was nineteen or twenty I guess.[33]

As wage labour brought French Newfoundlanders out of their communities and began to change the family-centred economic and social structure, exogamous marriage became more common; in homes where the mother tongue of each spouse differed, English was taken up as the everyday language of the home (Magord 2002a:188).

Descriptions of Cape St. George from different decades mark the increasing degree of language shift. Pierre Biays wrote a detailed physical and cultural geography of Cape St. George in 1952. According to his account, by the late 1940s and early 1950s, French family and place names were being pronounced with an English accent, the orthography of French surnames reflected phonetic English, there was extensive language mixing as the French spoken at the Cape was peppered with

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[33] Biays (1952) notes this pattern of parents raising their first several children in French and switching to English with subsequent children.

English words, many children did not speak French even though it was their parents' language, and bilingualism was the rule (Biays 1952). Two decades later, language shift was even more pronounced. Three years after the formation of Les Terre-Neuviens Français, its president remarked that there had been a "steep decline" in the number of young people who speak French and that it was difficult to sustain young people's interest in French "immersed, as they are, in an environment that is totally English" (Gosselin 1974:23).

Hence, economic, cultural, institutional, and social factors enmeshed together contributed to language shift in Cape St. George and the attribution of diglossic values to English and French. French Newfoundland language activists dedicated to revitalizing the French language had a difficult task in store. The French movement has enjoyed some success in its thirty years: many students have been educated in French, some of them now work within the French infrastructure on the Port au Port Peninsula, mass at the Cape is bilingual, French folk festivals are still held, and, above all, a person's French heritage and ability to speak French need no longer be sources of shame or embarrassment (see Chapter Four for a more detailed discussion of the French movement). However, despite these successes in reversing language shift, another factor continues to diminish the amount of French spoken at the Cape.

2.2.2 – Rural Decline and Out-Migration: Language Shift by Absence

Socio-economic and demographic changes in the latter half of the 20th century have perpetuated language shift despite the mitigating influence of the French

movement. The closure of the Harmon Air Force Base in Stephenville in 1966 accelerated the economic decline of the Bay St. George region (Benoit 1995, George 2000). Changes to the provincial economy in the late 1980s and 1990s dramatically affected much of rural Newfoundland (see Davis 2003 and Sider 2003). Cape St. George and the French movement were no exceptions to this trend.

Newfoundland's North Atlantic cod fishery, hitherto the province's most well-known resource, was in serious decline in the late 1980s and had diminished to such an extent that in 1992 the Canadian government announced a moratorium on that fishery (see Felt and Locke 1995). The cod moratorium was a pivotal point in the history of Newfoundland. Many people employed in the fishing industry abruptly found themselves without work or any means of making a living in rural Newfoundland. Financial compensation from the government sustained many of those fisheries workers for a period of time, but those programs were only a temporary solution. Some people decided to stay in rural Newfoundland to work in other fisheries or trades. Many others opted to pack up their families and move to larger centres in Newfoundland and mainland Canada for work, creating a wave of out-migration and urbanization that continues to this day (see Power and Harrison 2005 and Sinclair 1999 for discussions of the social impact of the cod moratorium on some rural Newfoundland communities).[34]

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[34] Migration in and out and within Newfoundland is not new. However, the collapse of the cod fishery in the early 1990s intensified the phenomenon.

The town of Cape St. George experienced a similar phenomenon. The cod stocks in the NAFO fishing zones adjacent to the Port au Port Peninsula underwent serious decline through the 1980s (see Palmer 2003). However, cod was not the only species decimated by years of overfishing: many other groundfish and shellfish species had also dwindled. Testimonials from three men living on the Port au Port Peninsula – Alphonsus Benoit, William Jesso, and Stan Formanger – from the summer of 1990 indicate the poor state of the fisheries at that time.

> I watch the Russians [from my window], their lousy factory boats taking the capelin. There won't be any soon. They used to come right into the cove, and we'd get barrels of capelin in a few minutes. Now you can't get enough for a lunch. (Alphonsus Benoit, Decks Awash 1990:53)
>
> I have lobster, groundfish, salmon, capelin and herring licences, all the licences I could ask for, but nothing to catch. (William Jesso, Decks Awash 1990:67)
>
> No fish came in and it's the worst in 55 years. (Stan Formanger, Decks Awash 1990:69)

Joe Simon, mayor of Cape St. George at the time, described the economy of the late 1980s and early 1990s like this:

> Unemployment is a huge problem here, the biggest we face right now, and this year has been the worst year ever. The high interest rates affect small businesses, the fishery is failing, and those who work in the woods to supplement their income have to leave the island this year because of strikes at Abitibi and Kruger. (Decks Awash 1990:55)

With the fishery in decline and few jobs available on the peninsula, many people left their homes to find work elsewhere. Out-migration is not a new phenomenon in

Cape St. George,[35] but the decline and collapse of the cod fishery exacerbated out-migration from the Cape. Census data from Statistics Canada shows that in the five years between 1986 and 1991, the population of the Cape declined by 24 percent. The population of the Cape has steadily diminished since 1986 (see Appendix C). More than just the cause of grave economic stagnation, the cod moratorium was also a symbolic and ontological blow to French Newfoundlanders who saw their original *raison d'être* disappear (Magord 2002a:194).

In recent years, the expectations of young people have shifted due to exposure to mass media and messages they receive at school and at home. Many of them have cultivated aspirations that cannot be fulfilled in rural Newfoundland. Davis (2003) describes how occupational aspirations of young people in one rural Newfoundland community changed to reflect lifestyles portrayed on television and changing values around education.

> In school they had been taught to get an education so that they can do more for themselves and be given more choices and opportunities than their parents had had. On TV they saw other lifestyles and became aware of the accessibility of material goods and lifestyles that they saw as being available to them only if they leave rural Newfoundland. Also, the availability of birth control and abortion allow them the choice of avoiding early family obligations. They saw themselves as more educated, more materialistic, less family-oriented, and more willing to uproot themselves in search of new opportunities. (Davis 2003:191-192)

[35] Biays noted in 1952 that emigration posed a threat to the French language at the Cape. At that time, people left mainly for large cities in the United States (namely Boston) or on the "mainland" (Halifax, Montreal, or Toronto), or else they left temporarily to work in the army, in the navy, or in construction elsewhere in Newfoundland (Biays 1952:16).

A recent study by the Newfoundland and Labrador provincial government confirms that the majority of high school age youth on the west coast feel there are few job opportunities in rural Newfoundland and that many of them plan to leave Newfoundland: "Many did not see the province as having much to offer them in the future" (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador 2004:iv). Most of the young people with whom I spoke praised their home and their life at the Cape, but saw moving away for work as inevitable. Others were itching to leave and eager to experience the world. I spoke with many adults who envisioned their children's lives in much the same way.

Those who have left have sought post-secondary education or have found work in different professions and trades. Many have joined the Canadian Armed Forces, the RCMP, or other enforcement agencies. Others work in the oil industry and construction. Still others became engineers, teachers, and artists. They are gone. Those who have left often return to the Cape for vacations and visits; they remain connected to the Cape but they have made their lives elsewhere.

The community's pulse now beats in time with the seasons, as people migrate to mainland Canada when the construction or fish processing seasons begin and return in the winter when the weather is too fierce for building and the processing done. Both men and women migrate for work, but in families where just one parent leaves for work, it is usually the man. For many families, then, life is marked by the comings and goings of fathers and husbands who spend days, weeks, or months at a

time away from home working on ships, in fish plants in other provinces, or on construction sites elsewhere in the province or the country. Families exist in new spatial and temporal arrangements: they exist as a unit with family members scattered across the province, the country, and sometimes the world. Many households are sustained or supported by money earned elsewhere, either by wage-earners who live away from their families for periods of time or by individuals and families who migrate seasonally according to the availability of work. People who are able to make their living within the area for the most part work with the schools, in the few small businesses that operate on the Port au Port Peninsula and in Stephenville, in the logging industry, with government organizations, or – in the increasingly rare case – fishing.

People who continue to live in Cape St. George mark this demographic shift and its effect on the community in many ways. One woman talked about the slow disappearance of accoutrements such as a gas station, a small movie theatre, and restaurants – those markers of a community's vitality and prosperity. Another woman remarked as she gazed out her window how the number of children and school buses that pass by the house each day, those markers of a community's youth and longevity, had become fewer and fewer. Several young adults who have made their lives in the community recalled their high school graduating class and remarked how few of their classmates have stayed to become neighbours.

The decline of the fishery and the rural Newfoundland economy generally from the late 1980s onward has furthered language shift at the Cape. With few job opportunities at home and, for some, a different set of aspirations than their parents, young people from Cape St. George joined many other Newfoundlanders in a wave of out-migration. Many of those who left the Cape were graduates of the French immersion program, those who were to be the bastions of the French language, those who would bring French back into the community. The French movement aimed to instil in young people a sense of place, a connection to the past, and a French Newfoundland identity rooted at the Cape. But it also provided many young people with the opportunity to travel throughout the province and the country as well as the opportunity to imagine themselves living outside the Cape. For many, this tug of war, this pull toward and push from home, ended when the realities of making a living were considered. Their bilingualism, that which their parents fought to reintroduce, that which would have enriched the linguistic fabric of Cape St. George, was also that which increased their employability in the broader Canadian context. Young French-speaking adults, the pride of the French movement, left the Cape en masse. In the words of a young woman and her mother:

> Mother: There's about eighty percent of them gone away that were in her class.
> Daughter: Everybody's gone.
> M: Everyone's away.
> D: Cities gulp them up. That's it. *L'exode*.[36]
> M: Swallow them in.

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[36] *L'exode* means 'exodus'.

D: Yeah. *L'exode des jeunes.*[37]
M: Gone.

Few graduates of the French immersion program have stayed in Cape St. George. One of the few who did, now raising a family at the Cape, put it this way:

> Most of the people that graduated with me are gone. So these ones that are left here are the ones that were in the English program, they weren't in the immersion program. From the eight that were with me from my class, I'm the only one that's left here. So, it's very hard to keep [the French movement] going when there's just no one left around. And like, on one hand I can probably count four, five [French-speaking] people my age or a little bit younger who are still around.

The absence of these young French-speakers tips the linguistic balance in Cape St. George toward English. It is anglicization by absence. This will be increasingly true as the years pass, as older French-speakers die, and as there are ever-fewer French speaking parents left at the Cape to pass the language onto their children.

The economic decline of the 1980s and 1990s contributed to language shift at the Cape by removing the majority of young French-speaking adults. While some have remained or returned after a spell abroad, the majority have left. The majority of young adults in the community are English-speakers. French language activists may have met their goal of instilling in people a sense of pride in their French heritage, but their attempt to increase the amount of French spoken in the community by educating young people was undermined by the economic downturn described above. This exodus of young French-speaking adults will have a long-term effect on the linguistic composition of the community. Among that group of French-speakers who

[37] *L'exode des jeunes* can be translated as 'the exodus of the young people'.

left Cape St. George were future parents who might have spoken French to their children, not only contributing to a French-language environment, but also helping to nurture another generation of French-speakers.

These demographic changes have affected the French movement in Cape St. George in several related ways. First, the next generation of language activists – those young adults who grew up in the heyday of the French movement, who were educated in French, who came of age at a time when their French identity could be a source of pride rather than shame, those primed to carry on the work of their parents – has, to a large extent, left the Cape. Without those young people to take the place of the aging leaders, involvement in the French movement has drastically declined. Second, the absence of those young French-speakers means there are fewer people to contribute to the maintenance of a French-language environment at the Cape. They would be the ones to help keep the language vital in the community, both by speaking French in the community and by raising their children in French or bilingual households.[38] Thus, the investment made by the original language activists, the energy they poured into the community and into their young people, has had uncertain returns. One young woman living in Cape St. George summed up the insecurity and uncertainty of many like this:

> I wonder sometimes if it's gonna die out. The generation of my parents who really fought for it are getting older and are not involved anymore, most of them. There's still a few, but for the most part they're not

[38] Fishman (1990) argues that using a minority or minoritized language in the community and at home is crucial for successfully reversing language shift.

> involved anymore. They've kind of, not given up, but it's like they don't fight for it like they used to. So I wonder… Who are they going to pass it on to? Because there's no one left. The kids are gone. The ones who went through the [French] programs are leaving because there's no work here. I mean, you can't blame them. But there's no one left here to pass it on.

A long-time language activist summed up the decline of the movement in this way:

> Our real problem is that, like every small rural community, our young people just don't stay. There's no work here, so they go. Now some young people want to go because they want to experience life out there, they want to see what's out there and they're perfectly anxious to go. Others go because they have to, they don't see any chance in getting a job locally. There's potential in tourism and that will create a number of seasonal jobs, but it's not the total answer. It's part of the answer.

There is still an institutional French presence at Cape St. George. French schooling from kindergarten to grade eight is offered at *École Notre Dame du Cap* in Cape St. George and high school students are bussed to *École Sainte-Anne in Mainland. Une Longue Veillée* has resumed as a one-day festival. The French association at the Cape, *Les Terre-Neuviens Français*, is still active, though by all accounts membership has decreased significantly. There are several programs offered to French-speaking youth at Cape St. George, including a French preschool program[39] which aims to familiarize preschool children with French before entering school and *École du Samedi*, a Saturday school that offers students at *École Notre Dame du Cap* an opportunity to speak French in a relaxed extracurricular context. These two programs are led by young French-speaking adults from the area whom I consider to be among the next generation of language activists. With the exception of those programs, it was my observation –

[39] This preschool program is available to children throughout the peninsula.

consistent with that of the people quoted above – that the majority of the leaders and organizers of the French movement were approaching retirement and were ready to pass on the torch. The resounding question is to whom?

2.3 – Conclusion

The Europeans who settled Cape St. George lived in a French language environment. Their cultural forms, social organization, and economic structure of self-sufficiency reinforced a collective identity rooted in the French language. The introduction of wage labour in the mid-20th century was the catalyst for significant social, cultural, and linguistic change. The construction of roads and the introduction of electricity brought an end to the relative geographic isolation that helped maintain the integrity of French Newfoundland language, culture, and identity. Exposure to the outside world brought ethnic self-awareness, stigmatization, desire for modern amenities, and a different set of ambitions for young people. All of this contributed to a process of language shift in Cape St. George that saw the decline of French and the ascendancy of English. In recent years, rural decline and out-migration have contributed to language shift at the Cape by decreasing the number of young French-speakers who choose – or are able – to make a living in Cape St. George.

Language shift at the Cape also meant the attribution of diglossic values to the two languages. English became the language of power, prestige, work, religion, education, and politics. French went from being the dominant and defining language in the community to being a marginal language, limited to use among friends and

family. In most cases, English eventually either joined or replaced French as the language of the home as well. And while the French movement has inserted French into some of the diglossic high variety spheres, the effects of language shift and the diglossic values originally associated with English and French still resonate throughout the community (see Chapter Four).

In the following chapter, I examine the way language activists in Cape St. George have responded to language shift through the medium of the French language movement.

Chapter Three

French Newfoundland Language Activism:

The Impact of the Oppositional One Language/One People Ideology

The French movement began in Cape St. George in late 1970 and evolved over the following three decades to include community, cultural, educational, and political dimensions. In this chapter, I argue that French language activism in Cape St. George is an example of resistance of reversal (Jaffe 1999). Much of the important work done by French language activists involves the French language usurpation of dominant, previously English language domains such as the school, the church, radio, and television. This type of language planning and language activism is informed by the oppositional one language/one people ideology, which in this case pits English against French. This language ideology makes little room for linguistic heterogeneity and favours 'purer' linguistic forms. In this chapter, I present a brief overview of the activities and evolution of the French movement and then discuss the clearest example of the way the oppositional language ideology has been enacted within the French movement: the acquisition and development of French education.

3.1 – A Brief History of the French Language Movement in Cape St. George

As discussed in the previous chapter, language shift entails not only a change in language practice, but also a shift in the values that surround language and language use. By the 1960s, some French Newfoundlanders had rejected all markers of their French identity and spoke only English, while others chose neither French nor

English identification and existed in a state of "anomie" (Magord 2002a). But there was a group of French Newfoundlanders who maintained their ethnic identity, who neither rejected the dominant culture nor allowed it to erode their own. They embraced the wage economy and material benefits of the wider society, thus allowing for cultural innovation and dynamism, but maintained a voluntary attachment to their French language and origins (Magord 2002a). The first language activists from Cape St. George emerged from this latter group.

The emergence of the language movement at the Cape dovetailed with similar language politics occurring at the national level. Concerned with the survival and growth of official language minorities, the Canadian government established a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism in the late 1960s (Waddell and Doran 1993:225) and provided funding for "the institution of sociocultural activities for linguistic minorities" (Charbonneau and Barrette 1994:63). This federal initiative validated the efforts of a newly emerged group of young language activists from the Cape. The group included people from all walks of life – teachers, tradesmen, homemakers – all of whom recognized that the French language was fast disappearing from their community and wanted to take action against that trend. The seeds of ethnic awareness and social action were planted for the teachers in the group while they were training at Memorial University in St. John's. For some, university was their first experience away from home and their first opportunity to perceive their

'difference'. For Gary, one of these original language activists, leaving home was essential for his ethnic consciousness to blossom:

> Because I had grown up in a small community and always lived in the Port au Port Peninsula and the surrounding area, you kind of assume that everybody's the same and all communities are like your own and there's nothing different about it. But when I got to St. John's, actually, I was very anxious to do some French courses because the high school French that we had was just written and the teachers who taught it couldn't speak the language, so it wasn't very much use. So I decided I would enrol in as many French courses at the university as I could when I got there. And the very first day, the teacher came in and said a joke and it was very funny and I started to laugh. And I was the only who laughed because the joke was in French and nobody else understood it. And I guess from that moment on something kind of clicked and said, 'Gee, you've got something that these other people don't have.' And other professors, you got to know them and started talking about language and culture and so on, and you began to realize that you had something that you should be proud of and you should preserve.

Studying French at university was not a positive experience for everyone. For some, ethnic awareness came from negative evaluations of Newfoundland French, which was "judged an obscure patois of no relevance" (Waddell and Doran 1993:225). Consider, for example, Fred's recollection of an encounter with one French professor.

> I remember one lady in particular from St. John's, [a professor] at the university, telling me that I didn't know how to speak French, my French was no good. But I put her in her place. I told her what I thought. I said you speak French the way you do and I speak the way I do. I said, you understand me, I said, I understand you and that's all we need to do. I said yours is no better than mine, I said mine is no better than yours, I said it's different. And I said we have to accept our differences.

Whether their experience with their French professors was positive or negative, being away at university gave these future teachers an awareness of their language and

culture, which strengthened their sense of identity and their resolve to act. These teachers became an important presence in their communities and in the French movement (Waddell and Doran 1993).

In December 1970, with the encouragement and financial assistance of the Department of the Secretary of State, the group of language activists formed *Les Terre-Neuviens Français*, the first formal francophone association in the province, located in Cape St. George (Waddell 1975). The association's goals were "To promote and better French cultural activities, to make efforts to preserve our dying French language and culture, to organise branches in other French-speaking communities" (Waddell 1975:55).

Les Terre-Neuviens Français was very active during the first years of its existence. It organized adult and student summer exchanges with Montreal, Chéticamp, Moncton, and St. Pierre and arranged for francophone *chansonniers* and theatre groups to visit the Cape. In 1972 it offered *alphabétisation* (French literacy) classes, which continued into the time of my fieldwork. The group also organized activities and events to revive traditional practices, including handicraft and square-dancing classes for the youth group and, in 1975, the celebration of *La Chandeleur* (Waddell 1975). With the help of a fieldworker who raised awareness by walking from house to house and speaking with residents about local language politics, branches of *Les Terre-Neuviens Français* were established in Black Duck Brook (1972) and Mainland (1976). These are now independent associations known as *Chez les Français de l'Anse-à-Canards*

and *L'Héritage de l'Île Rouge* respectively. In 1973, this same fieldworker helped form *l'Ordre du bon temps* in Stephenville, in the same grassroots manner as in the other communities on the Port au Port Peninsula. That same year, she supported the formation of *l'Association francophone du Labrador* in Labrador City via telephone. In some cases, the French associations were the only organizations in the communities at the time. In addition to promulgating the French movement, these associations were the wombs and classrooms of collective action.

In 1973, soon after *Les Terre-Neuviens Français* was established, a wider network of francophone associations formed around the province, which included *l'Association francophone de Saint-Jean* in St. John's and the provincial umbrella organization, *La Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador* (FFTNL). The Federation quickly joined wider associations such as the *Fédération des francophones hors Québec* (FFHQ) and the *Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française* (ACELF)[40], thereby garnering the group's support for their initiatives from other francophone communities across Canada (Charbonneau and Barrette 1994:65, Waddell and Doran 1993:225). Members of *Les Terre-Neuviens Français* and the youth group *Les Jeunes Francophones du Cap* travelled throughout the province and Canada to participate in a variety of francophone meetings, events, and exchanges. These networks and trips were important sources of information, support, and inspiration. One young adult

[40] These associations and federations may be translated as The French Newfoundlanders, the Francophone Association of Labrador, the Order of Good Times, the Francophone Association of St. John's, the Francophone Federation of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Federation of Francophones Outside Quebec, and the Canadian Association for French Language Education.

recalled, "Being able to actually experience someone else's involvement in their community made a difference for us because we got to live it and then come back and try to build that up for ourselves."

Federal support for French–English bilingualism and biculturalism gave language activists access to funds to support local programming and infrastructure projects, such as building a slipway and renovating an old schoolhouse to create the first French Centre. *Les Terre-Neuviens Français* was also an important lobby group who framed their claims not as privileges, but as rights (Magord 2002a:193).

> Perhaps the most creative actions taken by the Association have been those made on behalf of the francophone population, in acting as a pressure group regionally, provincially and federally with the purpose of demanding the satisfaction of some basic French language rights and obtaining more public recognition of their existence. (Waddell 1975:56)

They successfully lobbied for French language television, which became available by satellite from Montréal in 1974 (Thomas 1993:36). In September 1975, after years of pressuring the provincial government and the Roman Catholic School Board, *Les Terre-Neuviens Français* received approval to begin a French immersion program in the local school. It was the first French immersion program in the province and established a precedent for French education that many other schools in Newfoundland and Labrador followed in subsequent years. In 1976, a *Radio Canada*[41] signal was extended to the province. These incentives met with mixed success. In all my time in Cape St. George, I never heard *Radio Canada* playing in anyone's home;

[41] *Radio Canada* is Canada's national French-language broadcaster. Its English language counterpart is the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, better known as the CBC.

only one person told me they tuned into that station. Instead, I heard English language commercial radio: either a broadcast from Stephenville, which featured plenty of news from nearby communities and played primarily country and western music, or a province-wide pop/rock station, which was the most common choice of young people. Satellite radio stations were also frequently playing in houses with dishes; the most common channels were English-language and played contemporary pop/rock music or adult contemporary. Similarly, I never witnessed anyone watching French language television, an observation shared by Brasseur (1995, 2001). Regardless of their popularity, the provision of French language radio and television was important symbolic recognition of the French population. Later, years of French advocacy and pressuring government saw the installation of bilingual road signs throughout the Port au Port Peninsula and the construction of a mountain road to finally create a direct land link between Cape St. George and Mainland. Further political activity also saw the provision of French first language programs in schools in Mainland and Cape St. George by 1989 (Charbonneau and Barrette 1994:7-79). At the Cape, the French program is taught at *École Notre Dame du Cap*. In 1987, ground was broken in Mainland for the construction of a school and community centre, the *Centre scholaire et communautaire Sainte-Anne de la Grand'Terre*, which was subsequently inaugurated in 1994 (FFTNL 2002).

An important aspect of the French movement has been cultural revitalization. In the early years, *La Chandeleur* was revived but language activists sought to draw

broader attention to the cultural traditions of French Newfoundlanders on the Port au Port Peninsula. In 1980, *Les Terre-Neuviens Français* held its first French folk festival, which was called *Une Longue Veillée.* It featured local musicians and dancers, as well as francophone musicians from the Maritimes and St. Pierre et Miquelon. That first festival drew an audience of thousands to the Cape and it became an annual event thereafter. *Une Longue Veillée* soon inspired cultural workers in Mainland and Black Duck Brook to develop their own annual French folk festivals, *Une Journée dans l'Passé* and *Le Plaisir du Vieux Temps* respectively, both of which have also endured to this day. Another annual French cultural event is the *Marche de la Saint-Jean Baptiste,*[42] a hike that follows the old path over the mountain between Cape St. George and Mainland (Charbonneau and Barrette 1994, FFTNL 2002).

Since 1994, the francophone associations from Cape St. George, Mainland, and Black Duck Brook have been united under the auspices of the *Association régionale de la Côte-Ouest* (ARCO), or the West Coast Regional Association. Located in the *Centre scholaire et communautaire Sainte-Anne* in Mainland, ARCO manages the community component of the centre and the museum located there, works with other organizations such as the Port au Port Economic Development Association (PAPEDA) and the *Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité* (RDÉE) to oversee economic and tourism development on the peninsula, and assists with the cultural activities and musical festivals of the three communities (FFTNL 2002).

[42] The names of these cultural events may be translated as Candlemas; A Long *Veillée*; One Day, Long Ago; The Good Old Times; and the St. John the Baptist March.

When the movement first began, French language activists had the difficult task of reversing the negative associations that had been ascribed to the French language through the process of language shift and overcoming the "social and cultural apathy" that had become embedded in the community (Magord 2002a:192). According to Gary, an activist from the earliest days of the French movement, this was their most difficult challenge:

> The biggest struggle? Convincing the local people. That was a constant struggle because we had, I guess people had gotten used to doing things a certain way. And people had always been told 'you don't speak French very well, nobody understands you.' And in school you weren't allowed to speak. I mean there was all this stuff, right. And there's also the fact that a lot of our people come from ancestors who weren't supposed to be here in the first place. They had to hide, they were kind of outlaws. OK? So there was a fear of strangers and community organization. It's true. We've been told all along we're no good, you know, our language doesn't count, our culture is no good, so why should we believe you? To me that was the most difficult part. For me, it's always been, it's still that way, trying to convince the local people that what we want is reasonable, it should be done, and we should be proud of who we are, we need to pass it on to our kids, we shouldn't even be afraid of it. And you know that's the most difficult part.

The fact that Gary refers to this as a continuous struggle is an indication of the strength and persistence of the effects of language shift. Language activists obviously succeeded in convincing some people that the fight was worthwhile because the French language movement grew and flourished for many years. When people looked back on the early days of the movement, many remarked on the crowds that gathered at various events, the large number of volunteers, the fun that was had. Gradually, however, the level of involvement began to decline:

> We used to have loads and loads of volunteers, right, almost like an army. But the last few years that we did it you know you could easily put all the people that ran it into a small room, because, you know, people got older and some of them died, and some moved away and there's a smaller population here now.

There are many contributing factors to the decline of the movement, most of which are linked to demographic changes that shook the Cape starting in the late 1980s (discussed in Chapter Two).

The French movement is multi-faceted and can be analyzed from many different angles. I have chosen to focus on French language education for several reasons. First, the struggle for French education was one of the original battles fought by language activists at the Cape. Second, the French school has been an active site of language politics as French education has morphed and evolved over the years. Third, French schooling is the primary and often the sole means by which young people learn French, thus it is integral to the reproduction of the French movement. Fourth, most people living in Cape St. George have some interaction with the French school. Finally, the acquisition and evolution of French education in Cape St. George most clearly illustrates the influence of the oppositional language ideology and exemplifies the way in which language activism at the Cape can be considered a form of resistance of reversal.

3.2 – French Education: Resistance of Reversal

In Chapter Two, I discussed the integral role English language schooling played in language shift and the centrality of the school as perhaps the most powerful

institution in the community, given its affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church. The acquisition of French language schooling meant French language activists would 'take back' the school and co-opt that institution for their own ends: giving the French language back to their children. The instrument that was so central to decline of the French language was to be used for its renaissance.

I contend that resistance of reversal, the replacement of one language with another while maintaining the structures of dominance, is essentially the enactment of the oppositional language ideology. French education is perhaps the clearest example of resistance of reversal because we can see the switch in the language of the institution so clearly, because the development of French education brought an increasing emphasis on linguistic purism, and because the school was so central to both language shift and language revitalization. As we examine the evolution of French education at the Cape, we can see the oppositional language ideology grow in its influence.

3.2.1 – French Immersion

French language education at the Cape initially took the form of French immersion and it was offered in addition to the regular English program. French immersion is designed for students whose first language is English. The program begins with a high concentration of French language classes and English classes are increasingly incorporated into the program as students progress through the grades. By the time the students reach the higher grades, the concentration of English classes

is much higher than French; in other words, the balance of French and English at the end of the program is the inverse of that at the beginning. French immersion is "a second-language program designed to teach French to those whose mother tongue is not French by immersing the student in a French language environment in the classroom… Learning materials prepared specifically for [French immersion] pupils tend to be somewhat simpler in vocabulary and grammatical structures than those used by native francophones." (Netten and Murphy 2000:490). The French immersion program was created in St. Lambert, Quebec, approximately a decade earlier and prior to 1975 had been implemented in every province in Canada except Newfoundland (Heffernan 1975:2). Because it was a pilot project in the province, the Port au Port French Immersion Project as it came to be known was carefully studied each year.[43]

In the annual reports, the students who entered the French immersion program were consistently classified as anglophones. An explanation in the report for the school year 1975-1976 reads as follows:

> With regard to maternal language, all the youngsters were classified as anglophones. The situation with regard to language use in the Port au Port area is rather complicated. While the area is historically French, and its inhabitants attached to their French cultural heritage, the English language has made considerable inroads into the community… In recent years there has been a conscious effort on the part of many parents to encourage their youngsters to develop competence in English, at that

[43] The studies of the Port au Port French Immersion Project were published by the Institute for Educational and Research Development at Memorial University of Newfoundland and the Port au Port Roman Catholic School Board. See Netten et al (1976), Netten, Spain, and Heffernan (1977, 1978), Heffernan and Netten (1978), Netten and Spain (1981, 1982, 1983, 1984), and Netten, Spain, and MacGillivray (1985).

> point indispensable to their economic future in Newfoundland, so that they have deliberately spoken English to the children, whereas French might well be the language of communication between adults. Thus, the youngsters who entered the French kindergarten in September were all classed as anglophones, although it seems reasonable to assume that they are, to some extent, bilingual in that they are regularly exposed to French. (Netten et al 1976:15-16)

Though the authors of this report acknowledge that students will have had some exposure to French when they enter school and are "to some extent" bilingual, they are nonetheless classified as being functionally anglophone.

French immersion programs in Canada are usually directed at "majority speakers", people who speak English, which is dominant in the country as a whole. In Cape St. George, maternal language – and, therefore, status as majority or minority speaker – is difficult to ascertain. The French immersion program, in that context, was instituted "in a large measure to restore to a community its own language" (Netten et al 1976:68). The ambiguity around the linguistic identity of children in the French immersion program – whether they are anglophone or in some sense bilingual – makes it unclear whether the stated goal of "restoring a language to its community" in this case means reinforcing what is already spoken or effectively introducing a second language. This is a question to which I return later.

In an early survey of the opinions and attitudes of parents, it became clear that while many parents believed that the French immersion program made "an important cultural contribution" (Spain, Netten, and Sheppard 1980:55), from the beginning of the program "a primary concern of parents in the Port-au-Port programme, as in

others, has been the maintenance and development of proficiency in English" (Spain, Netten, and Sheppard 1980:22). The reports indicate that parents wanted their children to speak French, but they did not want that to come at the cost of diminished proficiency in English or weakened academic achievement (Netten et al 1976, Spain and Netten 1978). Parents valued bilingualism, not French monolingualism, and the program was evaluated for its effectiveness in promoting "balanced bilingualism", the ability to use both languages "satisfactorily" (Netten and Spain 1982:69, Netten and Spain 1983). This unwillingness on the part of parents to fully abandon English in favour of French suggests that although they supported the French movement, they were unwilling to completely abandon English. Like the post-language shift situation Dodson (1986) describes in Wales, the choices of parents in Cape St. George demonstrate the lingering impact of language shift and the resilience and entrenchment of diglossic values despite language activists' efforts at linguistic revaluation (see Chapter Four for further exploration of this point). This emphasis on bilingualism and early descriptions of Cape St. George as "an area that has a definite bicultural heritage" (Netten et al 1976:66) echo verbatim the federal government's early emphasis on bilingualism and biculturalism.

In Cape St. George, the French immersion program and the regular English program were housed in the same school, so students from both programs interacted outside class time; by all accounts this interaction among students took place in English, the language that all the students shared. Jackie, a graduate from the French

immersion program, recalled what it was like to be a French immersion student in that context:

> There were actually more students in English than there were in French when I was in high school. It wasn't a French school. Most of the time we'd have no choice but to speak English outside [class] because there was such a big [English] influence really. Everyone else spoke English. If you spoke French they didn't understand. So in order to fit in you'd speak in English.

Speaking English outside the French classroom was consistent with the goal of balanced bilingualism, so switching to English on the playground or between classes was deemed a normal and expected part of the French immersion program (Netten et al 1976). The French learned inside the classroom was balanced by the English spoken outside of it. Official policy encouraged that balance to extend to the home as well. An early brochure introducing the French immersion program "highly recommended" that children be exposed to some English at home (Heffernan 1975:12). This seems to have been unnecessary advice, given that most students who entered the program were classified as anglophone so presumably most parents already spoke to their children in English. The recommendation reflects the fact that the French immersion program is designed for students whose first language is English, the assumption being that their English education and proficiency ought to develop outside the classroom. While it may be consistent with the rationale behind French immersion education and consistent with parents' goals of bilingualism, this encouragement to speak English at home contradicted language activists' goal of bringing the French language back into the community. A change was soon to come.

3.2.2 – New Language: The Argument for French First Language Education

In 1982, Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms[44] transformed the discourse around minority language education. Section 23 entitles Canadian citizens residing in English language provinces such as Newfoundland and Labrador to the right to educate their children in French if the parent's first language "learned and still understood" is French, if they received their own primary education in Canada in French, or if they have another child who has received or is receiving his or her education in French in Canada. The same rights are designed to govern English language education in Quebec. Federal support for official language minorities, which had hitherto been primarily economic, now came in the form of constitutional rights. Section 23 empowered French language activists on the Port au

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[44] Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, entitled "Minority Language Educational Rights" clearly outlines the guidelines for minority language education. It reads:

> **23 (1)** Citizens of Canada **a)** whose first language learned and still understood is that of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province in which they reside, or **b)**who have received their primary school instruction in Canada in English or French and reside in a province where the language in which they received that instruction is the language of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province, have the right to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in that language in that province. **(2)** Citizens of Canada of whom any child has received or is receiving primary or secondary school instruction in English or French in Canada, have the right to have all their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the same language. **(3)** The right of citizens of Canada under subsections (1) and (2) to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the language of the English or French linguistic minority population of a province **a)** applies wherever in the province the number of children of citizens who have such a right is sufficient to warrant the provision to them out of public funds of minority language instruction; and **b)** includes, where the number of those children so warrants, the right to have them receive that instruction in minority language educational facilities provided out of public funds. (Government of Newfoundland 1991:xv)

Port Peninsula and provided them with legal grounds upon which to make their claims.

Language activists gradually became discontented with the French immersion program. Teachers from the Cape with whom I spoke pointed to the ever-diminishing French content and the predominantly English-language school environment as the program's key detractions, both of which they felt were impeding the goal of French language revitalization at the Cape. Though French immersion was popular, "it soon became evident that, as a program designed for anglophones learning a second language, immersion did not respond to the desires of the francophone community to restore its French language and heritage" (Netten and Murphy 2000:492). French language activists wanted to move towards increased French content and Section 23 gave them new language with which to transform their requests into legal demands.

This shift is quite noticeable in *French Educational Needs Assessment: Port au Port Peninsula* (Cormier et al 1985), a forty-three page brief which makes a case for French first language education to the provincial Department of Education. It argues that there was a sufficient number of people "enjoying French language educational rights to require that appropriate programs be established" (Cormier et al 1985:8). The authors report that in interviews, all parents agreed that "bilingualism was the most appropriate goal for the children of the area... [and] that both languages were equally

important" (Cormier et al 1985:15). However, the opinions offered at public consultation meetings offered a different perspective:

> At no time did anyone state that one or the other of the official languages was not important. However, some persons stated that the children should be bilingual francophones, as opposed to being bilingual anglophones. This was the prevailing view in the meetings in Mainland and Cape St. George. There can be no doubt of the sincerity of those in attendance on this point, and the importance that they attached to recovering the French language and the concept of self as francophones. (Cormier et al 1985:15)

Thirty-eight people, presumably the most impassioned parents, attended the meetings in Mainland and Cape St. George. One hundred and thirty people were interviewed. Despite the discrepancy in numbers and view between meetings and interviews, the authors of the report seem to have favoured the opinions expressed at the meetings for they concluded that unlike the School Board's goal of "balanced bilingualism", parents "would be satisfied with a form of dominant bilingualism where French would be the dominant language, with an overall bilingual competency that was considerably more socially oriented" (Cormier et al 1985:30). According to the report, parents would be satisfied with a level of English on par with that spoken in the community. Overall, the authors of the report emphasize the importance of French-dominant bilingualism.

Another key facet of the argument for a change in educational program was that the School Board measured academic success by achievement in English. According to the report, the School Board accepted the French immersion program as "compensatory education" and supported it because French immersion places an

emphasis on English that is consistent with the School Board's goals and mandate. The authors of the report argued that this emphasis on English infringed upon the right to education in French:

> The problem is that this program is designed for anglophones who wish to become bilingual. It does not have the emphasis on French required by francophone children. It is clear that the board cannot maintain its position on goals for attainment in English, if francophone parents choose to exercise their rights to a francophone education for their children. (Cormier et al 1985:28)

The argument continues that to meet the goals of parents, namely "the restoration of the French language as the means of communication in the home, and in the general social activities of the community" (Cormier et al 1985:28), a different priority ought to be placed on English.

> Because of the all pervasive nature of the English milieu for these children, parents feel that their children receive sufficient exposure to English to be able to develop adequate competence in the language with a smaller proportion of instructional time devoted to the study of English. In order to attain adequate levels of competence in French to restore its use in the community and home, it appears to them that a larger part of the school day must be devoted to instruction in this language. To pursue this point in a specific way, the relative weight which might be placed on French and English would become almost the opposite of what exists in the programs currently in place... What is required, therefore, to achieve the goals of parents, and to meet the requirements for minority language rights, is not a French immersion program but a distinct minority language program, where success is defined in terms of achievement in French, not English. (Cormier et al 1985:28)

A change in program was not the only recommendation. So as not to undermine the French teaching that took place in the classroom and to combat the "all pervading English atmosphere", the authors of the report recommended that the school

environment be an entirely French space, inside and outside the classroom. This approach exemplifies the oppositional language ideology: with its emphasis on heavy French content, it vilifies the English language context as a major obstacle to successful French revitalization, partitions the community into the "francophone" and "English-speaking" populations, and pits the two against each other.

The authors of the 1985 report recommended that school, school district, and school board administration personnel should be bilingual and sympathetic to the aspirations, problems, and rights of "the francophone population" (Cormier et al 1985:35-36). It was recommended that remedial and counselling services be provided by people who are francophone: "Anglophones, even when bilingual, may have a tendency to be unfamiliar with remediation resources in French, and may also not fully understand the problems, both academic and psychological of the francophone population" (Cormier et al 1985:32). The authors of the report conceded that the implementation of this program and the necessity for francophone staff would affect the job security of English language teachers and would mean job redundancy within English schools and the English school board, but they argued that the creation of francophone positions was necessary "affirmative action" to ensure that francophones' "basic rights" were being met (Cormier et al 1985:40).

Many language activists believed this new approach would enrich the French educational experience. Ruby, a teacher and long-time activist, explained the rationale:

> If you're a French part of an English school, you're surrounded by English all the time. The other kids are talking English, announcements are in English – although ours were always bilingual – [there are] signs up in the corridor and stuff like that. You can't help but have the English seep in. If you've got a school where there's only French instruction going on, everything is in French. The secretary is French, the bus driver is French, the janitor is French. So you get more education with experience. It's not just in the classroom, but it's in the school. At recess time and when you have special events, it all takes place in French. So it's a better educational experience than being in a bilingual school.

While the case made in this needs assessment was strong (it led to the implementation of French first language education in Cape St. George and in Mainland), there are clearly several contradictions in these arguments. First, the authors and language activists argue that French immersion is inappropriate for the Cape because it is designed for anglophones not francophones, but several of the same authors had consistently classified the students who entered the program as anglophones in previous reports and made a strong case for the provision of compensatory remedial services to assist students and parents with low or no French oral competence. Indeed, most people with whom I spoke agreed that the majority of children who enter the French school are anglophones from English-speaking homes. However, one language activist, echoing the report, stated the opposite: "We quickly realized that [French immersion] was not meeting our needs because it was meant for people who didn't have the language already and wanted to learn it, and our kids already had the language, most of them." The authors of the report and this language activist changed how they identify the children of the Cape. Second, the report also leaves an unclear impression of parental goals, especially as regards whether they wanted

balanced bilingualism or French dominant bilingualism. It refers to the large number of people who expressed a desire for balanced bilingualism, then favours the call for French-dominant bilingualism expressed by far fewer parents in the public meetings. Although differentiating the two may seem like an exercise in splitting hairs, the educational implications are significant, as are the inferences it makes about the goals and identity of French Newfoundlanders. The argument for French first language schooling exemplifies the oppositional one people/one language ideology, which defines French Newfoundlanders by their affiliation with the French language. The movement toward an increasingly French program, academic achievement goals based on French competency, a French-only school environment complete with francophone teachers and staff, and a French school board and administrative staff is not only an example of a more complete resistance of reversal but is a manifestation of the one people/one language ideology. By reinforcing the association of French Newfoundlanders with the French language, the language ideology allows little conceptual room for linguistic heterogeneity; details which challenge that ideology such as the parental desire for balanced bilingualism and the prevalence of French Newfoundland children who are anglophone, are glazed over, ignored, or 'forgotten'. I suggest that these inconsistencies are examples of erasure (Gal and Irvine 1995): the process by which elements that are inconsistent with a language ideology are overlooked or rendered invisible to create a false impression of uniformity or homogeneity.

3.2.3 – Contemporary French Education at the Cape

Many of the recommendations laid out in the 1985 French Education Needs Assessment were adopted. The French immersion program at the Cape was replaced with a French first language program; a similar program was initiated in Mainland. An excerpt from the provincial government's policy on French education captures the all-encompassing French character of the program:

> A Newfoundland ***French school*** is an educational institution whose very essence is francophone. All activities are conducted in French. The atmosphere and the spirit of the school embody the francophone heritage of which it is a product, as does its very structure. It is a vehicle of French Canadian culture. In a French school, instruction is in French and a French first language curriculum is used. (Government of Newfoundland 1991:3, emphasis in original)

The curriculum is consistently French from kindergarten through Level III (Grade Twelve); English is regarded as a second language and English classes commence in Grade Four. The school environment is French-only, which is to say that all students, faculty, and staff, including bus drivers, custodians, and secretaries, must speak French on school premises. French first language education is designed for francophone students in minority language settings, that is people whose mother tongue is French and who live in English environments. In its policy on French first language education, the provincial government expands the eligibility requirements laid out in the Charter to include people in minority language settings such as those on the Port au Port Peninsula: "The French school must also accommodate those francophones who, by force of circumstance, do not have a functional knowledge of

French but who demonstrate (through their parents) a desire to recover their heritage, the French language and culture" (Government of Newfoundland 1991:17) The document specifically mentions "children of Newfoundland parents of French origin who do not understand French but who wish to preserve their French heritage" and recommends that such children be provided with "special classes [that] would facilitate their integration into the French school community" (Government of Newfoundland 1991:18). In 1997, the provincial government announced that it would provide financial assistance to help establish a francophone school board in the province.

The teachers and language activists with whom I spoke felt that the creation of an all-French school environment was an important corrective measure which maximized the French educational experience and compensated for the largely English-language environment outside the school. Fred, a French teacher, explained the importance of the school's French-only policy in this way:

> Now the kids converse in and out of the classroom in French all the time. It makes it better for learning because a lot of the kids don't hear any French other than in school because their parents don't speak French, their parents have lost the language. The only place they hear it is at school, so you have to use every second of the day and give them as much as possible.

The French school, for many students, is a French language oasis. Students are immersed in French at school, but when they exit the school grounds, most of them return to English-language homes, play with English-speaking friends, watch English

language television, listen to English language music. For many students, there is little French language reinforcement outside the school.

The French-only policy not only reinforces students' French language skills, but also their association of the French language with the educational context. Many language activists told me that French has become a "school language" for many students at the Cape. Nevertheless, though most students associate French with the school and the school environment is supposed to be entirely French, some students slip back into English when they are there. As students interact with their friends at school, speaking French in what are usually English-language relationships, they occasionally revert to their everyday language and some English inevitably seeps into the school environment.

All of the teachers with whom I spoke described this tendency for students to revert to English as "understandable" given the language demographic of the community.

> You have to understand too that it's not their nat…, it's not their mother tongue. When they get out of school they're talking English to their friends, so in school it's artificial, they forget themselves, and, I mean, you've got to expect it sometimes.

These comments are typical of the explanations I heard from teachers. Teachers understood why students switched to English and were sympathetic, but nevertheless they found themselves in the position of enforcing the French-only rule. According to Karla, the French-only policy is relatively easy to apply at the primary level, but it becomes a more difficult task as students get older.

> I don't know why, but once they get to Grade Four and up, I find, they start. As soon as your back is turned they're speaking English. When they're younger, I don't know if they're trying to please, but there's not usually a problem with them. But afterwards, yeah. And high school gets even worse. I mean it's like you're policing almost all day.

As Karla suggests, enforcing the French-only rule demands a great deal of energy, time, persistence, and "vigilance". Many teachers seemed to find the task unending and frustrating; many sighed heavily and said that all they could do was keep reminding students of the rule and keep insisting that they speak French. The French-only policy does not theoretically permit students to slip into English, despite their reported tendency to do so. This is almost a mirror image of English language education during language shift: instead of francophone children being required to speak English at school, anglophone children are now required to speak French at school.[45] The reversal from English to French education – with French language program, school language policy, and school board – seems to be as complete as it can be.

3.3 – A New Linguistic Code: Standard French

Before the arrival of French education at the Cape, the main French variety spoken in the community was Newfoundland French, a conglomerate of the different French varieties spoken by the original inhabitants of the Cape (see Chapter Four for a more detailed discussion of the linguistic composition of Newfoundland French). As discussed in Chapter Two, French (at that time Newfoundland French) was

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[45] The primary difference between French education today and English education during the era of language shift is that parents can now choose their child's educational program whereas there was no choice before.

marginalized both in terms of its prestige relative to English and realms of use during the process of language shift. Language shift introduced a pronounced linguistic hierarchy at the Cape, whereby English and French were ascribed with high and low diglossic values respectively. As the language of school, church, wage labour, government, and literacy, English was a more prestigious language than French.

When French education was introduced at the Cape in the mid-1970s, language activists and educators had to choose a French variety to be the standard of education. Codifying a language or language variety, deciding which point in history or regional tradition epitomizes the language and ought to be enshrined as the standard, or whether a diplomatic hybrid ought to be created, is a common and often contentious task with which minority language activists elsewhere have grappled (Jaffe 1996, McDonald 1989b, Roseman 1995). Creating a standard where one has not previously existed or deciding upon one among many is necessary not only as an educational code but also for the production of any written documents such as government reports or literary material. Newfoundland French is an oral language. Though several people have documented the language to varying degrees (see Barter 1986, Darby 1978, and Sellars 1976) and there is a recently published dictionary of regionalisms (Brasseur 2001), there is to my knowledge no comprehensive code. No written variety was passed down from the *Vieux Français* who were literate; even if French literacy were passed on, it would have been a standard European French variety (that learned by *les Vieux Français* in school in 19th century France) and

certainly not one that represented Newfoundland French as it has evolved. Indeed, Brasseur argues that because Newfoundland French is a dynamic variety with many grammatical idiosyncrasies, it is difficult to codify (Brasseur 1995, 2001).

French Newfoundland language activists did not have to contend with these issues, as there were already 'legitimate' French codes ready to be imported. Similar to the case in other parts of Canada including Quebec, a recognized variety of Canadian French was introduced into the community as the language of French education (King 1980). This standard French became the language of French education and literacy, existing alongside English in the powerful domain of the school (as a second language in the regular English program and as a primary teaching language in the French immersion program). While the acquisition of French education was no doubt a significant achievement for the French movement, it introduced a second diglossic hierarchy at the Cape, this time between standard French and Newfoundland French, between the globally recognized literate variety and the localized oral vernacular (Brasseur 1995). Newfoundland French was doubly marginalized: vis-à-vis both English and standard French. This was reflected in people's views of the different languages. Clarke and King conducted a study of language attitudes on the Port au Port Peninsula and found "a downgrading of local French by comparison to external French dialects – whether European or Québécois

– and in particular by comparison to Canadian English" (Clarke and King 1982:105).[46]

While the mere association of standard French with education and literacy might have been enough to establish a diglossic relationship between standard and Newfoundland French, there is also some evidence that the use of local French was actively discouraged by at least some people affiliated with the French school. An introductory brochure explaining the benefits of the French immersion program to parents is one example of such explicit degradation:

> Though it is not recommended that only French be spoken to the children (some exposure to English in the home is highly recommended), in the event that both parents are French-speaking and only French is used in the home, the parents in the Newfoundland French milieu should encourage the use of ***good French***, learned in the school setting and heard on television (local Channel 13). At the same time, however, the children should be made to feel proud of their local dialect and their own French heritage. There should be no forcing of one accent instead of another! In the better interests of the children, though, the parents should do their utmost to support the teacher by having their children imitate as much as possible the French they will learn in books at school. (Heffernan 1975:12, emphasis added)

The brief reference to children having pride in their local dialect is undermined by the negative statements about Newfoundland French that bookend it. This kind of discouragement was also transmitted by some teachers, as I learned from a language

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[46] It is important to note that many Newfoundlanders do not speak standard Canadian English. Many varieties of Newfoundland English can be found throughout the province and, as with other English dialects, they are undergoing change (e.g. D'Arcy 2005). As well, as with the case of Newfoundland French there are instances of Newfoundland English having been stigmatized in the context of Canada as a whole. Consequently, there is a history of sensitivity to distinctions between varieties of Newfoundland English and standard Canadian English. The publication of the Dictionary of Newfoundland English (Story, Kirwin, and Widdowson 1990) in 1982 was an important step toward the validation of Newfoundland English.

activist named Roger whose daughter Julie was enrolled in the French immersion program.

> So when Julie went to school, they had the French immersion started down here. The girl that was teaching her…she was from [another community], she wasn't French. So, whatever her qualifications were, she was teaching French at the school. And I spoke French to Julie at home. So [my wife Catherine] went to this teacher [for a parent-teacher meeting] and the first thing [the teacher] told her, she said, "Catherine," she said, "you're going to have to tell Roger not to talk French to Julie anymore." And she said, "Well, why? Why, what are you getting at?" She said, "Well, it's interfering with the way I'm teaching her French." "Well," Catherine said, "my dear, you're some lucky that Roger's not here." To go and say something like that, can you imagine now? Turn around and say that my French… you know?

Roger's indignant response shows that some people opposed the imposition of a hierarchy among standard and Newfoundland French, questioning both the merit of the devaluation and the authority of the teachers and school board officials imposing the hierarchy (I discuss this resistance further in Chapter Five). Not all Newfoundland French-speakers responded like Roger.

This double downgrading of Newfoundland French – vis-à-vis both English and standard French – made some people who commanded only the vernacular French self-conscious, and anxious about their French language skills. One language activist explained some people's insecurity with Newfoundland French like this:

> Oh, we were told that all the time. We were told we couldn't speak French and that's why so many people in this area have an inferior complex in regards to the French. I'll give you an example. My brother Andy's wife Lou, that's all she ever spoke growing up. And if she knows it's a French person from outside Newfoundland, she will not speak to them in French because she's convinced that her French is not good. And

> she's not the only one that's like that. There's a lot of people still like that and that's something that I had to combat too personally.

I spoke with and was told about several people like Lou, who speak fluent Newfoundland French among friends and family but are too "shy" or "embarrassed" to speak French with francophones from outside the Port au Port Peninsula. Several people told me that this linguistic insecurity has kept some fluent Newfoundland French-speakers from participating at the executive level of the French movement because they are not comfortable participating in French-language meetings and conferences with other francophones. As another language activist reminded me, it is not only francophones from outside the Port au Port Peninsula that remind Newfoundland French-speakers that their language is different:

> When they hear kids coming from school speaking standard French, they think that their French is not good enough, it's not the same, or that the kids won't understand them. And sometimes they don't because our pronunciation, I'm sure you've noticed if anyone has spoken to you French from here, it's different.

Once standard French was introduced into the community, once young people began to learn the language, the second linguistic hierarchy, that diglossic relationship between standard French and Newfoundland French, became a constant presence. Not all speakers of Newfoundland French feel their language is inferior to standard French (see Chapters Four and Five), but those who do will sometimes opt to speak English rather than French (Brasseur 1995, 2001).

Until French education and standard French arrived at the Cape, the linguistic ideal by which French Newfoundlanders measured the quality of their French rested

with *les vieux Français* who could read and write French (Brasseur 1995, 2001, King 1980). Because these individuals are long dead, there are no present examples of this linguistic "golden age" (Brasseur 1995) to model this ideal French: "The [old] French model has now become distant, if not imaginary, and purely emblematic" (Brasseur 1995:113).[47] When standard French was introduced to the Cape, it replaced the French of *les vieux Français* as the "prestige dialect" by which Newfoundland French was judged, particularly among younger generations (King 1980). It is generally older people who refer to the French spoken by *les vieux Français* as the best French. The absence of a *vieux français* model coupled with the active presence of standard French in the community reinforces the position and relevance of standard French as the French linguistic ideal.

Introducing standard French into the community has been a double-edged sword. On the one hand, people who learn the standard gain access to a globally recognized code and the economic and social markets attached to it. On the other hand, it makes some speakers of the vernacular less inclined to speak French in certain (particularly public) contexts and makes them, therefore, disinclined to participate at the organizational level of the French movement. The movement simultaneously gains speakers and loses them.

The acquisition of French schooling is an example of resistance of reversal: French replaced English as the language of education. Jaffe (1999) defines resistance

[47] "*Le modèle du français est donc maintenant devenu lointain, sinon imaginaire et purement emblématique.*"

of reversal as a conservative form of resistance: the structures of dominance are not challenged. This is particularly clear when we examine the linguistic code of education. Language activists chose to import standard French as the language of education rather than also educate young people in Newfoundland French. This is a practical choice in many ways: standard French is useful and recognized internationally, it already has an accepted written code, teaching materials (i.e. books, curricula) were available in standard French, the usefulness of Newfoundland French outside the Port au Port Peninsula was unknown, and there was no written code for Newfoundland French. This 'sense' or logic stems from a structure of dominance which accords more power to literate standard French than the 'unproven' oral Newfoundland French. By choosing standard French as the language of education, French language activists left that structure of dominance unchallenged.

3.4 – Conclusion

Resistance of reversal has two main characteristics: 1) one language is replaced by another and 2) structures of dominance are not questioned. Judging by these two criteria, it is clear that the acquisition and evolution of French education in Cape St. George is an example of this type of resistance. When we examine the evolution of French education at the Cape, it is clear that French increasingly replaced English as the language of education[48], of the school environment, of the school board

[48] It is important to note that French-language education never fully replaced English-language education in Cape St. George. Instead, the two programs have co-existed as separate entities in the community and parents have been able to choose between the two. Within the community, French

administration. Rather than customizing a program for the students at the Cape, pre-existing 'proven' programs were imported. Rather than codifying and teaching Newfoundland French, a well-recognized literary variety was imported and existing linguistic hierarchies reproduced. The reversal even extends to the school language policy: where French-speaking children once attended an English-only school, now many English-speaking children attend a French-only school. In all of these cases, existing educational structures and linguistic hierarchies went unchallenged. The only change language activists insisted upon was exchanging French for English.

The increasing concentration of French, from the bilingualism of French immersion to the saturation of French first-language education, points to the presence and increasing influence of the oppositional one language/one people ideology. The decisions language activists have made with regard to French education embody the oppositional ideology by moving toward linguistic purism with respect to the amount of French, the type of French, and the amount of English spoken. The language ideology is further exposed through the erasure of certain community details, such as the linguistic background of students and the widely-shared parental goal of balanced bilingualism. In the context of Cape St. George, this ideology has linked French Newfoundlanders with the French language, leaving no conceptual space for a definition of French Newfoundland identity that accommodates the linguistic heterogeneity – specifically the prevalence of a local variety of

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has taken a place alongside English as a language of education. However, in the context of French education at the Cape, French has clearly replaced English as the language of education.

Newfoundland English – that exists in the community. As we shall see in Chapter Five, many people living in Cape St. George disapprove of the narrowness and exclusivity prescribed by the oppositional language ideology.

Thus far, I have described the way language shift unfolded in Cape St. George and discussed the ways in which language activists involved with the French movement have attempted to reverse the legacy of language shift. In the following chapter, I explore how these two processes – language shift and language revitalization – have influenced the way English and French are used in Cape St. George today.

Chapter Four

The Legacies of Language Shift and Language Revitalization: Language Use Patterns at the Cape

On a mild afternoon in October, I visited Roger, a retired man in his late fifties who was one of the founding members of *Les Terre-Neuviens Français*. He grew up speaking French at the Cape and, though he had lived off the peninsula for most of his adult life, he had maintained close family ties to the area and been actively involved with the French movement there. Roger welcomed me into his home, offered me a cup of tea, and after chatting for some time about his involvement in the French movement, he began to speak about the language dynamic in his family with his wife Catherine and daughter Julie.

> Roger: And by the way, Julie is completely bilingual.
> Erin: How did she become bilingual?
> Roger: I never, never spoke English to Julie. Even to this day I don't speak English to her. If Julie calls me on the phone I talk to her in French. She'll answer me in English, now. Most of the reason for that, I guess, [is] Catherine can't talk French, see. She understands it now because Catherine's to the point where… [if] me and you are talking French, she knows what we're talking about but she don't know what we're saying about it, you know, the details. She knows the topic but she don't know what we're saying about it. [Roger points around the table.] So Julie sat here, Catherine sat over there, and I talk French to Julie and she'd answer in English because her mother would understand it, see.
>
> I never spoke English to Julie since the day she was born. When I went into the hospital, she was a couple of hours old and I spoke French to her. You know, not that she understood me, but I spoke French to her. Over all the years I spoke French. Even now, if I talk to Julie on the phone, I talk French to her and she answers me in English.

Roger was very proud of his daughter and her bilingualism. His description of the way language is used in his family is at once representative of French Newfoundlanders and unique. It illustrates how English and French may coexist in French Newfoundland homes, particularly those of linguistically mixed couples, and exemplifies the ease with which the two languages coexist in many people's lives. However, Roger's case is unique in that it is one of many possible configurations and linguistic balances. As I demonstrate in this chapter, while English and French coexist and intermingle in the lives of French Newfoundlanders, there is significant variation in the extent to which people command each language and choose to use them.

In Chapter Two, I discussed how through the process of language shift, English and French were inscribed with diglossic values, a powerful linguistic hierarchy was introduced into the Cape, and there was a decline in the French language. The French language revitalization movement that emerged at the Cape was a community response to language shift that aimed to increase the amount of French spoken in the community and to reverse the negative associations ascribed to the French language and French Newfoundland identity. In Chapter Three, I discussed how through that work, language activists involved with the French movement ironically introduced a new linguistic hierarchy (between standard and Newfoundland French) into the community. In this chapter, I discuss how these two seemingly competing processes – language shift and language revitalization – inform

the way language is used and perceived in Cape St. George. I show that although the French movement has contributed to a broader acceptance of the French language, transferred the French language into some public institutional spheres, and to a large extent reversed the negative values attached to French Newfoundland identity, the diglossic values associated with English and French and the negative appraisal of Newfoundland French still influence some people's language choices. Together, the intertwining legacies of language shift and language revitalization have created a linguistically heterogeneous community, characterized by speakers with very different degrees of French language competence and different sets of values about the language varieties they speak.

4.1 – Language Varieties Spoken at the Cape

There are three language varieties spoken in Cape St. George: Newfoundland French, a variety of Newfoundland English, and standard French. Newfoundland French is the language that evolved from the different French varieties spoken by the original settlers. Ruth King suggests that Newfoundland French "is recognizably a variety of North American French and as such most closely resembles Maritime Acadian, i.e. the Acadian spoken in the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island" (King 1985:214).[49] Brasseur concedes that Newfoundland French has a strong Acadian component, closely related to Cape Breton French, but he suggests that linguistic influences from other groups, such as fishermen from

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[49] For a diagnostic linguistic description of some elements of Newfoundland French, see King (1985). See also Barter (1986), Brasseur (2001), Darby (1978), and Sellars (1976).

St. Pierre and Miquelon and the last of the settlers from Brittany and southern Normandy, are evident, as are some traces of Canadian French (Brasseur 1995, 2001). Both scholars agree that Newfoundland French is very dynamic. King (1985) remarks that there is a great deal of variation within Newfoundland French; Brasseur (2001) notes that its morphological structure varies, often within the speech of the same speaker and sometimes within a single phrase (Brasseur 2001). These different linguistic influences coexist comprehensibly and create a dynamic wide-ranging variation that is definitive of Newfoundland French (Brasseur 1995, 2001).

The variation within Newfoundland French is likely the result of its exclusively oral transmission (King 1985, Brasseur 1995, 2001) which fostered an evolution neither grounded in nor constrained by a written norm. It is well known that many of *les Vieux Français* were literate, having been educated in French in Brittany: these men used to gather in the evenings to read newspapers from Quebec and France[50] (Brasseur 1995, Thomas 1993). However, from the turn of the century until the advent of French schooling, most French Newfoundlanders could not read or write French (King 1979). As Clarke and King explain:

> All schooling in the region was until very recently administered in English by unilingual English teachers, and French-speakers were never provided the opportunity to become literate in their mother tongue – unless, that is,

[50] Some French Newfoundlanders, particularly those in older generations, regard the earlier era of French literacy as something of a linguistic golden age (Brasseur 1995, 2001, King 1980). The language of *les Vieux Français* is their French linguistic ideal. Brasseur argues that since there is no living example of that old French today, that ideal serves less as an actual guide to speech and more as an important emblem of French Newfoundlanders' origins in France and the worth of the Newfoundland French vernacular (Brasseur 1995, 2001). Brasseur (1995) argues that standard French has largely replaced the French spoken by *les Vieux Français* as the norm in the community.

> they remained in school long enough to have French taught them as a second language by a native speaker of English, who typically had been exposed only to "standard" European French and had at best a meagre knowledge of this language. (Clarke and King 1982:106)

One French-speaking resident of the Cape in his early fifties remembered being in such classes and remarked on the absurdity of taking French lessons from someone who knew less French than he did. By the time of the advent of French education, when French literacy became common at the Cape, Newfoundland French had become an exclusively oral language and was all the more dynamic for it.

By the late 1970s, a small percentage of Newfoundland French was comprised of anglicisms[51] (King 1979). King argues that "Many technical words pertaining to modern inventions would of necessity be anglicisms, since French Newfoundlanders have long been isolated from other francophones" (King 1979:64, see also Brasseur 1995). Some examples of these anglicisms are *le car*, *le vacuum cleaner*, and *le carburetor*.

English became increasingly present in Cape St. George throughout much of the 20th century as language shift unfolded and deepened (see Chapter Two). English was the sole language of education until the mid-1970s, when a French immersion program was offered at the Cape. As discussed in Chapter Three, with French education came a new language of instruction: standard French. Newfoundland French and standard French differ in many ways, including

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[51] King (1979) documents the presence of phonetic anglicisms, direct borrowings, morphologically assimilated borrowings, collocational calques, and syntactic calques in Newfoundland French. See Barter (1986) for detailed discussions of the morphology and syntax of the dialect, the vocabulary (including borrowings and anglicisms), and the phonology of Newfoundland French

vocabulary and colloquial expressions.[52] When I arrived at the Cape, I had no knowledge of Newfoundland French, which was clear to my interlocutors by my accent, vocabulary, and sentence structure.[53] I found it fairly easy to distinguish between Newfoundland French and standard French, in large part due to the extra effort I required to comprehend the former. By contrast, whenever I spoke French with younger residents who had attended French school, my comprehension was much greater as I found their French to be quite similar to that which I had learned at school.

The two varieties of French spoken at the Cape can be divided along generational lines to some degree. Middle and older generations of francophones who grew up speaking French at home tend to speak Newfoundland French. For many of them, French is situated as the classic diglossic low variety: it is an oral language spoken at home among friends and family. Because they were educated in English, most of these older residents did not have the opportunity to learn to read or write French at school. In response to this, the French associations began to hold 'alpha' (*alphabetisation* or literacy) classes for adults in their communities soon after the movement began. The alpha classes were designed to increase the French language skills of adults who knew some French but were not bilingual, and also to teach

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[52] See Brasseur (2001) for a detailed account of the particularities of Newfoundland French and its use.

[53] I would place my spoken French at an intermediate conversational level. The French I speak is most certainly standard French: I studied French as a second language for ten years at school and completed two courses in French grammar at the university level. My immersion experience prior to conducting my fieldwork consisted of seven weeks in Bordeaux, France.

French literacy to francophones who were literate only in English. Younger generations who went through the French immersion or French first-language programs have been educated in standard French. For them, French is both an oral and a written language.

Though it delineates general trends, this generational division of Newfoundland French and standard French is not hard and fast. Several people who grew up speaking French in the community went on to become French teachers; though Newfoundland French is their first language, they have become versed and literate in standard French during the course of their training. Most young people from the Cape experience French mostly at school, but their scholarly immersion in standard French does not mean they are untouched by the language of their parents and grandparents. On several occasions, I heard young people use Newfoundland French words, expressions, and pronunciation. With the exception of some French teachers, I never heard the line crossed in the other direction – people whose first language is Newfoundland French using standard French.

Despite the availability of Statistics Canada data on the maternal language of Cape St. George residents (see Appendix C), it is very difficult to ascertain the number of people who speak French (Cormier et al [1985] also note this problem). This is in part due to problems with reporting. King (1985) has shown that the number of French-speakers has been overestimated in some communities and underestimated in others. Butler and King (1984) suggest that under-representation

in the communities of Black Duck Brook and Winterhouse is due to the lack of prestige attached to Newfoundland French (thanks to the diglossic valuation that accompanied language shift) and because "semi-speakers" (Dorian 1981) did not identify themselves as such.

Regardless of precise numbers or proportions, it is important to note that the processes of language shift and language revitalization have contributed to a great degree of linguistic diversity at the Cape marked by a wide range in French-language competency and proficiency. Some people are fluent in one or both varieties of French. Other people whose first language is English reported to me that they understand French but can only speak a little. These were often people whose French-speaking parent(s) spoke English to their children (see Chapter Two). Their comprehension varies: some can understand entire conversations, others can pick out a word here and there. Some people are fluent in French but choose not to speak it. Others retrieve French words and fragments and use them often. Butler and King (1984) describe a similar linguistic range in Black Duck Brook:

> Sixty of its 110 residents are fluent French speakers, several others would be classed by Dorian (1981) as 'semi-speakers', others have only passive knowledge of French, and still others (particularly the young) are English monolinguals. All residents of the community speak English, with younger speakers in general more fluent than older speakers. (Butler and King 1984:11)

This description closely matches what I observed in Cape St. George. The qualifications I would make for the Cape are that (1) young people who are educated in French speak standard French, though almost everyone with whom I spoke

reported that they rarely do so outside school, and (2) the proportions of each category of speaker are likely different due to the passage of time (some twenty years) and the different histories and influences of language activism in the Cape versus Black Duck Brook. This wide range of French language ability, practice, and identification is difficult to discern from census statistics, in large part because the survey format allows neither the expression of such nuance nor any discussion of who 'counts' as a French-speaker. In the following section, I discuss how these language varieties are used in Cape St. George.

4.2 – Codeswitching in Cape St. George

The concept of codeswitching is useful for discussing the different ways language is used at the Cape. Codeswitching is the systematic use of socially differentiated language forms or "codes" (for example, languages, dialects, styles of speech). Codeswitching may be a strategic choice made for a communicative effect (for example, to evoke a feeling or to make a point) or it may be neutral. Codeswitching is effective within a speech community, that is, any human group that communicates regularly and shares an understanding of the social significance of language use (Gumperz 2001). Blom and Gumperz refer to a speech community's shared codes as "the community linguistic repertoire, the totality of linguistic resources which speakers may employ in significant social interaction" (Blom and Gumperz 1986:411). In Cape St. George, the community linguistic repertoire consists of Newfoundland French, standard French, and both standard Canadian and a local

variety of Newfoundland English but, as discussed above, not everyone has an equal command of each code. When the meaning of codes is ambiguous – because interlocutors come from different speech communities or because social, economic, or political conditions within the speech community are in flux – codeswitching can be unintelligible, social relations can be strained, and the negotiation of language choices can be confusing (Heller 1982).

Blom and Gumperz (1986) made an early distinction between "situational" and "metaphorical" codeswitching.[54] The concept of codeswitching is further refined by the theory of "markedness" (Scotton 1986). Every code choice points to a particular interpersonal balance. Speakers have a tacit knowledge of the indexicality of language and the social meaning(s) of codes. This gives them a "grammar of consequences": knowledge of which linguistic choices are safe, conventional, or unmarked, and which linguistic choices are unconventional or marked (Scotton 1988:155). With this knowledge, a person can weigh the social consequences of different code choices and decide how they want to navigate a given situation.

Markedness theory leaves conceptual space for agency. Carol Myers Scotton argues that norms governing code choice do not *determine* a person's use of language,

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[54] Situational codeswitching occurs when certain forms of language are designated for certain activities and relationships. Because of its repeated use in certain contexts, a language becomes associated with and comes to symbolize those social situations and relationships, along with their associated rights, obligations, and expectations. When these linguistic varieties are used in unconventional contexts, they invoke the social meanings and roles associated with their usual context(s); Blom and Gumperz refer to this as metaphorical codeswitching (Blom and Gumperz 1986:424-425).

rather they inform the way a person's choice will be *interpreted* by other members of the speech community. Choice is not a pre-determined reflex to a given situation, but an indication of the personal motivation of "goal-oriented actors" (Scotton 1988:155). An unmarked choice is an attempt to recognize the status quo; a marked choice challenges the status quo and calls for a different balance of rights and obligations (Scotton 1988, cf Cutler 2003). Monica Heller argues that

> Codeswitching provides a clear example of the ways in which individuals draw on their linguistic resources to signal changes in the different aspects of context which they wish to foreground, to make salient, thereby opening opportunities for the redefinition of social reality, exploiting or creating ambiguity in the relationships between form and context to do so. (Heller 1988a:10)

Marilyn Martin-Jones (1989) echoes this emphasis on agency informed, but not determined, by structure when she argues that language use by bilinguals, though influenced by macro-level social and economic processes and power dynamics, is nevertheless a creative act. Because it showcases the interplay of agency and structure, some anthropologists have argued that a careful analysis of codeswitching can provide a window into the consciousness of people in particular structural positions (Hill 1985, Gal 1987).

In Cape St. George, there are contextual cues to suggest which code choice will be marked and which unmarked in a given situation: these are spaces (where you are) and relationships (whom you are with). As we shall see, these cues have been shaped both by the diglossic values assigned to each language during language shift and by the language revitalization movement. I argue that while these contextual cues

help determine code choice, both inter- and intrasentential codeswitching[55] between French and English is unmarked.

4.2.1 – Code Choice: Space and Relationship

Despite being known as one of the French-speaking communities on the Port au Port Peninsula, the most commonly heard language and safest code choice to guarantee that you will be understood in Cape St. George is some variety of English. This is, of course, a holdover from language shift, when English gradually spread from church, school, and waged workplace into the home and throughout the community. The fact that English is the predominant language at the Cape is also a legacy of having higher status: English became and continues to be the language that everyone speaks.[56] For this reason, English is always a safe code choice: if you speak English you are guaranteed to be understood. I refer to English as the "default language" which can be used almost anywhere in the community.

The only spaces which are not governed by English – spaces where French is the first choice – exist thanks to the French movement. The French language schools, *École Notre Dame du Cap* and *École Sainte-Anne*, and the French centres in Cape St. George, Mainland, and Black Duck Brook are institutional spaces governed by

[55] Intersentential codeswitching occurs at sentence or communication boundaries and often marks changes in topic or participants. Intrasentential codeswitching occurs within a sentence or thought (Landweer 2000). Scotton reminds us that codeswitching "often (but not necessarily) involves stretches of more than one word" (Scotton 1988:157).
[56] Brasseur (1995, 2001) also notes the ubiquitous presence of English. He writes that in all his travels throughout the Port au Port Peninsula, which extend from 1981 to 1998, he never encountered a unilingual francophone.

their own set of language rules: in these spaces, French is the *modus* (or perhaps *lingua*) *operandi*.

Of all these sites, I spent the most time at the ARCO office, located in the *Centre Scolaire et Communautaire de Sainte-Anne* in Mainland. Though not located in the community of Cape St. George, ARCO is an umbrella organization whose mandate is to administer to the French population on the peninsula. Every time I telephoned the ARCO office I was greeted in French; every time I visited the office I felt obliged to speak French and observed that the daily affairs of the office were conducted in French. Of all the French associations, I felt most pressure to speak French at the ARCO office. ARCO is the body on the peninsula through which government funding for the three French communities flows; it is the organization that represents west coast French Newfoundlanders before the provincial francophone federation, the federal government, and funding agencies. ARCO maintains a consistently French space, free from the nuance, ambivalence, and English influences characteristic of the linguistic environment outside its doors. There, I observed a French-first policy and a general adherence to this policy.

The French schools and French centres have been officially established as designated French-language spaces by the French movement. They are important not only as sites of French language activism – the places where the French language is taught to young people and where cultural activities are planned and held – but also as spaces where French is consistently spoken. Some spaces such as the French schools

are governed by formal rules that explicitly outline appropriate language usage therein. Other spaces such as the ARCO office and the Cape St. George French Centre are governed by subtler language rules that I could sense whenever I entered those spaces. Though these guidelines are to my knowledge unwritten, they have likely been established over time by example and by precedent.

I was not the only person to sense this obligation to speak French. One Friday evening in mid-September, I attended the opening ceremony for *Le Plaisir du Vieux Temps*, Mainland's French festival at *École Sainte Anne*. The opening ceremony was a wine and cheese event, which was attended by several language activists from Mainland and Cape St. George, the principal and some teachers from *École Sainte Anne*, some representatives of regional economic development boards, ARCO employees, the Member of Parliament (MP) for the area, and a representative from *Patrimoine Canada*/Heritage Canada, whose department had provided funding for the festival. There were few residents of Mainland or the Cape present, aside from the language activists mentioned above. After about thirty minutes of mingling, there was an official welcome, followed by a series of speeches. The initial addresses were made by some of the key language activists, festival organizers, and other officials. Most of the speeches were entirely in French, with the exception of the federal politician who began in French and finished in English. After the formal speeches had been made, almost everyone in the room was invited to say a few words, including (to my surprise) me. Everyone's remarks continued to be made in French until Shelley, a

representative from the regional economic development board, was asked to speak. As I remark in my fieldnotes, the power of the French-first policy made me forget that there were anglophones in our midst:

> When it was Shelly's turn, she turned beet red and shied away saying that she didn't speak French. "*Je ne parle pas anglais.*"[57] Lori [Shelley's friend and francophone colleague] corrected her: "français". Shelley was invited to speak in English, and said "I say what Gerald said", referring to the MP. Everyone laughed. When Jeanette [a prominent volunteer with the French movement in Mainland] was invited to speak, she got up and said "I don't understand a word of it!" and proceeded to wish everyone well. Most of the speeches were introductory, congratulatory, and some were idealistic, praising the movement and its vision. There must have been other solely English speakers in the room when I spoke (a souped up version of my usual introduction) because when I stepped back, I overheard someone explain in English that I was here from the university doing my master's research. It is funny that nothing was translated. Though anglophones were cordially (and I thought genuinely) invited to speak in English, no efforts were made during the speeches to facilitate their comprehension. That includes me. But I felt pressure to speak French, or at least to try to speak French. I didn't even think about the anglophones in the room.

Shelly was usually gregarious and funny. Her embarrassed discomfort at the opening ceremonies, along with my oversight of the anglophones in my midst, indicate how strong the pressure can be to speak French in this French first institutional space and how successful the French movement has been in reversing the diglossic relationship between English and French in some contexts. In these French-first spaces, English is the marked code and French the unmarked code.

In addition to these spaces in which French, rather than English, serves as the default language, there are several public spaces in Cape St. George where both

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[57] Shelly said "I don't speak English."

French and English can be seen and heard. *Notre Dame du Cap*/Our Lady of the Cape Roman Catholic Church is perhaps the best example of a bilingual space. The church's name, as noted above, is always written in French and English. The church bulletins distributed after mass each week, as well as the mass itself, were bilingual, each containing distinct English sections and French sections rather than translations of everything. The two nuns who administered the parish were both bilingual, so they both were able to converse in whichever language parishioners were most comfortable. Sunday mass in Cape St. George was perhaps the most consistently bilingual space I encountered during my fieldwork; there, English or French were equally appropriate code choices.

The presence of French within the church, like its presence within the school, is due to the persistent work of French language activists. By implanting French in these powerful social institutions, language activists attempted to reverse the diglossic status of French as low variety and increase its prestige within their community. Though French is not the sole default language of the church as it is within the schools and French centres, its presence alongside English makes a strong claim for high variety status.

Space provides an important initial cue to help with code choice. Another important contextual cue is the relationship speakers have with their interlocutor(s). The language spoken in a given conversation hinges on each speaker's knowledge of the language abilities and preferences of those with whom she or he is conversing. If

both (or more) interlocutors speak French and realize that they share that language, it is likely that they will converse in French. If one person speaks only English, if their French is limited, or if their language abilities are unknown, the conversation will most likely occur in English.

Sometimes this relational knowledge is already well established. Relational knowledge is highly valued at the Cape. I witnessed the rehearsal of such social knowledge on many occasions when, for example, a conversation would be temporarily halted to locate someone within a community or network of relations. While I did not hear language ability discussed in such instances, it may well have been part of the information logged about others: knowledge about a person's family would allow someone to make educated guesses about her or his linguistic identity and proficiency.

Other times, such as when a newcomer arrives in the community, knowledge about a person's linguistic identity and, therefore, the language of interaction, must be acquired through a sort of negotiation between speakers (see Heller 1982). Because I was one such newcomer, I experienced this on several different occasions. On the first Sunday in August, I attended *Une Longue Veillée*, the Cape St. George French festival. I joined a cluster of young people in their mid- to late-twenties, some of whom I had met at a party earlier that week. After introducing me to the others, a young man asked me if I spoke French. When I told him I did speak a little French, he said, "Jean there is bilingual. Talk French to him." I felt very awkward there on

display, feeling the pressure to speak French in what I felt was an extremely artificial setting and utterly lost for words as the others quietly looked on, waiting to see what would happen. I sensed that Jean felt similarly uncomfortable. I muttered something very elementary and Jean mumbled some reply; the entire exchange was only three or four sentences long. Though I'm afraid it wasn't my best showing, it seemed to be enough to satisfy the others that they had an idea of my language skills: for the remainder of my fieldwork, those present on this occasion who knew how to speak French addressed me exclusively in English.

Establishing a person's language abilities may also be done more discreetly. I was drying the dishes and chatting with friends one evening after dinner, when Cletus, an older French-speaking gentleman, paid us a visit. Cletus and I had not yet met. We all exchanged some pleasantries in English then Cletus suddenly switched to French and began asking Karl, one of the people present, who I was. Karl responded in French that I was at the Cape doing research for my thesis, turning to me every now and then for confirmation. I replied in French that Karl was correct.

Cletus was trying to assess my French language ability indirectly. I believe he was testing me by using French as a "secret" language. Using French in this way is not uncommon at the Cape. Several people told me that French was often used as a "secret" language in mixed language settings to gossip or talk about subjects unsuitable for children's ears. Indeed, one of Cletus' daughters told me that her father and mother used language in this way at home around their English-speaking

children. Instead of asking me directly whether I spoke French or striking up a conversation with me in French, he spoke around me. Karl knew that I understood and spoke some French, and identified me as such by including me in the conversation.

Sometimes a person's linguistic identity can be incorrectly appraised. A good example of this occurred one afternoon in late August. I had attended the French festival in Black Duck Brook the previous weekend with a young woman from Quebec named Mariève who was working with the French association in Mainland that summer. Mariève and I spoke French together as a rule, mainly because I was more comfortable speaking French than she was speaking English. Mariève had been in the area for several months and was widely known. Those who knew where she was from or the work she was doing knew that she spoke French; those who did not know her and spoke to her in English could tell immediately from her accent that she was francophone. We chatted with many people at the festival and the conversation took place in French whenever the other interlocutor knew that language. We chatted with an elderly gentleman from Mainland in French for a long time about the different festivals on the peninsula and how Mariève was finding her time there.

Later the following week, I was on my way home to the Cape after having spent the afternoon in Mainland when I decided to stop into the *Boutique de l'Île*, one of two convenience stores in the community. I was the only person in the store other than the woman behind counter. We struck up a conversation as I paid for my items

and we spoke for nearly fifteen minutes entirely in English. As I was about to leave, the elderly gentleman from the festival the weekend before entered the store, recognized me, and greeted me in French. We proceeded to exchange a few pleasantries in French as the woman behind the counter looked on in surprise. When the older man parted to do his shopping, the woman remarked "Oh! You speak French?" I replied "*Oui, un peu*,"[58] and as I left I thought I overheard their conversation continue in French.

The fact that people spoke to Mariève in French suggests either that they possessed a prior knowledge of her language abilities or were able to ascertain that she was a francophone upon meeting her due to her French accent. When I participated in the French conversation between Mariève and the elderly gentleman, he would have realized that even if French wasn't my first language (as my accent and fumbling would indicate), I was able and willing to speak the language. He addressed me in French when we bumped into each other at the convenience store because our relationship had been forged in that language. By contrast, the woman behind the counter and I did not know each other. In the absence of any relational information to help us decide which language to speak with each other, she and I both opted to speak English. In retrospect, our conversation probably could have taken place in French. Code choice is clearly informed by the relationship between the two

[58] I replied "Yes, a little."

interlocutors and the circumstances in which their relationship is forged. When there is uncertainty about which code to choose, English is usually the default choice.

This link between language practice and relational knowledge is important in understanding why it may be difficult for a newcomer to the area to ascertain the actual amount of French spoken in Cape St. George and, more broadly, on the Port au Port Peninsula. If a newcomer is situated within the community as an English-speaker, people will interact with her or him based on that assumption. Consequently, she or he will probably hear far more English spoken than French and might be left with the false impression that there are few French-speakers there. The inverse is also true: a person situated as a French-speaker might not appreciate the extent to which English is spoken in the community, especially by French-speakers. In this context, a person's linguistic identity can significantly affect their experience of the language dynamics of Cape St. George.

The majority of homes I visited were mixed language spaces; a couple were French-first spaces. However, little definitive can be deduced from these observations about the everyday language character of those spaces as my assessments of language practice in different houses are based on my personal experience with the homeowners. The houses I experienced as French first spaces were the homes of people with whom I had a French language relationship. My first visit to one of these French first homes was arranged by an acquaintance; the first time I spoke to the inhabitants was on their doorstep. A man and a woman invited

me in and we exchanged a few pleasantries in English as they poured me a cup of tea. Very soon into our conversation, the man asked me if I spoke French. I responded in French as I always had when asked that question: "Yes, I speak a little French and I'm looking for opportunities to practice and get better at it." The man said that the most important thing was that I was trying. This brief conversation in French gave them the chance to judge my comprehension and spoken ability for themselves. Finding that my grasp of French was adequate (or perhaps taking my word for it), our conversations continued in French; this language precedent held during subsequent visits to their house. That house was a French first space for me because my relationship with the homeowners was forged in French. On the other hand, I experienced the homes of many French-speakers as English language spaces or as bilingual spaces. This was either because my relationship with those homeowners had been forged in English or because our attempts at French conversations had not been successful (usually because of my inexperience with and subsequent difficulty in understanding Newfoundland French). In those cases, I needed to rely upon their descriptions of their language use patterns, recognizing that I would not be able to discover them through participant observation.

When it comes to intimate spaces such as homes, language patterns shift depending the relationships between the people who happen to be there at a given time. One person's experience in a particular house does not necessarily provide an accurate impression of actual language use within those spaces. An English space for

me might be a French space for another, depending on the language relationships we have forged with the people who live there. If a group of people were to map Cape St. George in terms of the languages used in different spaces, I suspect there would be general consensus on institutional spaces such as the school, the French centre, and the church. However, I suspect the maps of other spaces in the community, such as Ozzie's store, different people's houses, the Boutte du Cap, and spots along the road, would be as unique as each person's web of language relationships with the people who inhabit those spaces.

4.2.2 – Unmarked Conversational Codeswitching at the Cape

Several people who have written about language use among French Newfoundlanders on the Port au Port Peninsula note widespread codeswitching (Brasseur 1995, Butler and King 1984, King 1985). Butler and King argue that "Language choice in conversations involving bilinguals is complex, being influenced by such factors as topic, interlocutors' status, degree of bilingualism, and degree of linguistic insecurity. Conversational code-switching, we have found, is also influenced by social and linguistic factors" (Butler and King 1984:12). They suggest that conversational codeswitching among French Newfoundlanders typically involves repetition of a single words, phrases, and whole sentences. Some examples they cite suggest that codeswitching can be used to ensure the comprehension of outsiders or members of the group who are "English dominant" (Butler and King 1984:15). According to King:

> Younger speakers are particularly adept at code switching. While francophones most often also speak English, anglophones in the Port-au-Port Peninsula area are with very few exceptions monolingual. One hears both languages at most social events within the community and within most French homes. Both codes, English and French, are often interspersed within the same conversation. The French Newfoundland case, then, is not one of diglossia, in which distinct varieties are associated with separate events and different speakers, but is a case of bilingualism in which conversational code switching plays an important social role. (King 1985:214)

Though I clearly disagree with King's contention that language patterns at the Cape are not diglossic,[59] I agree with her emphasis on the importance of codeswitching.

The two contextual cues discussed above – space and relationship – operate in concert with one another to inform code choice and code-switching in a given context. Very soon after I arrived at the Cape, I attended a planning meeting for *Une Longue Veillée*, the Cape St. George French festival. The meeting took place at the French centre in Cape St. George with members of *Les Terre Neuviens Français*. I hadn't met anyone in attendance, but because I was in a French first space with French language activists I assumed that French would be the language of the event. I walked in and introduced myself to everyone in French, sat in on the meeting, and helped put together prize bags for the children's 'fish pond' game. I spoke French the entire time with everyone there. Part way through the meeting, a man in coveralls walked in and began to speak with a member of the festival committee in English. The two men walked into the kitchen as they conversed in English. Meanwhile,

[59] Brasseur (1995) also uses the term "diglossia" to describe the way French Newfoundlanders on the Port au Port Peninsula use French and English.

everyone at the table continued to chat in French. When the festival committee member returned, he resumed speaking French with the rest of us.

I later learned that the man in coveralls was doing some maintenance work on the building. Because he spoke only English, he had no choice but to address the festival committee member and language activist in English despite being in a French-first space. The language activist switched from French to English and back to French in accordance with his relationship with his interlocutors. Because I initiated contact with that group of language activists in French, they persisted in speaking French with me even though I was clearly not fluent. With only one exception, my relationship with these language activists continued in French throughout the duration of my fieldwork.[60]

As King suggested, codeswitching is common within the homes of French Newfoundlanders. The house where I lived was a good example of a space where both English and French were spoken regularly. The couple with whom I lived was linguistically mixed – the husband's first language was French, the wife's English – but he also spoke English and she spoke and understood a good deal of French. The everyday language in the house was English, but the husband frequently addressed his daughters (both of whom had graduated from French school), and occasionally me, in French. This usually occurred around the kitchen table, sometimes in the form of requests '*du lait, s'il vous plait*' or '*de l'eau, s'il vous plait*' ('some milk please' or 'some

[60] One relationship changed from French to English at my explicit request. One language activist agreed to an interview and I asked that we conduct it in English to ensure my complete comprehension. After that, our encounters took place in English.

water please'), other times in small chats about the day's events. Members of the family often called each other by local terms of endearment such as *mignon* and *mignenne*[61] or by other French nicknames. Whenever the husband's siblings or mother would telephone, his conversations with them would invariably take place in French. Like the example at the festival-planning meeting described above, the codeswitching that I observed in this house was unmarked: switching between English and French was an everyday language practice at which nobody batted an eye.

My experience of the language practice in this house was similar to what I observed and experienced in several other homes at the Cape. Everyday life in Cape St. George often takes place in both French and English, with speakers of each language possessing some knowledge of and commonly employing both languages in some manner. Of course, the balance of French and English varied: in some houses an occasional French expression or nickname was inserted in an otherwise English conversation, in other houses, like the one where I lived, there was a much larger proportion of French spoken. A couple of the houses I visited were consistently French language spaces, homes where French seemed to be the preferred language of communication,[62] though I did hear a scattered English phrase when I was there. Regardless of the proportions of each language, the flow between English and French seemed easy. I contend that this unmarked conversational codeswitching is the

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[61] These terms can be roughly translated as 'cutie'.

[62] The French variety spoken in homes at the Cape generally depended upon the age of the individuals. As discussed above, middle and older generations of francophones generally spoke Newfoundland French, while younger generations generally spoke a standard French coloured by the Newfoundland French vernacular.

quintessential language pattern of French Newfoundlanders. Though language shift and language revitalization have created a great degree of linguistic homogeneity in terms of French language competence and degrees of bilingualism, switching between English and French to whatever degree a person is able is very common.

4.3 – Metadiscourse

Though there are plenty of indications of the intertwining legacies of language shift and language revitalization in the way language is used in Cape St. George, they are perhaps more apparent in the ways people speak about language. In this section I discuss two apparently contradictory sets of values that surround the French language at the Cape.

4.3.1 – The Lingering Diglossic Impact

Despite the mitigating influence of the French revitalization movement, some people have not recovered from the stigmatization of being and speaking French. This is most true for some older French Newfoundlanders who experienced language shift first-hand. Several academics have referred to a certain linguistic insecurity held by some French Newfoundlanders at the Cape (Brasseur 1995, Butler and King 1984); this insecurity has been linked to their experience of French as a source of belittlement (Magord 2002a). This linguistic insecurity leads to self-consciousness and limits the extent to which some people speak French. Fred, a language activist, explained it this way:

> We were told we couldn't speak French and that's why so many people in this area have an inferior complex in regards to the French. I'll give you

> an example. My brother's wife Lou, that's all she ever spoke growing up. And if she knows it's a French person from outside Newfoundland, she will not speak to them in French because she's convinced that her French is not good. And she's not the only one that's like that. There's a lot of people still like that and that's something that I had to combat too personally… Because I remember leaving the community here to go to Stephenville, OK, and soon as you opened your mouth to speak people would laugh at you because your accent was different. But I mean they had basically the same accent we did, cause most of them were French-speaking as well, yeah. But still we were laughed at because our accents were different. So they thought. And that's something that a lot of people, older people in this community have never gotten over, OK. We were belittled because we spoke differently and some of them will go to their deaths with that feeling.

People like Lou at the Cape restrict the amount of French they speak due to the lingering effects of language shift and the stigmatization that devalued French as a low variety. The effects of English–French diglossia clearly remain. However, the second diglossic relationship between standard French and Newfoundland French also inhibits some French-speakers. Anne, a language activist, said her parents were a prime example of French Newfoundlanders whose first language is Newfoundland French, but who are reluctant to speak French with francophones who are not from the west coast:

> They were always French, they still always speak French between each other and whenever there's company in, if it's people that speak French, the conversations are always in French. It's just their comfort language I guess, *as long as it's on their own level…* There was always the perception by people [around here] that their French is not good enough, that their level is here [Anne points low] and other people are here [Anne points high]. And they don't realize that the gap is not that big. So, it depended. I've seen people come [into my parents' house] that were French and I've seen [my parents] hesitate in speaking French because of that. And I know that's the reason even though they mightn't say it. [emphasis added]

Anne's hand gestures illustrate the second diglossia that characterizes the two French varieties spoken at the Cape. Some speakers of Newfoundland French have accepted this linguistic hierarchy and their comfort speaking French with certain francophones has been compromised as a result. Anne's parents were key figures in the French movement. Despite years of involvement and despite being enmeshed the language politics of empowerment, the effects of the double marginalization of Newfoundland French – vis-à-vis both English and standard French – linger in their mouths.

Even for Anne, the child of language activists and a language activist herself, the effects of language shift still resonate in her home:

> Growing up home, and as silly as this sounds, whenever there was a new baby we always spoke French to the new baby. Now you mightn't know a whole lot of French, but what you knew you spoke to the child. And when I had kids it's the same way. I always spoke to my kids in French as babies. And it's stupid because my partner always spoke English. He doesn't know a word of French to save his life, sort of thing, so he always spoke in English. But yet I always spoke to my babies in French, up to the point of when they were near starting school and they were starting to go out and they were starting to play with other kids. And then French became less and English became more to the point that it was all English and there was no French. Now, I know that's stupid. Especially for me, it's hypocritical because I realize the importance of the French language and want my children to have that feeling of importance in their language. And yet I switch over, which makes no sense, I know. But it's just how it happened.

Though Anne's use of language might not make sense to her, it is understandable when viewed in the context of language shift. Her switch from French to English with her children exemplifies the lingering diglossic associations of French as the low variety of hearth and home. When her children approached school age and their life

began to reach outside the home, Anne increasingly spoke to them in English, the predominant language spoken in her community, by her husband, and by her children's friends. She is replicating the language patterns of her childhood, which occurred before the language revitalization movement began. Even for this language activist, the influences of language shift and diglossia linger in her life.

Because I spent most of my time with French language activists and people involved with the French movement in one way or another, the majority of people I encountered had positive attitudes about speaking and being French. I discovered near the end of my fieldwork that not everyone feels this way. For some, the effects of language shift were final and the language revitalization movement made little difference to their use of language or sense of identity. I came to this realization one morning near the end of my fieldwork when Mike, a man in his early fifties, stopped by for a visit. I described our encounter in my field notes:

> We got talking about my work and I said that I found it amazing that the French movement in the province started right here in the Cape. Mike said yes, it was a good thing, but they started too late. Had that work been done in the 1940s, there would have been a better chance of keeping the French in the Cape. But as it was, most of the anglicization had already happened thanks to the English education and the Base. He said you can't go backward with culture; you can't go back to what was before. Mike said "I have as much French blood in me as those [language activists] who consider themselves to be French. Maybe even more. But I'm an English person and that's it. I can speak one or two words [of French], but that's all.

Mike comes from a long line of French Newfoundlanders: his grandmother was a renowned storyteller and singer, his wife an important language activist.

Nevertheless, for Mike, the effects of language shift on his language use and identity are enduring; for him, the French movement is a lost cause.

4.3.2 – French Language Revitalization and Revaluation

Though the effects of language shift still resonate in the way people use and value English and French, the French movement has gone a long way in changing what it means to be and to speak French. As Gary, a long time activist told me, reversing the legacy of language shift was not easy: "Trying to convince the local people that what we want is reasonable, it should be done, and we should be proud of who we are, we need to pass it on to our kids, we shouldn't even be afraid of it, that's the most difficult part." Fred argues that the shift in the way people value French came over time with the work of the movement.

> We had, we still have, the winter carnivals, the festivals, the music festivals, OK. That was a way of showing our people, look, what we have here is special, OK, let's show it off. And by doing that we invited people from the outside to come in and see what we had, OK. And some people over the years have been encouraged and have become more brave I guess, and proud of the fact that they do speak a different language, and not to be belittled anymore.

Jackie grew up in the heyday of the French movement and participated in many of the French youth activities. She argues that her pride in being French came not just from watching the French movement but from being an active part of it:

> You get involved with something like a little group like that, and then they get onto executive, and then they get to run the meeting, and then they're responsible for the rest of the group, and then they get to lead. You know, so it's a bit more confidence, right? And then they're involved in something different, and it's a whole new role that they wouldn't have taken otherwise. And that's when a little bit of pride comes in too because

> you're doing it all in French, right, and you're following in your roots, doing something you want to do, something you can be proud of. And you know you're promoting your language too all at the same time just by getting together with a bunch of your friends and speaking in your common language that you don't normally use outside.

Those involved with the French movement were immersed in the politics of empowerment; through their work, they developed and enacted their pride in being French. Fred suggests that this shift in the local valuation of French was reinforced by broader social changes: "It's rare today that someone would make fun of you if you spoke French. No, no. That's an asset now. People admire you now if you speak two languages, rather than make fun of you, because it's an asset now, knowing two languages, as you well know." This broader revaluation of French language proficiency supported the work being conducted by language activists in Cape St. George.

With this newly generated pride in the French language came a subtle social obligation for people who know French to speak it. As discussed above, I felt this obligation when I entered some French-first spaces such as the ARCO office. However, I experienced the exertion of this social obligation by French Newfoundlanders, particularly language activists, on several occasions that were not connected to specific spaces. Marilyn is a French-speaker from the Cape who, like many others, spoke English to her children. She believes that French Newfoundlanders must take responsibility for the decline of the French language on the Port au Port Peninsula. Though she understands the role of the school and the

church in promoting English, she argues that it was French Newfoundlanders themselves who ultimately spoke English to their children: "[The French language] was lost because we made it go away. We did it."

Marilyn argues that the welfare of the French language at the Cape depends upon the daily language practices of every person in the community. She believes that just as the power to lose the language was in the hands of French Newfoundlanders, so too is the power to bring it back. Marilyn has long espoused the politics of language revitalization and she is critical of French-speakers who do not speak their language. During one conversation, she made reference to a woman named Colette, a francophone teacher:

> And I noticed there last week she was speaking to her daughter in English. So, you know, if the French is losing, you blame yourself, you don't blame anybody else, you know? And then if I did that and somebody else did that…it jumps from one family to the other, [and] eventually the French will fade away again, you know? When the French teacher, and she's got a French husband, is going to talk to her daughter English, you know…

Marilyn theorizes the snowball effect that one person's language choices can have on an entire community, thus emphasizing the importance of each individual's language practices. Her characterization of Colette as a French teacher with a French husband reinforces her argument that Colette has little excuse to speak English to her daughter; it also suggests that Marilyn might be more understanding if a parent in a mixed language household spoke English to their child. Marilyn argued that there are certain individuals who embody the ethos of the movement and who have a social obligation to practice what they preach. She implied that Colette, as an ambassador

of the French movement, was hypocritical to speak English to her child. Though she felt that the entire community bore the responsibility of keeping the French language alive, Marilyn pointed to Colette as having a particular responsibility to set a good example for the rest of the community to follow.

The social obligation for people who know French to speak it was especially strong for parents. As discussed in Chapter Three, most children who attend French school have English as their first language. Many language activists, such as Marilyn, are confounded by French-speaking parents who speak to their children in English:

> What's taking away the French, it's the parents. Me for one, you know. There's a lot here today, the parents are French, talking to their children in English. And their children are going to a French school. It don't make sense, but that's how it is.

Karla also described the phenomenon:

> I find that there are a few that went through the immersion program, for example, and who did get a bit of French at home, but they don't speak to their kids in French. I think of my friend Tammy, for example, with [her son] Alex. Like, she doesn't speak to him in French. She's put him in a French program, she can help, but it's still not the tongue they speak at home. So I don't think it'll have the same effect as if it was something from the home. I think that's where it has to start.

As a teacher, Karla knew first-hand the advantage of having some exposure to the French language when entering school. She felt that parents who had the ability to give their child that experience ought to do so.

Language activists are not the only people to feel this obligation to speak French. One evening as I was walking down the road with Jackie, we encountered her friend Lisa who was out with her toddling daughter Madison. After greeting her

friend, Jackie bent down and began to speak to Madison in French, asking her to name colours in French and telling her what to expect in French preschool. Lisa looked on and remarked that she needed to be more diligent about speaking to her daughter in French. Lisa planned to enrol Madison in French school and was supportive of the French movement. Her comment shows her recognition that speaking French to her daughter was something she *ought* to do.

This popular contention that people should speak French at home and in the community is supported by Fishman (1990), who argues that the success of language revitalization efforts requires more than an organizational infrastructure and cultural events. He argues that the most crucial requirement for reversing language shift (RLS) is for the language to be reinforced at home and in the community. Fishman contends that the most important step towards language revitalization

> consists of family-, neighbourhood-, community-reinforcement (and of organised RLS activity squarely aimed at each of the foregoing) and constitutes the heart of the entire RLS venture… [I]t is inescapably true that the bulk of language socialization, identity socialization and commitment socialization generally takes place through intergenerationally proximate, face-to-face interaction and generally takes place relatively early at that. (Fishman 1990:20)

In places like Cape St. George, where language shift has left some people with little command of the French language, this responsibility falls heavily upon the shoulders of people who speak French. They are well equipped to bring French into the community, to overcome the tendency to resort to English as the default language, and to reinforce French language relationships. I refer to these people as ambulant

sites of French to indicate that regardless of where they go, the space they occupy is French-first.

French teachers are a very good example of ambulant sites of French. One sunny afternoon in mid-September I went for a walk through the Cape with a new teacher who had recently arrived from Quebec. He had just begun teaching at *École Notre Dame du Cap* and was still getting to know the names of his students. As we were walking along, some children who had been playing in their yard looked up and called out to their teacher in unison, "*Bonjour Monsieur!*" A couple of weeks later, I found myself in the gymnasium of *École Sainte-Anne*, enjoying some local music at the French festival with some friends. One of the people at our table was a French teacher named Jacqueline. She had taught in *École Sainte-Anne* for some years but was off on maternity leave. We were enjoying ourselves, chatting away in English, when about a half dozen young girls who looked to be eight or nine years old approached Jacqueline en masse and began speaking to her in French. They addressed her in French despite the fact that everyone at the table had been speaking English and Jacqueline probably had not seen these children in several months.

In the French schools, teacher-student relationships are forged in French; French is the language of their interactions from the beginning. These two examples illustrate that those interactions continue to occur in French in settings outside the French-first space of the school and despite the presence of English-speakers, thus contravening the English as default language convention.

It is important to note that in both of these examples, it was the children – not the teacher – who initiated the conversation in French. This simple fact is remarkable considering the many stories I heard about children who attend French school but who play in English and use English as their daily language outside school. That these children broke their usual language patterns and spoke to their teachers in French underscores the importance of these individuals to the French movement: as mobile sites of French, their mere presence compels people to speak French. Anne's son is an elementary student at the French school. Though he is able to speak French very well, his everyday language is English. She marvelled at the way certain teachers were able to change her son's everyday language practice outside the classroom.

> There are certain people he just doesn't respond in English to because it's a no-no. Like if he'll meet up with Fred [his teacher] somewhere, for instance. It's just automatic [to speak French] because you associate that person as being French only, through the school or for whatever reason. You will speak to them in French. Now Krista is the same way. She worked with the Saturday Camp[63] activities last year, so if he sees Krista somewhere and she'll talk to him, he'll respond in French because that's what he's used to doing. It just comes automatic. But at home, because mostly everything that goes on home is English – his father is English, his grandmother who lived with us for a number of years in English, and everybody else in the community is English – he'll speak English.

I spoke with several other parents who echoed Anne's observations about the way their children, who were so frequently reticent to speak French, would suddenly and voluntarily lose their reservation in the presence of certain people.

[63] Saturday Camp or *École du Samedi* is a weekly activity available to students at *École Notre Dame du Cap*. Children from Grades One through Six get together every Saturday morning during the school year and play games, make crafts, and do other activities in French. *École du Samedi* was funded by the *Fédération des Parents Francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador* (FPFTNL) (French Parents Federation of Newfoundland and Labrador).

French teachers are not the only individuals who act as mobile sites of French. Anyone whose presence encourages people to speak French or anyone who chooses to speak French first even in the presence of English-speakers may be considered mobile sites of French. A good example was an economic development worker named Lori. She was motivated by her frustration with the practice that made some French-speakers "scared to speak French because they thought it was rude"; these values were established during language shift and continued to influence some people's use of language. She recognized the long-term detrimental effects of that language practice and consciously worked against it by initiating conversations in French with other French-speakers regardless of where she was or who else was around. Afterwards, she would translate what she said for any English-speakers present, thereby courteously including them in the conversation. Lori frequently represents French Newfoundlanders from the Port au Port Peninsula at regional economic development meetings; because these meetings include people from many communities along the west and southwest coasts of Newfoundland, they always take place in English. Lori told me that while English is the language of these meetings, she chats with her French Newfoundland colleagues in French during the social time before and after.

Lori represents French Newfoundlanders at these meetings, so her practice of speaking French in these contexts may be as much about raising the profile of French Newfoundlanders as about encouraging people to speak French. However, Lori said

that she also carries on this practice in her personal life, outside the boardrooms and in the community. Lori told me that she was fortunate because her husband, an English-speaker, was very patient when she spoke French in his presence; she said that he understood her reasons for insisting upon putting French before English. Lori argued that you need "supportive people" like her husband and that "it's really a question of mentality". To reverse language shift, English-speakers and French-speakers alike must share the same language politics; everyone needs to abandon negative ideas about the French language and "rudeness" so that French-speakers are not reluctant to speak their language and English-speakers do not feel insulted or excluded if French is spoken in their presence.

For language revitalization to succeed, people must overcome the pull of existing language relationships and forge new ones. Choosing to interact with someone in a different language is a form of marked codeswitching: it is a call for a new interpersonal balance, a claim for a new identity. It is also an invitation for the interlocutor to accept the new balance. The two speakers must negotiate the linguistic terms of their relationship anew and this can sometimes be awkward. A few people told me about changing their language relationships with family members, which in most cases entailed grown children speaking French with their parents who had chosen to raise them in English. Fred found the change awkward in the beginning.

> It was difficult on the first cause I wasn't used to that. You're switching gears, right? And it was difficult, but I was determined. And Mom and

> Dad at the beginning answered me in English and then they realized I was serious and then they started to answer in French and it hasn't stopped since then. I spoke to them in French until they died.

With determination and consistent effort, old language relationships can be overcome and new ones formed. Anne worked as a teaching assistant at *École Notre Dame du Cap* for two years, at a time when her son was a student there. As discussed above, Anne's relationship with her son began in French, but from the time he was approaching school-age onward, she always spoke to him and his friends in English. While she worked at the French school, however, she had to interact with her son and his friends in French, in accordance with the school's French-only policy. Anne describes that as a definitive period:

> When I started working at school I got used to talking to these kids in French all the time. And now, it's too funny, because even now – that's like three years ago – if I meet one of these kids in school it's like "*Bonjour Madame, comment-ça va?*" …They're still speaking to me in French and of course I'm going to respond. And even when I see one of them [around the community] …I'll talk to them first in French and of course they'll respond back [in French] because that's what they got accustomed to doing when they were in school… I get a little kick out of that. And my son will look at me and say, '*Mom.*' Right? But it's good.

With the encouragement of the school language policy, Anne was able to forge a new language relationship with her son's friends. Her choice to continue speaking with them in French outside the school allows her to reproduce this new language relationship rather than resort to their former practice of conversing in English. In so doing, Anne acts as a mobile site of French and makes an important contribution to the French revitalization effort.

Anne's son's awkwardness and possibly embarrassment at his mother speaking French with his friends is much like Fred's parents' reluctance to speak French: both responses betray feelings of discomfort with the marked code choice and the new relationship balance it proposes. New language relationships can feel artificial or 'put on'; people can feel 'silly' conducting a relationship in a new language. These feelings speak to the power of language relationships both as determinants of language practice and as indexes of identity. They seem naturalized. As Fred indicates, relationships based on particular languages are hard habits to break; establishing a new language relationship and entrenching it so that the marked choice eventually becomes unmarked requires determination and persistence. Anne provided some examples:

> Like our preschool teacher, for instance. If there's a child who speaks French, and she knows it, she'll communicate with that child in French. And Verna was another very good person who was here for a number of years. She would refuse to take a response in English from a child that she knew spoke French. Which was good. And it's little things like that that you need so it becomes natural for the child to communicate in French... It's a force of habit.

The social obligation to speak French discussed above encourages mobile sites of French to persist in the difficult task of helping people overcome their awkwardness so that they can *parler* with comfort.

Individuals who are mobile sites of French provide an important opportunity for people to speak French in non-institutional public spaces. The key public institutions in the community (the school, the French centre, and the church) are

either French-first or bilingual spaces. Their existence is an important testament to the work and accomplishments of the French movement. However, as I have shown, the convention of English as a default language can undermine the practice of French throughout the community. Non-institutional public spaces such as roads, the convenience store, and the wharf, are not currently administered by the associations and organizations dedicated to the French language. The way language is used in those spaces depends entirely upon the everyday language practices of the people who use the space: the residents of Cape St. George. Diglossic conventions that discourage the public use of French, such as English as default language, work to make these spaces resound with English. As mobile sites of French, individuals such as Jacqueline, Fred, Lori, and Anne make a critical contribution to reversing language shift by encouraging others to speak French.

People who insist upon speaking French first, who resist the urge to defer to English, and who encourage others to use the French language show how everyday choices about language can be important and powerful forms of language activism. Though many of the mobile sites of French I have mentioned have been teachers, anyone can assume this role. Any bilingual person can decide whether they are going to speak English or French, any English-speaker can decide whether it is acceptable or rude for a person to speak French in their midst. Because speaking French in the community and at home is so critical to the success of French revitalization, any effort to do so or to encourage others to do so is regarded as a show of support for

the movement. Speaking French is measured not in terms of proficiency, but in terms of solidarity. It doesn't matter how well a person speaks French. As the owners of one French household said to me shortly after I stepped through their doors: "The most important thing is that you're trying."

4.4 – Conclusion

The processes of language shift and language revitalization have left Cape St. George with a great degree of linguistic homogeneity. Newfoundland French, standard French, and standard as well as Newfoundland English are all spoken at the Cape by different people with varying degrees of competence. Everyone at the Cape speaks English; many people speak either variety of French. Code choice is informed by contextual cues such as physical spaces and social relationships. One lingering impact of language shift is that, when there is doubt about code choice, English remains the default code. Unmarked codeswitching between English and French is very common and is arguably the quintessential language pattern of French Newfoundlanders.

Two diglossic hierarchies exist at the Cape in relation to Newfoundland French thanks to these two processes: language shift left the Cape with a hierarchy between English and French, and the introduction of standard French into the community by language activists resulted in a second hierarchy between standard French and Newfoundland French. These two diglossic hierarchies doubly marginalize Newfoundland French and have limited some people's willingness to

speak French outside the "hearth and home" and in front of francophones from outside the Port au Port Peninsula. The language revitalization movement has made significant strides towards reversing the negative values surrounding the French language and French Newfoundland identity.

As Fishman (1990) warns, institutional and cultural efforts towards reversing language shift may be helpful but, ultimately, they are not sufficient for reversing language shift. Family, neighbourhood, and community reinforcement of these formal efforts is crucial for revitalizing a language. People who transcend the conventions of space and relationship to bring the French language into non-institutional spaces in the community play a crucial role in revitalizing the French language at the Cape. The principle of "rudeness" that once deterred people from speaking French in public is being countered by a new social obligation promoted by some individuals for people to speak (or try to speak) French in public. These competing values are clearly products of language shift and language revitalization. When a person chooses to speak French, especially in non-institutional public spaces, they declare their affinity for the French revitalization effort, their camaraderie with their friends and neighbours who share those goals, and their identity as French. In this way, French is a solidary language. As discussed above, the success of French language revitalization depends upon the tolerance and "patience" of English-speakers in the community as well as the participation of people who are not fluent in French. Their role in revitalizing the French language cannot be understated. Hence,

solidarity is less about a person's French language proficiency, and more about their willingness to try to speak French, participate in the French revitalization effort, and encourage others to speak French.

In the following chapter, I explore the way some residents of Cape St. George have critiqued and resisted the French movement and the oppositional one language/one people ideology that has guided it. I show that popular resistance to the French movement is based in large part upon the disjuncture between people's experience of the linguistic homogeneity described above and the far narrower approach to the French language encouraged by the oppositional language ideology.

Chapter Five

Everyday Language Activism and

An Alternative Model of French Newfoundland Identity

The French movement is not the only medium for the enactment of language politics. Nor are the choices of language activists or the directions of the French movement necessarily representative of the politics of all French Newfoundlanders. In this chapter, I examine the everyday language activism of French Newfoundlanders living in Cape St. George, particularly that which is fuelled by a different set of language politics than that of the French movement. I argue that resistance to the French language movement is often resistance to the oppositional one language/one people ideology and the exclusionary differentiation that it prescribes. My discussion of the everyday practices and discourses of resistance suggests that many people at the Cape call for plurilinguistic practices and a more inclusive definition of French Newfoundland identity which takes in a wider range of French language ability and which validates the Newfoundland French vernacular.

5.1 – Defending Newfoundland French

As discussed in Chapter Three, the introduction of French language schooling to Cape St. George meant the introduction of a new French variety and a new linguistic hierarchy into the community which favoured standard French above Newfoundland French. This hierarchy was reinforced on one level by its status as a literate language validated by its use as the educational code. However, as discussed

in Chapter Three, it was also prescribed, reinforced, and validated by some documents, teachers, and school policy. This new linguistic hierarchy made some Newfoundland French-speakers reluctant to speak their language when standard French-speakers were present and made some people disinclined to participate at the organizational level of the French movement where they might have to interact with francophones who did not speak their French variety.[64]

But not everyone agrees with the assertion that Newfoundland French is an inferior variety of French. This is apparent in the stories some French Newfoundlanders tell about occasions when other French-speakers have dismissed or disparaged Newfoundland French. One example, discussed in Chapter Three, is Roger's story about the time his daughter's teacher suggested that he not speak Newfoundland French at home because it would interfere with her teaching (see Chapter Three). When Roger told me this story, it was clear that he was appalled and disgusted by the suggestion that his French is somehow inferior. I heard a similar story from a French teacher named Josie. She encountered a similar hierarchical attitude from a teacher who had come from Quebec to work at *École Notre Dame du Cap*. One day, the Québécois teacher remarked "*Ah, tu parles bien le français*", to which Josie replied "*Merci, et pourquoi pas?*"[65] Josie said that the teacher apologized a few days later. Though this exchange had taken place years before, Josie told the story

[64] Again, a similar relationship has existed between Newfoundland English and standard Canadian English.
[65] Translation: The Quebecois teacher remarked "Ah, you speak French well," to which Josie replied "Thank you, and why wouldn't I?".

with wide eyes and a raised voice, making it very clear that her disapproval of the teacher's backhanded compliment was still strong. She was still infuriated by what she called his "superiority complex". Stories like these condemn the hierarchy that diminishes the worth of Newfoundland French. In Josie's case, they also provide an example of someone defending the vernacular.

French Newfoundlanders told me that they have often heard their language variety dismissed as "Franglais" or "*une langue batarde*", or they have heard people remark that "*le français au Cap est mal*".[66] A common way that French Newfoundlanders challenge this linguistic hierarchy and validate their language variety is by providing historical explanations of the evolution of their French, most of which are corroborated by the work of people such as Barter (1986), Brasseur (1995, 2001), and King (1979). Many French Newfoundlanders with whom I spoke explained that their language derives from the French spoken by the original French and Acadian settlers and that their geographic isolation meant that the language evolved differently than it did in France or Quebec. They said that Newfoundland French contains English words such as 'vacuum cleaner' and 'dryer' because no French vocabulary was available when new technology arrived at the Cape. One woman explained that the first time her mother saw an airplane, she called it "*un oiseau qui vole*" (a bird that flies) because the French term "*un avion*" had not yet been introduced to the area. I was told that Newfoundland French has a unique vocabulary because old French

[66] *Une langue batarde* means "a bastardized language". "*Le français au Cap est mal*" means "the French [spoken] at the Cape is bad".

terminology has endured in Newfoundland French whereas it may be long absent from other varieties. The most common example of this phenomenon that people offered was the word for "window": in Newfoundland French it is called "*le chassis*" (which technically refers to the window casing) as opposed to the more standard "*le fenêtre*". Another common example was the word for "now", which in contemporary French word is "*maintenant*" whereas in Newfoundland French people say "*asteure*".[67] They explain that these words may be old but they are good and legitimate French. They said that while it may be understandable that some francophones would find this terminology odd since it has fallen out of use elsewhere, that is not a good reason to disrespect Newfoundland French. By explaining the composition of Newfoundland French in terms of its origins and evolution, French Newfoundlanders acknowledge its difference from standard French but reject the notion that difference means inferiority and therefore refute justifications for the French linguistic hierarchy.

A final way that people at the Cape defend Newfoundland French is by debunking the idea that Quebec French is somehow 'purer'. The best example of this came from Roger, who told me about an encounter with a man from Quebec who told Roger that his French was poor and that he spoke *une langue batarde.* Roger said that he pointed to a gate and asked the man "What do you call that?" to which the man replied "*C'est le gate.*" Roger told the man that he calls it "*le barrieure*". He said he

[67] When I first heard this expression, I thought it was a fast way of saying "*à cette heure*" or "at this hour". I enjoyed the word for the beauty of what I imagined was its clear etymology. I was also pleased to learn this expression as it was a little piece Newfoundland French that I could easily incorporate into my everyday French.

looked at the man and said "So who's French is the bastardized French?" Roger's strategy was to turn the man's assumptions on their head, to suggest that Quebec French is not 'pure' and that, like Newfoundland French, it too contained many anglicisms. Roger proceeded to give me other examples which demonstrate that sometimes Quebec French is the more anglicized variety: he said that people in Quebec say "*le sweater*" when French Newfoundlanders say "*le chandaille*" or "*la chemise*"; people from Quebec say "*le weekend*" when French Newfoundlanders say "*le fin de semaine*". All these examples debunk the idea that Quebec French is 'better' because it is a purer variety of French by demonstrating that it is not free from English encroachment. Jason, a young man who graduated from French school, did not provide specific examples like Roger, but he similarly dismissed the notion of a French language hierarchy saying that every language has "slang".

People also defend Newfoundland French by placing a higher value on comprehension than on perfect grammar and pronunciation. Roger made this point:

> I don't claim that my French is the best in the world, but I make myself understood. And like I told a guy from Quebec one time, I can talk to a guy from France, Africa, Belgium, Sweden, all across Canada, in the States, and I can make myself understood in French, so I can't be too bad altogether. But I goes to Quebec and I can't make myself understood. So what does that tell you? Right? You know?

Fred has a similar philosophy. He rejects the linguistic hierarchy that attaches value judgements to difference: "I told myself, no, my French is different, but it doesn't mean it's bad or it's no good, it's just different. And be proud of the fact that what you have, it's different, and that's it." By dismissing the value judgements that

demean Newfoundland French and adopting other standards (such as comprehensibility), residents of Cape St. George defend their vernacular.

Some teachers from the Cape validate Newfoundland French by incorporating it into their teaching. One young teacher gave the example of using the Newfoundland French word *tchinze* instead of the standard French *quinze* (French for "fifteen"). He said that some students recognize the words from hearing their parents and grandparents, but most students encounter them for the first time at school. Fred argues that students from the Cape should recognize the value of Newfoundland French:

> We have to teach our children our language. It's nice that they're learning the French language, but they also have to learn ours because ours is unique, it's unique anywhere else in the world. So we have to teach them that as well. And I do a little bit of that. Every now and then I'll throw in vocab that we use here [at the Cape] so at least they know some of the words. But they should be learning a lot more. We've already mentioned it to the school board and I think they're hoping to have that into the high school program. So, at least they'll get some of it there. But it definitely should be taught in school.

Fred's suggestion that Newfoundland French be taught in school challenges the diglossic valuation that situates the language variety as inferior to standard French. His suggestion is more radical: what is needed at the Cape is not just any French education, but localized French education.

This concept of localized education extends beyond language to include French Newfoundland culture. Some teachers already incorporate local knowledge into their teaching. There was once a strong storytelling tradition in Cape St. George,

which has declined with the advent of radio and television (see Thomas 1993). Some of the more senior teachers from the Cape remember the old stories and have used them in their classrooms. When French immersion graduates reminisced about their school days, they invariably mentioned one teacher and the fantastic old stories he would tell his students that would have them teetering on the edge of their seats. This teacher told me that he continues to tell the old stories to his students today. Fred described how he integrated local knowledge into his teaching:

> Last year, as part of my social studies – I wasn't supposed to but I did anyway – for the first three months I did history of Newfoundland with my kids, the French history of Newfoundland from what I know. I taught them that. Wherever I find information I pass that on to them. I throw in name places from here because there's a lot of place names that people don't use anymore. *La Grosse de Riblé, L'anse-à-Pomme, L'anse-à-la-Vierge, L'anse-à-frigots.* All those names people don't use them anymore. *L'anse-a-la-Vierge,* it's between the Cape and Mainland. Interesting story about that actually. I don't know how true it is, but supposedly fishermen used to actually see the blessed virgin in the cliff and that's why they called it *L'anse-a-la-Vierge.*

By teaching this local material to his students, Fred is helping to keep a French Newfoundland worldview, language, and local toponymy alive. Teachers sometimes invite French-speaking community members into the classroom to teach an activity such as painting or a craft. Ruby, a local teacher, argues that this exposure to French-speakers from the area helps promote students' awareness and comprehension of Newfoundland French:

> People [who] come in probably each have a different accent or a different way of speaking French. It's a way of getting the kids familiar with other types of French-speakers besides the teachers. Sometimes the teachers speak a very standard language. It's not like the language of the [local]

> people. If you can get other people to come into the classroom it means the kids get a wider experience of the language.

Several people told me about cultural afternoons that took place once a month when local musicians or dancers would come to the French school and perform for the students. When Anne worked at the French school, she attended many of these afternoon cultural events. She argues that they are a good example of how the school can help preserve and perpetuate French Newfoundland culture.

> [The students] don't realize that this is their culture and it's becoming a part of them. And it was fun. You see the little kids getting up on the floor and dancing along and it was really… I know my son truly loved it. But I think it's a very important part of school, of learning in the community. I think you have to have the community involved in the school – especially culture-wise – because a lot of these things kids don't see at home. But it's brought in to them. And it's probably the only way that a lot of them are going to be able to become, or do, or have part of that. So I think it's very important.

These events and workshops expose students to different aspects of French Newfoundland culture, as well as to Newfoundland French. Everyone who told me about this kind of local cultural education agreed that it was enjoyable for the students and an excellent, multifaceted educational experience. These experiences have not always been offered to students; they are not a regular part of the curriculum. The existence and success of these programs depends upon teachers, administrators, and community members who support localized language and cultural revitalization.

One of the fundamental principles of the province's policy for French first language education is that "the school must promote the ***cultural identity*** of the francophone community. Cultural identity may be defined as an awareness of the

value of the individual as a francophone, and of the importance of his or her contribution to society" (Government of Newfoundland 1991:10, emphasis in original). By integrating local language and culture into the school experience, French teachers take this principle one step further by specifying *which* French cultural identity is promoted. These teachers elevate the status of Newfoundland French and local culture by placing them alongside standard French and the generic curriculum. In this way, they legitimize the variety of French spoken in the area, reinforce the importance of local culture, and work against the second linguistic hierarchy that was introduced with French education.

5.2 – Calls for Inclusion

When people critiqued the French movement, it was always for what they perceived to be exclusionary policies and practices. One such policy is the French-only rule, which requires all students, teachers, and staff to speak only French in the French schools. Some teachers, such as Fred, argue that there was a good deal of support for the policy: "I must say, the kids are pretty good. They realize that the only time they do speak [French] is when they're in school and most of them will go along with the rules. And the parents are very supportive of that. They insist, actually." Others disapprove of the policy. Doug, a long-time language activist, argues that the policy is cruel, the mirror image of the assimilation tactics used at the Cape when francophone children were forced to speak English at school years ago.

Doug argues that it is hypocritical for people to condemn the practices of yesteryear and condone the same practices today.

> A lot of the French people in the [leadership] positions today are crying about what happened years ago. I'm sure you've heard about it in your interviews: that when they went to school if they spoke a word in French they were punished. But it's the same thing in the French system today. You speak English, you get a *coche*. Check mark. Three check marks and you get detention. They're doing the same thing. It's crazy.

Doug argued that this means of enforcing the French-only policy was "embarrassing" and he said it was in part responsible for declining enrolment in the French programs. Moreover, Doug argued that the French-only policy created an environment that deterred people from participating in the language revitalization movement.

> What are you creating? Are you creating an atmosphere that's fun to be in? Or are you creating an atmosphere that's not fun anymore? ... What are you promoting? Are you promoting a nice atmosphere? Or are you following the footsteps of what you criticized in the past, that if you spoke French you were given a spankin'?

According to Doug, the French-only rule alienates students and deters them from attending French school. The '*coche*' system to which Doug refers is reminiscent of the *symbole*, a punishment once used in schools in France to discourage the use of languages other than French (Jaffe 1999:287; McDonald 1989b:46-47, 76). As discussed in Chapter Three, the development of French education at the Cape is a good example of resistance of reversal. Doug's critique of the hypocrisy of the French-only policy is a common reaction to a resistance of reversal: people who are highly attuned to the repressive structure of dominance are able to see that structure of dominance reproduced anew (Jaffe 1999).

Some teachers also criticized the French-only rule. Karla argued that the French first language program was designed for French-speaking children and Cape St. George is a different type of linguistic community. "It's not the case here. Here the case is that they're from francophone families. If you go back, their grandparents speak French, but the generation of the parents have been lost, so the kids come to school not hearing [French] at home. So it's the immersion situation with the French first-language program added to it." Karla argued that this mismatch between the language of the curriculum and the student's first language leads to significant problems for students and teachers. She said that the students don't have the French proficiency to manage the French first-language program. Another teacher explained it this way: "when kids don't know the basic difference between *avoir* and *être*, it's difficult for them to express themselves and learn other subjects in French". Karla argued that French first-language program does a serious disservice to students at the Cape:

> They're finding more kids with difficulties and I don't think it's always difficulties in intelligence or learning difficulties or whatever the case may be. It's that they can't do the programs that are there. And it's the majority. It's not the minority… I know at school we're tired of saying it's too hard, it's too hard, they can't do it. I mean you're setting them up for failure is basically what you're doing.

These teachers argue that because the French first language program is not designed for the language level of their students, it essentially precludes them from achieving a high level of success.

Teachers have a difficult task ahead of them. They must manage the disjuncture between the curriculum mandates and the language skills of their students. Whenever they are in the classroom they must make choices about language: how to communicate with the students, how to adapt the program to their students' language level, how to accomplish their curriculum goals, whether to correct for their students' use of language or their ideas. Karla, a primary teacher, talked about the complexities of teaching her students how to read.

> It's very hard to teach a child to read if they don't have the background. If they don't know what the words mean, how are they going to read them? They're sounding out the words and it's fine, but there's no comprehension there. I mean they're reading, sure, but to me that's not reading because they don't know *what* they're reading. It defeats the purpose in my opinion. I don't know. It's very hard.

I experienced this phenomenon directly while I was at the Cape. One fall evening, I was visiting a couple whose children attended French school. I wandered into the living room and found their eldest daughter sitting on the couch reading a storybook she had brought home from school entitled "*L'agneau, qui va être ma maman*".[68] I sat with her and we read the book together. It told the story of an orphan lamb who approaches many different animals inquiring whether or not they would be its mother. The book was illustrated with many pictures of the lamb and the various other animals. The girl's reading style was much like that of anybody learning to read: she read one word at a time rather than complete phrases, she occasionally stumbled over words and tried to sound them out, she gradually noticed

[68] This translates as "The Lamb: Who Will Be My Mother?".

parallel sentence structure (when the lamb asked the same question to different animals) and her reading became smoother when she encountered these repeated phrases. Her pronunciation was quite good. When we reached the end of the book I asked the girl if she knew what "*l'agneau*" meant. She said she did not. This child was learning how to associate letters of the alphabet with different sounds but she did not have the vocabulary to attribute meaning to the words she was reading despite the hints given by the illustrations.

Teachers must modify or supplement the curriculum to make it manageable for their students. One teacher put it this way: "Mind you now, what we do unofficially is we don't use a lot of it, we do parts of it. You just can't do something that the kids are not able to do, so you find other resources around or make up your own a lot of times because the kids are just not able to do it." Karla explained what this entails for reading:

> A lot of times you have to spend an hour or even two days working on the vocabulary before you can even go through the text in one of the books because there are going to be so many words there that [the students] just don't know.

The need to adjust and supplement the curriculum intensifies at particular moments in the school year. Jackie explained with a sigh that over the summer months, when students are away from the French school and immersed in an English-dominant context, the French-language skills of primary students who are just beginning to learn the language tend to erode:

> The worst part is that the kids forget so fast. I mean, sure, you can have [French] school in the summer time, here and there, once a week on a Saturday, or whatever. Come September, the kids don't remember what they did all summer long [at French summer school]. All they remember is they had fun, they were out playing.

When students re-enter the French language context of the school in the fall after a two-month absence, their French is often rusty, absent from their mouths, or buried deep in the back of their minds. Until the students get a firm grasp on the language, teachers must continue to reinforce the basics each September and further adjust the curriculum.

In this context, given the linguistic demands of the French first language program and the language background of most of the students, some teachers feel that the French-only rule places unreasonable demands on the teacher and the students. Several teachers with whom I spoke felt that maintaining a strict French-only classroom was neither an efficient nor an effective way to teach. Well into my fieldwork, I had an animated discussion with a teacher who had taught in both the French immersion and French first language programs. She had a wealth of teaching experience and strong feelings about French education at the Cape. She felt that the "not a word other than French" policy was "impractical" and "unfair" to students. She argued that in a context where most students have a limited command of French especially early in their education, the French-only policy results in limited, imprecise communication between teachers and students. This poor communication, in turn, wastes time and produces passive students. She believed that teachers should be

allowed to judiciously use some English in the classroom to help their students better understand concepts and to explain things efficiently the first time. After that, French could be clearly and effectively used as the working language of the classroom. This teacher's remarks about good and bad communication echo Karla's comments about good and bad reading: both teachers point to the importance of comprehension and some ways that the current curriculum and the school language policy can hamper comprehension. While they supported the goal of French language revitalization, they called for a more moderate approach to the English language.

When I spoke to a former teacher about the experience of teaching at the French school, this individual voiced an opposition to the French-only policy, arguing that it had impeded the teaching. This teacher's frustration was palpable when we spoke. This interviewee said there had often been tension created by feeling a need to choose between a role as a model French-speaker and as an instructor. Situations described included moments when one English word would have clarified conversations or expedited a lesson but this teacher had been reluctant to use it as teachers were technically not allowed to speak English in the classroom. Other occasions were when a student would ask a question in English and again it was unclear whether to answer the question or penalize the student for having broken the French-only rule. According to this individual, the French-only rule created tension in the classroom and complicated the job of teachers. In some cases, it forced them

to question their roles as teacher and decide which aspect of their jobs took precedence: their obligation to teach the curriculum or the school's mandate to teach the French language by creating and enforcing a French language space. After toiling with these contradictions and tensions, this teacher eventually decided to relax the French-only rule to some extent by maintaining a French classroom but allowing a limited use of English when it facilitated student learning. My interlocutor acknowledged that this contradicted school policy but he argued that it was a considered choice that best enabled carrying out the job as a teacher: "The principal said that there could be no English, but when I closed that door the classroom was mine and I would teach however I wanted in there."

These critiques of the French-only policy speak to its impracticality in the context of the Cape and call for a linguistic middle ground that is tolerant of English. A similar preference for compromise was expressed with respect to the choice of French program at the Cape. Everyone with whom I spoke agreed that there was a place for French education but opinions differed on which program best suited the students of the area. I spoke with several parents who felt that French immersion was sufficient for the area and that French first-language education was unreasonably difficult for students. Doug, a native of the Cape and seasoned language activist, shared this perspective:

> I can understand where our leaders at the time were coming from in saying that we need a French first language [program]. Right? Because we were francophones and we needed to have a system that was totally in French. But I think the immersion program probably would have worked

> better. Although we were francophones, coming from French descent, there was still a lot of English in us. I mean we still had to immerse ourselves. Basically, [for] any child going through the French program, French is their second language starting off. When you send a four year old to preschool in French, that's a whole new world for them, that's a whole new language. And the success stories of those who graduated from the French immersion programs earlier on [are] the same as [those who are graduating] today.

Doug uses the term "francophone" here to refer to people of French descent who still have "a lot of English" in them. His definition is linguistically more inclusive than its technical reference to "a French-speaking person" (Barber 2001:551). He argues that the French immersion program, which blended French and English, was a better match with the local population. Most local teachers, many of whom are also parents, disagreed with Doug and felt that French immersion did not provide enough consistent French content for students at the Cape. However, many of them thought that French first language education is a problematic replacement for French immersion. The majority of teachers with whom I spoke argued that the ideal French program would be a hybrid of French immersion and French first-language, a customized program that would account for both the Cape's particular language demographic and language activists' goal of French language revitalization.[69]

> I think they have to find something in between the two. That's the only way that it's going to work here... We're saying 'You have to find something between the two.' Immersion is not enough but the French programs that they're giving us are too much, so you have to find a just

[69] A report on the French first language program at the Cape makes a similar recommendation, urging that "every effort should be made to develop a program for these pupils which will best develop their bilingual language skills and academic potential" (Netten and Keough 1987:41). The authors of the report do not offer specific suggestions as to what such a program would be like.

> middle somewhere. They'll have to come up with something because it's getting worse.

These calls for an educational and linguistic compromise implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) critique the narrowness of the French first-language program and school language policy.

The most consistent and common critique of an exclusionary practice came in the form of a narrative that was recounted to me countless times. It was told to me by many different people of various language backgrounds, most of whom consider themselves to be French Newfoundlanders. The story was about an incident that occurred some years earlier at *Une Longue Veillée*, Cape St. George's French folk festival. Usually, people recalled past festivals very positively: they were consistently remembered as fun occasions with great music, good food, an abundant audience, and an army of volunteers. However, on many occasions people followed their positive descriptions with this darker narrative. As the story goes, that particular festival began like every other festival: everything was running smoothly, people were having fun. A band took the stage and performed a couple of songs in French. Then, partway through their set, they began to sing in English. By all accounts, the festival organizers interrupted the performance and asked the band to leave the stage.

One English-speaker who was in the crowd when this occurred told me that the festival organizers alienated many people that day and that the incident had left a bad taste in people's mouths. His assertion seemed to be confirmed by the disappointed, disapproving tone in which this story was consistently told. Judging by

the frequency with which I heard this anecdote and the variety of people who recounted it, this story seems to have assumed an iconic status, encapsulating a popular opinion which condemns the actions of the festival organizers as unfair and exclusionary. Though most people recall *Une Longue Veillée* fondly and support the idea of French activism, this anecdote suggests that many people disapprove of French activism that is intolerant of the English language.

I contend that many people are intolerant of exclusionary practices because, like Doug, they have a broader definition of French Newfoundland identity, one which includes people of French descent whose maternal language is English. I first became aware of this as I observed my own patterns of self-identification in the field. Whenever people from the Cape asked me where I was from, I almost always responded by saying that I was from St. John's but "my grandmother was a Benoit from Stephenville". I highlighted this aspect of my geneaological and linguistic identity to help people locate me within the region, but I realized that this way of introducing oneself could also be a way in which people whose linguistic identity is predominantly English might identify themselves as French Newfoundlanders. Once I noticed this pattern in myself, I began paying closer attention to the way people introduced themselves and found that people often located themselves linguistically, especially after they learned about my research. Countless people introduced themselves to me by situating themselves within the history of language shift, much as I did when I tied myself to my French Newfoundland grandmother. By making a

direct link to a French-speaking parent or grandparent and explaining how the French language had dissipated from their family, English-speakers from the Cape claimed French Newfoundland identity for themselves.

English-speakers also identified themselves as French Newfoundlanders by interspersing French words and expressions in their otherwise English conversations. Cynthia is a woman in her early forties who was raised in the Cape and continues to live there today. Though her parents were French, they raised Cynthia and her siblings in English. One day, a group of women were chatting about a house party they had attended the weekend before. Cynthia recalled her sister's noble appetite and remarked "That Rose can *mange!*" Cynthia does not speak French fluently but she often incorporates what she knows into her everyday language. Another way people integrate some French into their English speech is through nicknames and terms of endearment. Two of the most common terms of endearment were *mignon*, *mignenne*, and *ma chère* (my dear). These names are used with great sweetness. I was given the nicknames '*chose*' (the thing) and '*cachune*' (kindly translated by one woman as 'busy-nose'), both of which were used playfully and teasingly. I contend that when people who are predominantly English-speakers use French in this way, it may be considered a form of marked codeswitching signalling a claim to French Newfoundland identity. After Rose, Cynthia's sister, introduced herself to me and located herself within the history of language shift, she began to tell me about growing up as an English-speaking child with French-speaking parents. She said that even though English is

her first language, there are still some words that come to her first in French, such as "*école*". She told me that when this happens, she has to search for the English equivalent "school". Testimonials such as these authenticate a person's claim to French Newfoundland identity.

One way English-speakers participate in the French movement is by enrolling their children in French school. One mother echoed many other parents when she told me "I want to give my children the advantage of a second language that I never had." Parents who say this explicitly reference the impact of language shift in their lives. By enrolling their children in French school, they reclaim their French identity and reintegrate it into their family, while simultaneously supporting the French movement by helping to sustain enrolment at the French schools and encouraging the development of another French-speaker to help sustain Cape St. George as a French milieu.

Another important way that English-speakers contribute to the French movement is by volunteering. When I arrived at the Cape and began to chat with people about the French movement over the years, it became clear that it has been sustained by the energy of volunteers. These are the people who initially went door to door building up the membership of the French association, who held meetings, organized events, sat on committees, staffed the festivals, chaperoned youth events, led cultural activities, and did countless other things to keep the movement alive. I quickly realized that volunteerism was an important form of cultural work. I also

soon learned that many of the most dedicated volunteers were English-speakers, some of whom told me they "don't understand a word of French". Through their volunteer efforts and support of the French movement, these English-speakers significantly contributed to the revitalization of the French language at the Cape.

For many English-speakers, peppering their speech with what little French they knew, enrolling their children in French school, and volunteering with the French movement were ways of identifying themselves as French Newfoundlanders. These are solidary gestures that indicate their inclusion in the French movement. When French language activists follow policies and practices that exclude English-speakers, they alienate many English-speakers who through words and actions identify as French Newfoundlanders. Some people voice their disapproval through anecdotes such as the one about the English singers being asked to leave the stage. Others, such as Krista, state the need for community cooperation and inclusion more explicitly: "You can't avoid the English and you can't exclude them. Keeping up the French involves everybody in the community, not just the French. You need to get everybody involved. You can't divide the community."

Some language activists apply this broader definition of French Newfoundland identity to their work. Lori administers a federal program designed for "francophone" proponents. Instead of judging whether a person qualifies by their French language ability, she applies a common rule of thumb. She told me that if an English-speaker approached her and their last name was Chaisson, she would help

them because she knew that somewhere in their family there was French or "francophone" heritage. Anne also administers a program for "francophones" and she applies the same logic as Lori when seeking participants:

> On the peninsula, there's very few people that aren't part of the French ancestry here. It's very rare to hit someone that doesn't have it somewhere along the line. If you were born there, you have a ninety-nine percent chance of having French ancestry.

Karla and Ruby, both teachers and language activists at the Cape, drew upon this assumption that people born at the Cape were of French descent to explain why English-speaking students from the Cape were entitled to attend French school:

> Well now technically, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms has got definite rules about who's entitled to a French education, right... But in reality I never heard of the French school board ever turning anybody down. For instance, here on the peninsula it's recognized that most people have French roots so there's no such thing as turning your child down because his parents don't speak French, because you just assume that probably their grandparents spoke French and they can't now. So we're very loose about that here, especially in Mainland. The French school is the only school [in that community] and you cannot tell a child that they have to go on the bus to Lourdes just because he can't speak French. Most of the kids can't speak French when they come to school cause they speak English in the homes, right. So there's really no strict criteria on that, on who goes to French school.
>
> I think it's just that there has to be some francophone in your background, but I think they generally accept anyone who wants to put their child through the French program. I don't think they've ever refused anyone, even if they don't have francophone... well it's kind of hard to find someone here that doesn't have it somewhere down the line. (*laughs*)

During my time at the Cape, I heard this explanation of assumed French lineage from many people in many different contexts. In fact, it was so common it sometimes seemed like a running joke among residents there. This assumption of common

French lineage serves as a levelling device: it is a way to group everyone together as French Newfoundlanders regardless of their linguistic ability. Defining a French Newfoundlander by their French language skills would be a very difficult and politically treacherous task, given the range of linguistic ability in Cape St. George. Where would the line be drawn? What degree of fluency would a person need to qualify? How broad a vocabulary would one need? As I have discussed above, in the context of the Cape, drawing such a line and defining French Newfoundland identity in terms of French language ability would be divisive. Because most people from the Cape can find French roots somewhere in their family tree, a definition based on ancestry is much more inclusive. When the definition of who is French determines access to services such as French first language education or economic development programs, the boundaries of inclusion are very important. Defining French Newfoundlanders based on French ancestry avoids the contentious language question.

As we can see in the second example above, the word 'francophone', which technically refers to French-speaking ability (Barber 2001), is sometimes used at the Cape to denote ancestry. This local use of the word 'francophone' blurs the line between language and ancestry. Similar ambiguity surrounds the word 'French'. Many French language programs, such as French first-language education and federal economic development programs, come with bureaucratic definitions of the people who are allowed to avail of them. By maintaining ambiguity around words such as

'French' and 'francophone' and by blurring the distinction between them, people at the Cape widen the definition of who is a French Newfoundlander. This definitional ambiguity and the assumption of common French background together form the argument that makes French language programs accessible to more people. The language activists quoted above reinterpret federal funding conditions with the local logic of French Newfoundland identification and, in so doing, they avoid exclusion based on French-language ability. In this way, they not only oppose exclusionary definitions of French Newfoundland identity, but also work to make them more inclusive.

5.3 – Conclusion

Many people in Cape St. George are critical of policies and practices that are linguistically exclusionary, whether that be to speakers of Newfoundland French or to predominantly English-speaking French Newfoundlanders. Exclusionary policies and practices tend to be constructed according to the oppositional one people/one language ideology which purports that a group is defined by the (single) language that it speaks; in Cape St. George, that logic conflates French Newfoundlanders with the French language. As I have discussed, linking French Newfoundland identity with a person's French speaking ability does not reflect many people's experience. This does not mean that local definitions of French Newfoundland identity have nothing to do with the French language: instead of tying it to a person's own French-speaking

ability, it ties it to a French-speaking ancestor and a person's affinity for the French language.

While no one with whom I spoke denied that the French language was important, many people criticized practices and policies that disallowed the English language altogether. I argue that these policies and practices were distasteful because they exclude the English-speakers who contribute significantly to the French movement and who consider themselves to be French Newfoundlanders. Their linguistic practices, actions, and self-identification do not fit within the narrower group boundaries established by the oppositional one language/one people ideology.

Some language activists work to make programs and environments more inclusive of those who may not be fluent speakers of the French language but who nonetheless identify as French Newfoundlanders. Their actions implicitly critique the narrow definition of French Newfoundland identity promoted by the oppositional one people/one language ideology. These language activists override exclusionary policies and practices by reinterpreting them with a more inclusive local definition of "French Newfoundland" and "francophone" identity. Their critiques and actions call for a plurilingual definition of French Newfoundland identity which validates Newfoundland French and includes the full range of French-speakers, including those who "don't speak a word of French" but who nonetheless feel French. Because this plurilingual definition rejects the structures of domination – those which hierarchize

language varieties, favour linguistic 'purity', and acknowledge identity only when it is accompanied by fluency – it may be considered a radical form of resistance.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

This thesis is an exploration of language shift, language revitalization, language use, and identification among French Newfoundlanders in Cape St. George. It is about the processes by which languages and language varieties flourished, waned, and re-emerged at the Cape, the ideologies that informed those processes, and the ways people at the Cape have resisted those processes and ideologies. It explores the way the values attached to languages influence how people use and identify with those languages. At the heart of this thesis are questions of language, power, and identity.

Contemporary language politics and language use patterns at the Cape are the product of two countervailing processes: language shift and language revitalization. As I discussed in Chapter Two, language shift from French to English was the result of various economic, social, and cultural changes, such as the switch to wage labour, reduced geographic insularity due to the construction of roads, the provision of all-English schooling, and stigmatization. The pressure to speak English gradually affected the way language was used in homes and around the community of Cape St. George.

French did not vanish altogether under the shadow of English. Rather, through language shift, English and French were ascribed diglossic values as high and low variety respectively. Much as Jaffe (1999) found in Corsica, this diglossia at the Cape was not only "the key ideological factor influencing language practices and

attitudes… [but also] an oppositional model of linguistic and cultural identities" (Jaffe 1999:19). Through the process of language shift, specifically the entrenchment of diglossia, an oppositional relationship between English and French developed at the Cape.

Many language activists have appropriated the oppositional framework that pits English against French and used it in their work with French language revitalization movement. Throughout this thesis, I have referred to that framework as the oppositional one language/one people ideology, a common language ideology which links group identity directly to language. This language ideology allows little conceptual room for linguistic heterogeneity, emphasizing instead linguistic homogeneity, purism, and exclusivity. While there is much evidence of the influence of this language ideology on the French movement at the Cape, the clearest example is the acquisition and evolution of French language education. As French education at the Cape progressed from French immersion to French first language, the French content of the curriculum, the school language policy, and the school and school board staff all became increasingly French. The ever-decreasing presence of English within the French school coupled with the erasure of the parental goal of balanced bilingualism and children's linguistic background as anglophones, point to the influence of the oppositional one language/one people ideology.

Ironically, one of the by-products of this effort to revitalize the French language at the Cape was the degradation of the Newfoundland French vernacular

through the introduction of standard French into the community. In their attempt to undermine the English–French diglossia established during language shift, language activists introduced another form of diglossia into the community. As a literary language and as the language of the school, standard French assumed the status of diglossic high variety, to be juxtaposed with the low variety, Newfoundland French, an oral language variety reserved for friends and family.

These competing though related processes – language shift and language revitalization – have influenced the way language is used and valued in Cape St. George and contributed to what is today a complex linguistic environment. The English–French diglossia established during language shift circumscribed the area where French is spoken (restricting it mainly to the home – when it is indeed spoken there – and to certain close relationships) and established English as the dominant or default language of the community. Through language shift, the values around English and French changed and some people became reluctant to speak French. These patterns persist to a large extent today. The French revitalization movement has attempted to reverse the legacy of language shift and to some extent it has succeeded. The French movement introduced French-first spaces such as the French school and the French centre into the community, thereby reversing the English-as-default-language guideline in at least some institutional contexts. Perhaps most significantly, the French movement helped reverse the negative associations attached to speaking and being French, which were one of the biggest deterrents for people to

speak French. The French movement may also be credited with introducing a social obligation to speak French, which is an important counterbalance to the concept of "rudeness" that was attributed to speaking French during language shift. This social obligation encourages the use of French as a solidary language to show support for the French movement and the politics of language revitalization. However, as described above, the French movement is also responsible for the presence of standard French in the community, which led to the introduction of a second tier of diglossia between standard French and Newfoundland French at the Cape and, consequently, some people's reluctance to speak Newfoundland French in the company of other francophones.

The intertwining legacies of language shift and language revitalization create a wide range of French language competence at the Cape. Contemporary language use patterns at the Cape spill over diglossic boundaries and are much more heterogeneous than those prescribed and valued by the oppositional one language/one people ideology. As I discuss below, this linguistic heterogeneity that exists at the Cape, this range in French language ability and use, is one of the primary bases for some people's critiques of the French language movement.

I have argued in this thesis that there are two types of resistance occurring at the Cape: resistance of reversal and radical resistance. The French language movement is clearly an example of resistance of reversal, which entails the replacement of one language with another and the maintenance of dominance

structures. As I have discussed, in Cape St. George this was guided by the oppositional one language/one people ideology, which was a continuation of the diglossic oppositional structure established during language shift. English and French continued to be polarized, but the French movement simply attempted to invert the relative power of each language. Structures of dominance, such as the language hierarchy that places greater value on the literary standard than the oral vernacular and the oppositional one language/one people ideology, are left unquestioned and unchallenged by the French movement.

My examination of popular critiques of the French movement in Chapter Five suggests that many people living at the Cape oppose this oppositional model and the exclusionary politics and practices it espouses. In some cases, people see the hypocrisy of the movement that replicates (albeit through reversal) the system it resists. This was especially true for Doug, who drew explicit parallels between the forced English education of French-speaking children and today's French education of English-speaking children. As Jaffe (1999) suggests, this is a common criticism of resistance of reversal because people who have experienced a particular system of domination are sensitized to its replicas. In Chapter Five, I discussed many examples of people who reject the diglossic hierarchies that degrade Newfoundland French, people who oppose the exclusionary policies and practices of the French movement, and people who work to create an environment that is more inclusive of the linguistic variety that exists in their community. Through their comments and everyday actions,

these people challenge the structures of dominance that have long given preference to certain language varieties above others and leave no room for linguistic heterogeneity.

I suggested in Chapter One that the practices of language movements encourage the creation of ethnic identities. As Jacqueline Urla has argued, the strategies of cultural movements may be "best understood not as protecting a true or essential identity from power, but as forging that identity in the process of resistance" (Urla 1988:391). Each type of resistance at the Cape has propagated a different French Newfoundland identity. The French movement, guided by the oppositional one language/one people ideology, developed a concept of French Newfoundland identity built upon linguistic exclusionism and purism. The movement's ideal French Newfoundlander speaks French. The bilingualism and linguistic nuances of the population are erased, just as they were through the evolution of French education and from the interpretive sign at the Gravels described in Chapter One. I contend that this definition of French Newfoundland identity is what concerns and jars many residents of Cape St. George, including some active in the French movement. It does not speak to their experience of the community, to their sense of belonging, or to their concept of French Newfoundland identification. Nor does it speak to a community ethos, also promoted by many in the French movement, stressing the value of a person's willingness to speak French above his or her French fluency. The definition of French Newfoundland identity conjured by the oppositional one language/one people ideology excludes many people who consider themselves to be

French Newfoundlanders. Through their critiques of the French movement, these residents of the Cape reject the definition of French Newfoundland identity that is circumscribed by the one language/one people ideology. Their resistance to some aspects of the French movement is built upon and encourages an alternative definition of French Newfoundland identity that encompasses the linguistic variety they experience at the Cape. Their French Newfoundlander need not speak fluent French, but must feel French, try to speak French when they can, and have a connection to a French ancestor somewhere along the line.

The one language/one people ideology is pervasive; it is embedded in many nationalist ideologies. Language has often been seen as indexical – and even proof – of group identity. Given the diglossic division of French and English that emerged through language shift at the Cape, it is not surprising that language activists employed that oppositional ideology in their work developing the French language movement. The categorical differences between the 'English' and the 'jacotars' were already well-entrenched and ready to be rearticulated and redefined. However, linguistic practices and group identification among residents of Cape St. George spill over these essentialized, ideological boundaries. The discourses and practices of resistance outlined in Chapter Five suggest that some French Newfoundlanders call for a plurilinguistic definition of French Newfoundland identity. This rejection of the oppositional one language/one people ideology upon which the French movement at the Cape has been built is an example of radical resistance. Though the suggestion

that a French Newfoundlander does not necessarily speak French would surely be radical for many of the people who have inquired about my fieldwork, the concept of authentic group identity based on plurilingualism is not new (see examples cited in Jaffe 1999). The oppositional one language/one people ideology seems almost commonsensical; it is one of the most pervasive language ideologies of the past century, employed by nation-states and nationalist groups around the world. Many institutional and funding structures are built upon that very ideology, so it is safe for language activists to espouse and employ. It fits with existing dominance structures. Therefore, it is difficult to predict how French Newfoundlanders would fare if their radical plurilinguistic concept of identity were adopted as the guiding vision of the French movement.

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www.jasenbenwah.ca

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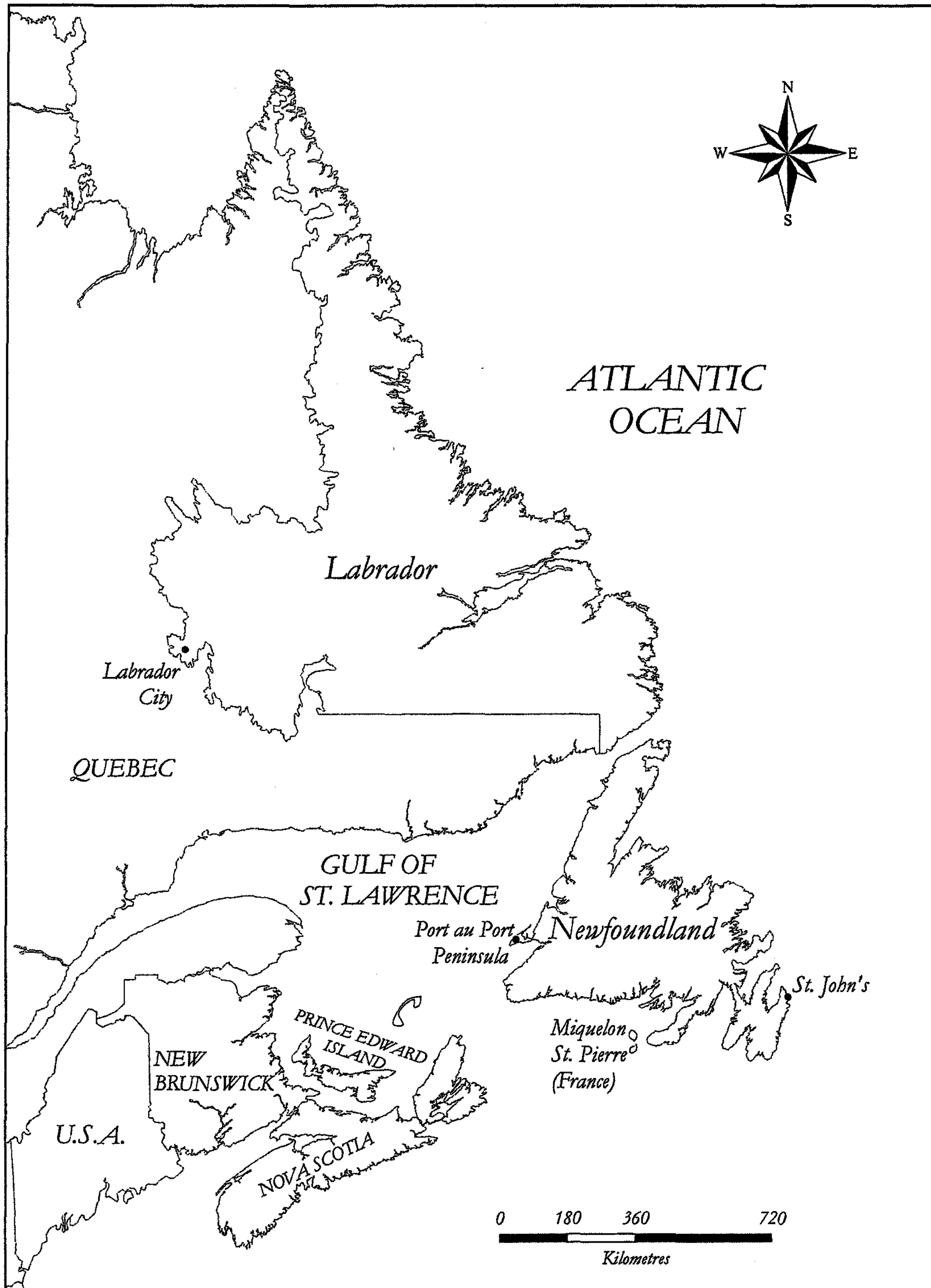
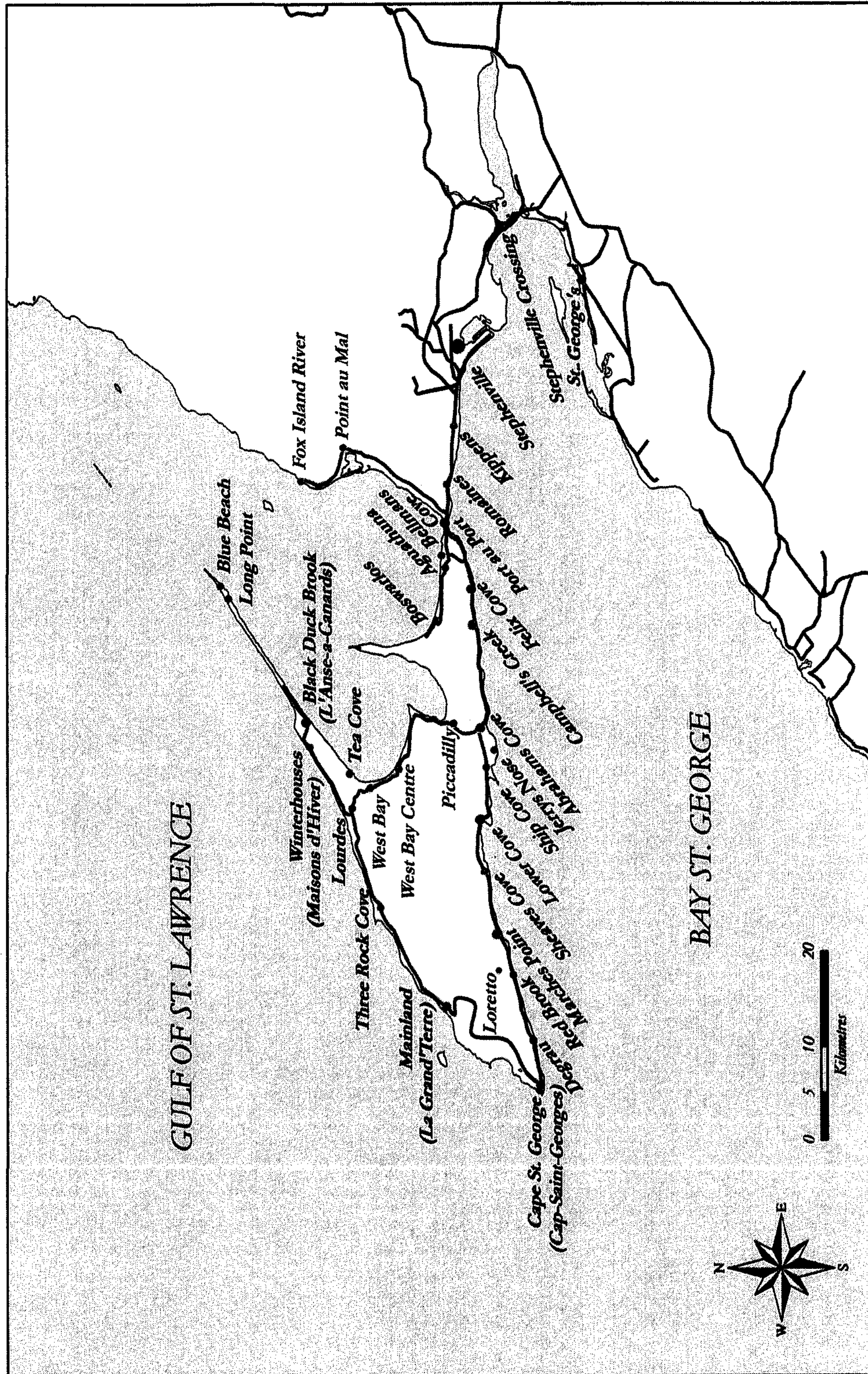
Appendix A

Map of Newfoundland Showing the Port au Port Peninsula



Appendix B

Map of the Port au Port Peninsula



Appendix C

Canadian Census Material for Cape St. George-Petit Jardin-Grand Jardin-De Grau-Marches Point-Loretto

Population & Maternal Language

Year	Population	English	French	Eng & Fre	Not Stated
2001	925	690	190	45	N/A
1996	1095	910	175	10	N/A
1991	1140	865	190	85	N/A
1986	1505	1185	180	135	N/A
1981	1470	1065	30	420	N/A
1976	1713	1420	280	N/A	20
1971	1595	1120	475	N/A	N/A

Census results for matters such as language must be read carefully, as responses are as likely to reflect the changing political atmosphere as much as actual language patterns. As King (1985) has indicated, determining the number of French-speakers on the Port au Port Peninsula has been very difficult, with examples both of overreporting and underreporting. Moreover, as the numerous cells marked N/A indicate, responses are both limited and influenced by the questionnaire or survey design. It is difficult to discern from these statistics patterns of language use, respondents' ethnopolitical commitments, or how people identify themselves outside of set categories.

Source: Statistics Canada