

## **Linguistic Minority Communities' Contribution To Economic Well-Being: Two Case Studies.<sup>(1)</sup>**

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This paper examines the economic vitality of linguistic minority communities and how these communities contribute to the economic well-being of their regions based on two case studies. The first is the Francophone minority of Prince County in Prince Edward Island and the second is the Anglophone minority on the south coast of the Gaspé Peninsula in Quebec. Both geographic areas are economically depressed by national standards with higher-than-average unemployment rates and lower-than-average incomes.

The paper is based on a study by the authors commissioned by the Department of Canadian Heritage and supported by the Canadian Institute for Research on Regional Development entitled, "The Socio-Economic Vitality of Minority Official Language Communities: A Pilot Study." Socioeconomic profiles of the regions for the study were prepared from a special micro-data set, based on the 1991 Census, purchased from Statistics Canada. As well, more than fifty interviews were conducted in the various communities to gain the perspective from actors within the communities. A standardized questionnaire was used in the interviews but the sample of persons interviewed was not random. A cross section of each community was interviewed, typically civic leaders, leaders of the *Société Saint Thomas d'Aquin* in Prince Edward Island, leaders of CASA (the Committee for Anglophone Social Action) in Quebec, members of volunteer groups in the community, officials of various development agencies and industrial commissions, established business persons, emerging entrepreneurs, union leaders,

homemakers, young people, and retired persons. The questions sought to learn how people of linguistic minority communities participate in local economic development and how linguistic minority communities contribute to the economic well-being of the local, regional, and national economies. Accordingly, the answers to the questions often reflected people's impressions of events and it was not possible to verify all statements by respondents for accuracy. Nevertheless, under the circumstances and in the time allowed, the interviewers made efforts to verify statements through some follow up interviews by telephone.

### **Language and Output**

There is a paucity of literature on how economists examine the relationship between language and output. For example, there are difficulties in using traditional growth theory to analyse the effects of language on output. One difficulty is on the input side where economists tend to consider factors of production or resources that can be easily quantified and valued in money terms, such as natural resources, labour, and capital. Economists tend to shy away from non-quantifiable resources that they cannot easily value in money terms. Language, as a variable, is not easily quantifiable. Language has nevertheless been considered as "a resource and can be taken into account in planning [economic growth and development]" (Rubin and Jernudd 1971: 196). The other difficulty with growth theory lies on the output side where economists tend to measure the well-being and progress of society in terms of the value of goods and services produced in the economy. That a society has become more cultured or enjoys more leisure activities through the use of one or more languages is not translated into "products" easily quantifiable in such traditional measures of well-being as growth in gross domestic product or national output. That is not to say that economists are at a complete loss in analysing the relationship between language and output. They sometimes use social accounting matrices and often analyse the situation -- as did the authors of this study -- by various demographic and income groups and by the skill levels, education levels, and other characteristics of the labour force.

The study of language planning, however, might lend some clues for economists studying the link between language and economic growth and development. Linguists and sociologists have studied the effects of language on the political and social structure of society for some time. Herbert Kelman of Harvard University, for example, argued "that language is a uniquely powerful instrument in unifying a diverse population and in involving individuals and subgroups in the national system" (Rubin and Jernudd 1971: 21). A common language builds

trust and improves communication (Rubin and Jernudd 1971). Economic development theory has long recognized the importance of both of these factors in the progress of a nation's economy. Sociolinguistic specialist Joshua Fishman claimed that "economic growth and progress toward linguistic unity go hand in hand" (Eastman 1983: 55). However, "some of the very features of language that give it this [unifying] power under some circumstances may, under other circumstances, become major sources of disintegration and internal conflict within a national system" (Kelman 1971: xxi). In a country like Canada bilingualism can both enhance and detract from economic development. The Department of Canadian Heritage clearly recognizes linguistic duality and bilingualism as a resource. It regards a bilingual workforce as more mobile, [more adaptable], more productive in activities centred on language based services, and able to facilitate communication in doing business outside the country (Department of Canadian Heritage 1995). Canada's dualistic reality increases its export potential and thus enhances the value of national output and increases national employment. The fact that Canadian producers are already accustomed to producing bilingual packaging and dealing in a second language gives them an advantage over producers from other countries that have not yet overcome the non-tariff barriers of working, and supplying goods and services, in a second language (Department of Canadian Heritage 1995). The Department claims that more business comes to Canada because of its dualistic nature than would otherwise (Department of Canadian Heritage 1995). There are also niche service exports based on language, such as translation services, linguistic technology, and second-language teaching (Department of Canadian Heritage 1995).

How the linguistic minorities in the south coast of Gaspé, Quebec and Prince County, Prince Edward Island, contribute to economic growth are reported below.

#### **The Francophone Minority in Prince County, PEI**

West of Summerside there is a Francophone enclave, mainly of Acadian descent, known as "the Evangeline region" which comprises Wellington and the surrounding communities of Abram-Village, Mont Carmel, Cap Egmont, St. Chrisostome, St. Philippe, Baie-Egmont, St. Hubert, St. Gilbert, Urbainville, Maximeville, St. Timothée and St. Raphael. There are also Francophones of Acadian descent at the northwestern tip of the Island, in the communities of Tignish, Palmer Road, and St. Louis. The Acadians in this latter region are much more assimilated than their counterparts in Evangeline, where there are French schools and thriving French communities.

In Prince Edward Island the maternal language of 6,300 persons is French. Approximately three out of four Island Francophones live in Prince County and they are approximately 10 percent of the county population. The proportion of the population under twenty-five years of age is much lower for Francophones (24.0 percent) than for Anglophones (40.3 percent) in Prince County (Beaudin et al. 1995). The overall Francophone population of Prince County declined in the 1980s, except in the Wellington area. We partially explain this by the national trend of workers migrating from rural to urban areas, the outmigration of workers from Atlantic to Central Canada, where employment opportunities were more promising, and the increasing assimilation of the linguistic minority.

The Francophones of Prince County, largely of Acadian origin, are twice disadvantaged; the region is economically depressed by national standards, and by certain socioeconomic indicators the Francophone minority is disadvantaged compared with the Anglophone majority. Francophones have a lower participation rate in the labour force (61 percent versus 69 percent for Anglophones), lower educational levels, and are further disadvantaged by the occupational mix of a linguistic minority in a rural setting and the dependency of the population on government transfers, especially unemployment insurance. The dependency ratio of unemployment insurance benefits to earned income is already high for Prince Edward Island, three to four times the ratio for Canada. However, the ratio is five times higher for Prince County, and more than sixteen times higher for the St. Louis area, where unemployment insurance benefits are 82 percent of earned income (Beaudin et al. 1995). The many seasonal workers in Prince County partially account for this phenomenon, but the proportion of Francophone seasonal workers are higher than their Anglophone counterparts.

We found a higher proportion of Francophones (34.3 percent) in the primary and manufacturing sectors than Anglophones (30.8 percent) in Prince County. Both linguistic groups were almost equally represented in the traditional service industries (wholesale & retail trade, lodgings, restaurants, and personal services) and in the public sector. However, Francophones were under represented in the financial services sector (2.6 percent versus 4.0 percent for Anglophones). Except in education, Francophones employed in those sectors with above average income -- (management, education, health, technical professions, transport, manufacturing) -- were under represented in relation to their Anglophone counterparts. The average salaries in these sectors were much higher for Anglophones, except in the transportation sector where the average salaries for Francophones actually exceeded those of Anglophones. The education level of Francophones in the labour force was lower than their Anglophone counterparts in Prince County. Approximately half the Francophone labour force in the county did not complete secondary school compared with 41 percent for the Anglophone

labour force. At the post secondary level, there are a higher proportion of Anglophones (18 percent) than Francophones (11 percent) in the labour force who are university graduates (Beaudin et al. 1995). The disparities in the levels of education are even more pronounced in the population fifteen years of age and over.

Francophone women were better educated than Francophone men. The proportion of the labour force with a university degree among female Francophones was 14.3 percent compared with 7.6 percent for male Francophones, and 61.8 percent of male Francophone were without a high school diploma compared with 37.8 percent of female Francophones (Beaudin et al. 1995). However, women were under represented overall in the sectors (management, education, health, technical professions, transportation, and manufacturing) which had above average income.

We explain the various disparities in the labour force and in the levels of remuneration between Francophones and Anglophones in Prince County as follows. The Francophone population in Prince County is concentrated in rural areas, where the industrial mix and occupations are skewed toward lower earnings. Anglophones live and work closer to Summerside, which is more urban than the rest of the county. A second factor is the lower level of education among the Francophone population, especially the men who tend to work in the goods producing sectors. Because of the decline in employment in the fishery and farming sectors, there is an above average dependency ratio of unemployment insurance to earned income, especially in the Tignish-Palmer Road areas. The partial assimilation of the population, especially in the Tignish area, also contributes to the disparities. So do the lower participation rates among Francophones in the labour force. Then there is the outmigration of people between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four, which poses a problem for the future where the remaining Francophone population, the very young and the old, will be more dependent on the remaining workers.

Finally, our profiles show that disparities also exist within the linguistic minority community in Prince County. Levels of education, participation rates, the occupational mix, and earnings are much more favourable in the Evangeline area than the Tignish-Palmer Road-St. Louis area. It is as if we had a dual economy within the Francophone community in Prince County. In Evangeline the proportion of the labour force employed in services -- traditional, professional, and dynamic -- is higher, but in North Prince, the opposite is true: the proportions of the labour force employed in primary and secondary activities are higher and the population is much more dependent on transfer payments.

## Evangeline

From our on site interviews in Evangeline, we learned that the fourteen communities in the Evangeline region effectively function as one community to promote economic development. This unity derives in part from the concentration of Acadians in the region and the homogenous nature of the society through the French language and the Roman Catholic religion. The cohesive force in language, culture, religion, and pride in community carries over to development initiatives.

Community leaders have fostered this unity by promoting existing businesses and new entrepreneurs through *La Commission Industrielle de la Baie Acadienne*. The commission created infrastructure in support of the private sector, such as the small shopping centre -- *Le Centre Commercial* -- in Wellington. As well, the commission invested in infrastructure to support public sector and volunteer activities that would ultimately contribute to the economic well being and reinforce the unity and dynamism of the Evangeline region. They achieved this by buying the building that had housed the consumers' cooperative in Wellington and turning it into a *Centre d'Affaires Communautaire*, which acts as a centre for several agencies. Among them are the *Centre de Services Régional*, a government office created to provide all provincial services in both official languages and services to volunteer groups; the *Secrétariat des Affaires Francophones*, which is funded through a federal/provincial cooperation agreement to promote the French language and the economic development for the Francophone community in PEI; *la Société Éducative de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard*, the first postsecondary institution for Francophones on the Island; the industrial commission; the regional committee of the *Société Saint Thomas d'Aquin*; an accounting firm from Summerside which provides services in the French language; *l'Office des Catéchèses des Maritimes*; the coordinator of *Les Jeux de l'Acadie*; and several agents of provincial government departments. Representatives from federal agencies such as Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), Federal Business Development Bank (FBDB), and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) use the facilities on their visits to clients in the region. Such a one stop shopping centre for services can act as a model for linguistic minority groups elsewhere.

Other development institutions in the region are the *Société Touristique*, *Conseil de Coopération*, the risk capital arm of the *Caisse Populaire*, and the West Prince Community Futures with its lending arm, West Prince Ventures. Although the SDE (*Société de*

*développement de la région Évangéline*) developed a strategic plan for the area, there has been no implementation of any development plan for the region.

One major strength of the Evangeline region is the cooperative movement. The Evangeline region with approximately nineteen cooperatives has the highest cooperative density in Canada. There is also a sizeable pool of educated volunteers in the area. This spirit of cooperation, whether through commercial ventures or voluntarism, can be a powerful tool in carrying forth economic development initiatives in Evangeline. That having been said, there is little local economic planning -- outside tourism -- in the region because of the present lack of economic opportunity. There is, however, a strong commitment by the Acadian community to develop the area and its desire to have a Provincial Regional (Economic) Development Area designated for Evangeline.

The contribution of the *Société Saint-Thomas d'Aquin* to the vitality of the Evangeline region and the Francophone community on the Island should not be underestimated. The *Société* based in Summerside promotes the cultural and educational interests of Francophones and the economic welfare of the linguistic minority by forming partnerships within *La Francophonie* and elsewhere, by promoting the region nationally and internationally, and by encouraging entrepreneurship and economic development. One of the Society's initiatives was the establishment of *la Société Éducative de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard*. Until its establishment, there was no postsecondary institution for Francophones on the Island. The education centre provides access to the curriculum of *Collège l'Acadie* in Nova Scotia for distance adult education *via* the Internet.

Among the weaknesses in the Evangeline region is the lack of marketing skills among Francophones in the region. We were told that residents are able to produce quality goods and services but they do not possess the necessary knowledge of markets or skills to sell their products effectively. One example was the purchase by Hostess Potato Chips of the cooperative venture, Old Barrel, which successfully produced potato chips but failed to market them nationally. As well, the pool of potential entrepreneurs is reduced because of the small Francophone population under twenty-five years of age.

When we asked business people whether they felt disadvantaged as a linguistic minority in term of starting their own businesses, they responded that some federal agencies like ACOA were sensitive to the needs of the Francophones. However, other federal departments and agencies were not as sensitive to the needs of the linguistic minority as were their provincial counterparts. Some respondents thought that a parallel institution at the federal level to the *Secrétariat des Affaires Francophones*, which provides provincial government services in

French, would discount the language factor as a barrier to entry. Insensitivity to the needs of the linguistic minority can impede economic development if, for example, Francophones can only be served in English by development agencies or if entrepreneurs have to wait a longer time for their applications to be processed in French, as was the case reported by some Francophone business people.

Nevertheless, the Francophone community in Evangeline contributes to the Island's economy and to the Canadian economy. The *Société Touristique* estimated from an exit survey on the ferries that 90,000 visitors came to the Evangeline region in 1994, most of them from Quebec, New Brunswick, and Louisiana. French-speaking tourists, and Acadians from away seeking their roots, are glad to visit where they will be welcomed in their native language. Also, many Anglophones whose children are enrolled in French immersion courses journey to the region for the cultural experience and exposure. According to the exit survey, these 90,000 tourists spent \$3 million in Evangeline in 1994. <sup>(2)</sup>

The education centre in Wellington with its multimedia capabilities can serve as a model for other communities to adopt. Already, their expertise in providing distance education *via* the Internet, especially in the French language, is being exported to the rest of the Island and elsewhere in Canada. With this goes the transfer of new technology. Also, the significant use of distance learning access to the *Collège l'Acadie* by the people of the Evangeline region not only enhances the community's education in its own language, but it also serves the not so subtle function of teaching computer mastery and making many of its members early adopters of the new tools of the age.

Then there are the contributions of the Francophone youth from the area who have gone to university elsewhere in Canada. Some graduates return to Prince Edward Island, but wherever they settle in Canada, they make a contribution as bilingually trained persons: some of them as entrepreneurs filling special niches related to providing Francophone services.

As well, it is too easy to underestimate the value of the export of cultural services of writers, artists, comedians, musicians, etc. With the increasing importance of leisure industries in Canada, such supply of cultural services estimated at \$16 billion in 1993 for Canada, <sup>(3)</sup> will make a growing contribution to the Gross Domestic Product. Based on the relative population of P.E.I. to Canada, the share for P.E.I. can be estimated at approximately \$73 million, and the relative share for the Francophone population of P.E.I. can therefore be estimated as approximately \$3.1 million. Unfortunately, the authors were not able to learn the actual amount Francophones in Prince Edward Island contributed to leisure activities and whether



their contribution was disproportionate to the overall Canadian supply of leisure activities.

## **North**

## **Prince**

In North Prince, approximately 60 kilometres to the northwest of Wellington, the heart of Evangeline country, is the municipality of Tignish, and within 15 kilometres of Tignish are the communities of Palmer Road and St. Louis. This, too, is Acadian country. Unlike Evangeline, the Francophones in North Prince do not have their own schools. Although there are support organizations, the Acadians in this region are much more assimilated and many no longer speak French.

The economy of the community is based on farming and fishing. There is a high dependency on earnings from the fishery and from transfer payments. We were told that employment opportunities associated with potato growing have been reduced since McCain Foods and Cavendish Farms now do their own grading of potatoes.

Although there are many agencies responsible for economic development in this area, none has a strategic or comprehensive development plan for the area. There are many cooperatives in the area, including a blueberry producers' cooperative, a health centre, a fishers' producer cooperative, a resident home cooperative for the disadvantaged, a social club cooperative, a consumer cooperative, feed mill, saw mill, and a credit union. The Tignish Credit Union is an example of the strength in cooperatives in the region. In 1995, it had assets of \$37.3 million and 6,337 members. By comparison, the Metro Charlottetown Credit Union, with a population base of twenty-fold that of Tignish's, had assets of \$33.6 million and 7,328 members. The growth rate of assets for the Tignish Credit Union from 1990-1995 was 77.6 percent, which exceeded the average growth rate of 60 percent for all credit unions in P.E.I. <sup>(4)</sup>

Another strength is the Community Service Centre in Tignish, which houses several agencies and provides one-stop shopping for many government services. Among the agencies housed in the centre is the *Secrétariat des Affaires Francophones*, which ensures that people can obtain provincial government services in both official languages.

Respondents saw the high concentration of the labour force in fishing and farming, and the accompanying dependence on unemployment insurance earnings as weaknesses. The strong leadership capabilities in Evangeline were not as evident here from the responses of those interviewed. Neither was there evidence of strong entrepreneurship. We were told that risk taking was averted through the formation of cooperatives.

Unlike the people of the many communities surrounding Wellington who identify more with Evangeline as a single region to develop for the benefit of Acadians, the Francophones in the Tignish-Palmer Road-St. Louis area do not consider their area as a single region to develop. The Acadian population is much more dispersed here. Francophones participate with the English in each of the municipalities to effect whatever development efforts there are for the local community as a whole.

Like the Evangeline area, the Tignish region draws many tourists from Quebec, New Brunswick, and Louisiana because of the region's Acadian heritage. As well, there are many musicians, artists, and performers who contribute to the economy.

### **The Anglophone Minority in the Gaspé Peninsula**

Anglophones in the Gaspé are dispersed over a large geographic area. In the counties of Bonaventure, Pabok, and la côte de Gaspé, the maternal language of 8,300 persons is English. The proportion of Anglophones in the population of the three counties are higher than for the Province as a whole. The highest concentration of Anglophones is found in Bonaventure County, and Anglophones are the majority in the communities of New Carlisle, Shigawake, Grande Cascapédia, Saint Jules and Hope Town. The Anglophone population is an aging one; the proportion of those more than sixty-five years of age is higher for the Anglophone population (16.6 percent) than for the Francophone population (10.9 percent) in the Gaspé (Beaudin et al. 1995).

Between 1986 and 1991, there has been a decline in the total population of the three Gaspé counties in our study. However, we were not able to obtain a linguistic breakdown. Among the communities that suffered declines are New Carlisle, Shigawake, Grande Cascapédia, and Saint Jules, where Anglophones are the majority (Beaudin et al. 1995). Although the on site interviews confirm an exodus of Anglophones from the Gaspé, deducing from our statistical profiles that the emigration of Anglophones is disproportionate to Francophones is impossible.

Like the Francophone community in Prince County, PEI, the Anglophone community in the Gaspé is twice disadvantaged; the region is economically depressed by national standards, and by certain socioeconomic indicators, the Anglophone minority is disadvantaged compared with the linguistic Francophone majority. The labour force participation rates in the Gaspé are lower than those for Canada and the participation rates for Anglophones are lower than those

of Francophones. The same is true of unemployment rates that range from 44 to 67 percent for those communities in Bonaventure County where Anglophones are the majority or sizable minorities. The dependency on transfer payments is also high. The ratio of unemployment insurance earnings to earned income in the so called Anglophone communities of New Carlisle, Grande Cascapédia, and Shigawake are, respectfully, approximately three times, five times, and seven and a half times higher than the ratio for the Province of Quebec (Beaudin et al. 1995).

We found a higher proportion of Anglophones (14 percent) than Francophones (10 percent) in primary activities. As well, there were a higher proportion of Anglophones (35 percent) than Francophones (28 percent) in traditional services, but less concentration of Anglophones (12 percent) than Francophones (17 percent) in the manufacturing sector. Since productivity gains and remuneration in the traditional service sectors are lower than in manufacturing, the Anglophones are not in an enviable position. In financial services, the disparity is not as great; four percent for Anglophones and five percent for Francophones. The proportion of Anglophones (21 percent) employed in the public sector, especially in education and social services, is lower (28 percent) than for their linguistic counterparts (Beaudin et al. 1995). The distribution of employment by sectors and by linguistic group indicates that the linguistic minorities in both Prince County and the south coast of Gaspé are disadvantaged.

Of the seven occupational sectors -- education, health, managerial, manufacturing, technical professions, transportation, construction -- where salaries were above average in 1991, Anglophones had a lower concentration of employment in five. The exceptions were in manufacturing and in education where the mix of administrators to teachers was high due to the smaller total number of students and staff in the English school system.

We found some disparities in the education levels between the two linguistic groups on the south coast of Gaspé. A larger proportion of Anglophones (42.6 percent) than Francophones (35.4 percent) in the labour force population did not complete secondary schooling. Paradoxically, both linguistic groups had approximately the same proportion (15 percent) of university graduates in the labour force population. In New Carlisle and in Grande Cascapédia there was an above average concentration of Anglophone university graduates in the labour force population for the south coast region of the Gaspé (Beaudin et al. 1995).

The average employment earnings for both linguistic groups were 76 percent of their Canadian counterparts. However, when we examined the remuneration by occupational groups, we found that average earnings of the Francophone majority exceeded their Anglophone counterparts in eight out of thirteen categories. The five categories where average

employment earnings of Anglophones were higher were: processing industries, office employees, fabrication and assembly, teaching, and other industries not specified (Beaudin et al. 1995).

The disparities in earnings between Anglophone women and men are not as pronounced as they are in the Province and in Canada. However, the labour force participation rate among Anglophone women in the Gaspé is extremely low: on average, only one in three is an active participant in the labour force. This low participation rate partially explains why the unemployment rate for Anglophone women is lower than for Anglophone men. As well, the labour force participation rates are lower for Anglophone women (34.5 percent) than for Francophone women (51.6 percent) in the Gaspé, just as they are for men (57.4 percent versus 65.5 percent) (Beaudin and Boudreau 1995).

What did our interviews reveal about the institutions that are in place for local and regional development? There are municipal institutions, such as the *Comité de Développement de New Carlisle*, which undertake projects to attract tourists but do not engage in comprehensive planning. In New Carlisle, English-speaking people work with the French majority for the promotion of the community. In New Richmond, there is *La Commission du Développement Économique - Ville de New Richmond*, which has an annual budget of \$85,000. <sup>(5)</sup> Although this commission tries to attract new businesses to the town and oversee some sectoral committees, such as forestry and fishing, they do not plan comprehensively for the municipality. The Anglophones tend not to take an active role in the Commission's direction because they see it as a creation of the municipal government, which operates in the French language. In smaller communities, the efforts are more modest, but the situation is similar, i.e., there is no overall planning of the economic future of the communities. Nevertheless, whatever local development efforts there are, English Gaspésians tend to cooperate with the French speaking majority.

There are many government departments and agencies that have responsibility for regional development. At the provincial level, there is the *Commission Régionale de Concertation et de Développement (CRCD) de la Gaspésie et des Îles-de-la-Madeleine* that has drawn up a strategic development plan for the 1993-1998 period. This council of mayors has set some overall objectives and some specific ones in various sectors, and operates on an annual budget of \$4 million. Most of the English-speaking people we interviewed were not aware of its plans, and only a few were even aware of its existence. The ordinary citizen was not involved in the formulation or approval of the plan. Any publicity calling for input was done in the French media but not in the English media. This lack of publicity in English effectively

disenfranchised any Anglophone wishing to participate in the development process. Similar comments about disenfranchising Anglophones have been made about the Municipal Regional Councils.

At the federal level there is the Federal Office of Regional Development (Québec) -- *Bureau Fédéral Régional (Québec)* -- with an office in distant Rimouski. The Federal Business Development Bank -- *Banque Fédérale de Développement* -- also has an office in Rimouski that is responsible for the Peninsula. The *Société d'Aménagement et de Développement Communautaire (SADC)*, also known as Community Futures, is in danger of discontinuation. Beyond their awareness of the Federal Business Development Bank, those interviewed did not know of the existence of these agencies, let alone participate in any processes.

These institutions, whether at the federal, provincial, or municipal levels, are typically not sensitive to the English minority and its needs. We asked whether English-speaking Gaspesians were treated better by the federal agencies than provincial ones, and we were told that in some instances the federal agencies are less sensitive to the needs of the Anglophones than their provincial counterparts. Such perceptions of treatment by public servants act as a disincentive to potential entrepreneurs in trying new ventures or expanding their operations.

Respondents were aware of many strengths in the communities where they resided, and strengths within the wider Anglophone community in the Gaspé. Some strengths perceived by those interviewed were: the salmon runs on the Cascapédia rivers, the British Historical Village in New Richmond; the museums and various cultural attractions in various communities which reflected the heritage of English speaking Gaspesians; the Pin Rouge ski facility near New Richmond; agriculture, especially beef raising; the highest mountain chain east of the Rockies; the Stone Pulp and Paper facility in New Richmond; the English Schools, the recreational facilities, and the eighteen hole golf course in New Carlisle; the large service centre for public and private goods, and the tourist attractions in the Town of Gaspé; the lobster industry and tourism in the Magdalen Islands. The English language newspaper, *Spec*, was seen as an important unifying force for the vastly dispersed Anglophone population in the Gaspé. Magdalen Islanders similarly treasured their English newspaper, *First Informer*. The Committee for Anglophone Social Action in the Gaspé (CASA) is viewed as a stalwart in protecting the interests and rights of English Gaspesians.

Among the weaknesses of the region perceived by those interviewed were: the distance from markets; poor passenger transportation facilities, especially air travel; high long distance telephone rates; the exodus of the young; and the lack of overnight accommodations on the Magdalen Islands. For Anglophones, the dispersed English population, the exodus of young

Anglophones, the aging Anglophone population, the absence of a postsecondary Anglophone institution, including a Collège enseignement général et professionnel (CEGEP), and the high dependency of Anglophones on social programmes were seen as additional hindrances in preserving their language, culture, and improving their relatively disadvantaged economic circumstances.

There was a very strong consensus among those interviewed that there was a lack of leadership at all levels of government when it came to economic development. The leadership of CASA was highly praised for its efforts in defending the political rights of Anglophones. However, some respondents expressed that CASA should expand its mandate to include the involvement of Anglophones in the economic life of the region.

English-speaking Gaspesians contribute to the Peninsula's economy and to the Canadian economy in many ways, according to those interviewed. In Grand Cascapédia there is *La Société de la Gestion pour la Rivière Grande Cascapédia*, an equal partnership between the predominantly local English community and the Micmacs on the Gesgapegiag reserve (formerly known as the Mira reserve), which manages the salmon river that has traditionally attracted American and other English-speaking tourists. Anglophones have traditionally been good managers of the salmon rivers in the Gaspé peninsula. The partnership which exists through *La Société* is a model of cooperation between two minority groups.

In nearby New Richmond, a community of 4,200 people, 18 percent of whom are Anglophones, there is the Gaspesian British Heritage Centre which retraces the Loyalist era from 1760 to the early 1900s. Started in 1988, the Loyalist village now has twenty buildings, and employs thirty seasonal workers on a part-time basis, one full-time person, and four people on a full-time basis from May to September. In 1994, there were 15,000 visitors to the Centre. <sup>(6)</sup> The Anglophones throughout the Gaspé make a big contribution to tourism because they attract English-speaking tourists who would not otherwise come to the region. Other communities have heritage museums, such as the Hamilton museum in New Carlisle.

Also in New Richmond, the English established the New Richmond Fairgrounds where cattle are auctioned and the price is set before the cattle leave the area. Previously, the price was determined at the destination point, at which time the stock had experienced weight loss and there may have been adverse price movements in the market. This innovation of the New Richmond auction has contributed to an improvement in productivity in the agriculture sector of the region. The initiation of the artificial insemination programme has done so as well. Many English-speaking Gaspesians are important producers in agriculture. Farms have been handed

down from generation to generation, and are well managed. There are large beef producers, dairy farms, and horse-breeders.

Historically, English-speaking Gaspesians have been entrepreneurs in the region. For example, Robin Jones & Whitman Limited is spoken of as the second-oldest company in Canada, next to the Hudson Bay Company. Englishspeaking Gaspesians played an important role in the forestry and fishery sectors of the Peninsula. Today, Anglophones continue to contribute successfully as farmers, fishers, and as tourist operators. More important, English-speaking entrepreneurs are at the forefront of new technology and innovation. One dairy farm operator is researching and developing an organic compost made of peat moss, fish waste, and farm waste. Some production has been exported to Japan. A fishers' union official told us that it is the English-speaking fishers who are more likely to adopt new technology. Fishers travel long distances to catch fish, and because English-speaking fishers can more easily communicate while they are in ports outside the Gaspé, they become acquainted with new ways and new technology. And because many of these fishers are also bilingual, they are able to pass their new knowledge on to unilingual French-speaking fishers in the Gaspé. This also happens in agriculture and other sectors. It would seem that English-speaking Gaspesians act as an important bridge socially and economically between the Francophones in Quebec and the rest of Canada, and the world.

Many English speaking people are self-employed in the region. Some have businesses that families have operated for generations. Others start their own businesses because they find it difficult to find employment due to local employers' preference for Francophones. We have been told that it is more difficult for an Anglophone, even if she or he is bilingual, to find work than a Francophone who is bilingual, or even in some instances, than a unilingual Francophone. As well, some Anglophones, who had left the region, began to see opportunities for starting their own businesses in the Gaspé, and have since returned to do so. However, many people expressed that the pool of entrepreneurs among Anglophones was shrinking due to the aging Anglophone population and the exodus of young Anglophones from the region.

## **Conclusion**

What have we learned from the comparative experiences of the English minority in the Gaspé and the French minority in Prince County of Prince Edward Island? First, we quickly discovered

that the Gaspé region, like the Tignish-Palmer Road area, is very much different from the Evangeline region. As we have mentioned, Evangeline is a French enclave where Francophones are in the majority. They have their own schools, and the working language in the communities is French. In the Tignish-Palmer road area, the Acadians do not have a French school to which they can send their children. The working language is English, and many people of Acadian or French heritage are no longer able to speak French, or can do so only minimally. English-speaking Gaspésians are not in the majority within their communities, except for some very small communities. In some communities like New Carlisle, there are English-run schools. But unlike Prince Edward Island, which has become quite sensitive to the needs of the Francophones as a minority, Quebec has passed language legislation which discourages the use of the English language, and the language policy is designed to force English-speaking people to assimilate. Consequently, much time and effort in the Gaspé are spent preserving the rights of the English, and by contrast to the Evangeline area, little time has been spent in promoting economic development in a concerted way by English Gaspésians. <sup>(7)</sup>

The concentration of Francophones in the Evangeline region produces a greater commonality of interest for development purposes. People see the advancement of their economy as a way of ensuring the preservation and advancement of their culture. Thus, they actively promote the area and lobby for structures for economic development that will support the needs of their region. They are used to collaborating through the cooperative movement and form quite a force for development. There was no comprehensive plan in place for Evangeline, but this may change as new structures come into play because of federal and provincial reforms in regional development. Ultimately, the chances of large-scale development will be limited by the nature of the PEI economy, the performance of the Canadian economy, and the monies available from the public purse for both heritage spending and development. In the Tignish-Palmer Road and Gaspé regions, the minority groups are more dispersed geographically and do not operate on a unified front for development purposes. Community economic development -- such as it is -- is associated with the local place, and is not tied to language.

Just as Evangeline is more fortunate relative to the other regions in this study, it is also subject to the potential shock of reduction in public spending. The success of the economy of Evangeline is somewhat artificial in its dependence on funding for heritage purposes. There is a concentration of public servants or quasi-public servants dependent on heritage money in the Evangeline region, and this presence partially explains the fact that the average income for this region is above that of Prince County as a whole. Also, there are many educated people who could provide the necessary leadership to formulate and implement development



plans. But this strength can become a weakness: if there is a drastic cut in funding there will be an exodus of well-educated bilingual people and the economic base of the region will be badly eroded. With a loss of population, funding for French schools could become problematic, and that would be the beginning of the loss of the minority language and culture. Consequently, there would be a loss of communal interest in developing the Evangeline region.

Despite the differences in communal interests in developing their local economies, the statistics show that the linguistic minorities in the two regions have much in common. They are each disadvantaged in relation to the respective linguistic majorities in the two regions. In the Gaspé, it is the Anglophones, and in Prince County, it is the Francophones, who have smaller proportions of their population under twenty-five years of age, lower participation rates, lower educational levels, greater concentrations of employment in primary activities, higher ratios of unemployment insurance earnings to earned income, and a lower concentration of employment in most of the sectors with above average earnings. And, despite the disadvantages faced by the linguistic minorities, they nevertheless make important contributions to output.

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## **Endnotes**

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2. From an interview with Monsieur Edgar Arseneau, *agent de développement économique régional*, Wellington, P.E.I., March 1995.

3. From *Les Affaires*, Sept. 16-22, 1995 issue, page 8. The source quoted in the article is Statistics Canada.
4. Based on interviews with Mr. Victor Doucet, Assistant Manager at the Tignish Credit Union, Tignish, March 1995, and Mr. Robert Gregory, Marketing Manager for Credit Union Central for P.E.I., September 1996.
5. From an interview with Mr. Jean-Marie Jobin, Mayor of New Richmond, February 1995.
6. Interview with Mrs. Joan Dow, President of the Gaspesian British Heritage Centre, New Richmond, February 1995.
7. To place things in context, we were told repeatedly by respondents that there does not appear to be any great concern about economic development outside of the tourist sector, by any group in the Gaspé. With the provincial government preoccupied with the sovereignty issue in 1995 and the ensuing debate on the matter in the region by both linguistic groups, the pursuit of economic development at the regional level seems to have been set aside.

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