

Dynamics of Power in Immigrant Student Placements: Comparing Government, School, and Student Discourses in Quebec Schools

Roberta Soares, University of Ottawa

ABSTRACT

This study examines how different social actors (government, school personnel, and immigrant students) construct the meaning of integration and justify placement decisions in relation to the welcoming class, a language support model which is part of the linguistic, academic, and social integration program in Quebec, Canada. The article describes qualitative ethnographic research from a critical epistemological perspective. The analysis draws on multiple sources of qualitative data, including government documents, observations of school interactions, and semi-structured interviews with school personnel and students. A thematic analysis highlights how integration is notably framed as the adaptation of students to the host educational system. Across institutional and professional discourses, success is understood according to locally valued norms such as students' academic performance, autonomy, and motivation. Students who are perceived as failing to meet these expectations are more likely to experience extended stays in the welcoming class or to be redirected toward alternative pathways, including placement below their age level in regular schooling, adult education, or special education. By comparing institutional, professional, and student perspectives, the analysis reveals how deficit interpretations of students' trajectories coexist with limited recognition of structural constraints within the host educational system.

Keywords: linguistic integration, immigrant students, school placement, othering, deficit thinking

RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude examine comment différents acteurs sociaux (gouvernement, personnel scolaire et élèves immigrants) construisent le sens de l'intégration et justifient les décisions d'orientation concernant la classe d'accueil, un modèle de soutien linguistique qui s'inscrit dans le programme d'intégration linguistique, scolaire et sociale au Québec, au Canada. L'article décrit une recherche ethnographique qualitative menée dans une perspective épistémologique critique. L'analyse s'appuie sur de multiples sources de données qualitatives, notamment des documents gouvernementaux, des observations des interactions en milieu scolaire et des entretiens semi-structurés avec le personnel scolaire et les élèves. Une analyse thématique met en évidence la manière dont l'intégration est principalement définie comme l'adaptation des élèves au système éducatif d'accueil. Dans les discours institutionnels et professionnels, la réussite est appréhendée selon des normes valorisées localement, telles que les résultats scolaires, l'autonomie et la motivation des élèves. Les élèves perçus comme ne répondant pas à ces attentes sont plus susceptibles de rester longtemps dans la classe d'accueil ou d'être réorientés vers d'autres parcours, notamment un placement dans une classe inférieure à leur niveau d'âge dans l'enseignement ordinaire, l'éducation des adultes ou l'éducation spécialisée. En comparant les points de vue institutionnels, professionnels et des élèves, l'analyse révèle comment les interprétations déficitaires des parcours des élèves coexistent avec une reconnaissance limitée des contraintes structurelles au sein du système éducatif d'accueil.

Mots-clés : intégration linguistique, élèves immigrants, placement scolaire, « autruisation », pensée déficitaire

INTRODUCTION

Immigration has become a central focus of public and political debate in Canada. Population growth associated with higher levels of permanent and temporary immigration has intensified concerns about housing affordability, public services, labour market needs, and the capacity of institutions to support newcomers. In response, the federal and Quebec governments have introduced significant policy changes, including reductions in immigration targets, caps on international student permits, and measures intended to align immigration more closely with institutional and societal capacity (Gouvernement du Canada, 2024; Gouvernement du Québec, 2025; The Racialization of Asian International Students Collective, 2026). Although much of this public discussion has centred on immigration levels and international students,

less attention has been paid to immigrant children and adolescents entering the public school system. Their educational trajectories are shaped not only by language acquisition but also by institutional decisions concerning their academic progression.

Even though immigration plays an important role in the demographic and economic development of many societies (Institut de la statistique du Québec, 2023; Statistique Canada, 2022), immigrants' integration remains a significant challenge (Abu-Laban et al., 2023). Recently arrived immigrant youth must often adapt simultaneously to a new language, cultural environment, and educational system (Shields & Lujan, 2018). These transitions can affect students' academic trajectories, social experiences, and sense of belonging (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2009).

Across many national contexts, schools play a central role in immigrant integration. Educational institutions are not only sites where students acquire language competencies and academic knowledge but also spaces in which ideas of citizenship, social participation, and belonging are negotiated. Educational policies and practices may therefore shape how newcomers are positioned and how inclusion is understood (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2009).

Canada has long positioned itself as a country of immigration, with immigration policies closely linked to nation-building, demographic growth, and economic development (Abu-Laban et al., 2023; Statistique Canada, 2022). Immigration currently accounts for a substantial proportion of population growth, contributing to increasingly diverse school populations across Canadian provinces (Statistique Canada, 2022). As a result, Canadian schools have become key sites where diversity, inclusion, and immigrant integration are negotiated in everyday educational practice. Although Canada is often associated with multicultural ideals, research suggests that immigrant students continue to encounter uneven educational experiences shaped by linguistic barriers, institutional structures, and broader social inequalities (Abu-Laban et al., 2023; Shields & Lujan, 2018). These dynamics vary across provinces due to differences in educational systems, language policies, and approaches to immigrant integration (Mc Andrew, 2010).

While Canada recognizes English and French as its two official languages at the federal level through the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Official Languages Act (Gouvernement du Canada, 1982, 1985), language policy varies across provinces. Quebec is the only province where French is the sole official language, as established by the Charter of the French Language (Gouvernement du Québec, 1977). Under the Charter of the French Language, access to English-language public schooling in Quebec is restricted, and most immigrant students are therefore required to attend French-language schools unless they meet specific eligibility criteria linked primarily to parental schooling in English in Canada (Gouvernement du Québec, 1977). These policies aim to promote French as the common public language of the province and to support the

integration of newcomers into the francophone majority (Mc Andrew, 2010). At the same time, language legislation related to schooling has significant implications and has been the subject of ongoing debates concerning language rights and educational access (Lamarre, 2012).

Quebec occupies therefore a distinctive sociolinguistic position within North America as a predominantly French-speaking society situated within a broader English-speaking context. Historically, concerns regarding the preservation of French language and culture have shaped public debates surrounding immigration, integration, and education. Language policy in Quebec is consequently not only an administrative matter but is also closely linked to questions of collective identity, cultural continuity, and nation-building (Lamarre, 2012; Mc Andrew, 2010).

Immigration and integration have increasingly occupied a central place in public and political debates in Quebec. Discussions concerning immigration, the preservation of French language and culture, and the integration of newcomers frequently intersect with broader concerns regarding identity, social cohesion, and the future of francophone society (Mc Andrew et al., 2015). Schools occupy a significant position within these debates because they are often understood as institutions responsible for linguistic, academic, and social integration (Soares, 2024).

Educational systems adopt diverse approaches to supporting newly arrived students learning the language of schooling. Some prioritize placement in mainstream classrooms with additional language support, whereas others rely on transitional separate structures intended to facilitate linguistic and academic adaptation (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010).

In Quebec, students who require support in learning French are frequently placed in the welcoming class, a language support model which is part of the linguistic, academic, and social integration program, that operates separately from regular schooling (De Koninck & Armand, 2012; Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2010). The welcoming class is officially presented as a transitional structure designed to prepare students for their integration into

regular schooling (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2010).

Within a broader political context, welcoming classes function not only as educational support structures but also as institutional spaces through which expectations concerning linguistic integration, belonging, and educational trajectories may be enacted (Soares, 2024). For example, scholars have raised questions regarding tensions between linguistic integration and educational inclusion, including the ways separate structures may shape students' social experiences, school trajectories, and sense of belonging (De Koninck & Armand, 2012; Mc Andrew, 2010). Students enrolled in this model typically pass through two key institutional moments: an initial placement when they enter the welcoming class and a subsequent placement when they leave it and are directed toward different educational pathways (Soares, 2024). These placement decisions can significantly influence students' educational trajectories. From a critical perspective, placement decisions cannot be understood solely as technical or pedagogical processes. They also involve institutional governmental discourses in which categories such as integration, language proficiency, and educational pathways are constructed and negotiated (Foucault, 1975; Soares, 2024).

While government policies define the official objectives of linguistic integration programs, these policies are implemented in everyday school practices by teachers, administrators, and other school personnel. Moreover, immigrant students themselves experience and interpret these processes from their own perspectives. Understanding how integration and placement decisions are constructed therefore requires examining the perspectives of multiple social actors involved. In response, this study analyzes the discourses of three groups of social actors—government, school personnel, and immigrant students—regarding the placement of students learning the language of schooling in Quebec. By comparing these perspectives, the research seeks to understand how integration is understood within the education system, how students' readiness for regular schooling is evaluated, and how different educational trajectories are considered before, during, and after students' participation in the welcoming class.

Although situated within Quebec, this study contributes to national and international discussions concerning newcomer education, language and school integration, and belonging. To address these questions, this article reports on qualitative ethnographic research conducted from a critical epistemological perspective.

LINGUISTIC INTEGRATION PROGRAMS AND WELCOMING CLASSES

Several studies conducted in Quebec have examined the functioning of welcoming classes and the educational experiences of immigrant students within these programs (Armand, 2021; Breton-Carbonneau, 2011; De Koninck & Armand, 2012). More precisely, studies in second language teaching have explored the pedagogical practices implemented in welcoming classes and their impact on students' learning experiences. Research has highlighted the role of reading and writing development, as well as the importance of cultural and artistic activities in facilitating language learning (Armand et al., 2008, 2013; Maynard & Armand, 2016; Vatz Laaroussi et al., 2013; Beauregard et al., 2020). Other work has examined the specific challenges faced by refugee students, whose previous educational experiences may differ significantly from those expected in the host education system (Feuer-verger, 2011; Papazian-Zohrabian et al., 2018; Pugh et al., 2012). These studies have focused on improving the class experience in the current models of integration.

Thus, existing research portrays welcoming classes as a central mechanism through which Quebec supports the linguistic integration of newly arrived students. This literature has generated important knowledge about classroom practices and language learning. However, less attention has been paid to how institutional placement decisions are produced across different levels of the education system or to how these decisions are simultaneously understood by policy makers, school personnel, and students themselves. Consequently, the literature provides a partial understanding of how educational trajectories are constructed through everyday institutional practices.

STUDENT EXPERIENCES IN WELCOMING CLASSES

Research focusing on students' experiences within welcoming classes or similar integration programs has highlighted both opportunities and challenges associated with these models. Because welcoming classes operate separately from regular schooling, they often segregate (Aarsæther, 2021; Amireault & Lampron-de Souza, 2022; Razafimandimbimanana & Blanchet, 2011; Steinbach, 2010a, 2010b, 2015) and limit interactions with students in regular schooling (Hilt, 2017; Moya & Butler-Kisber, 2019; Resch et al., 2023; Terhart & Dewitz, 2018). Such institutional segregation is frequently justified by the need to provide intensive language instruction before students can fully participate in regular schooling (Allen, 2006, 2007). However, some students and their families may see this separation as an obstacle to their integration, rather than the way to be integrated. Not only due to segregation, but also because of the potential academic delay caused by time spent in the welcoming class or similar models (J. Cohen, 2012; Riggs & Due, 2011).

Some studies also highlight the agency of immigrant students as they navigate the challenges of adapting to a new educational environment (Allen, 2006; J. Cohen, 2012). Students may draw on family resources, interpret their migration experience positively, and develop social relationships with peers and school staff to support their educational trajectories (Michael et al., 2007; McCloud, 2015). Other studies have underlined the role of school-family relations in shaping the educational trajectories of immigrant students (Kanouté et al., 2008; Soares et al., 2023).

PLACEMENT PROCESSES AND EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITY

Another body of research examines how placement decisions within education systems contribute to the variation of students' educational pathways. These studies document the overrepresentation of minoritized students in less prestigious programs, such as special education, and their underrepresentation in more selective educational tracks (Bélanger & Taleb, 2006; Bianco & Leech, 2010; Collins, 2024;

Hibel et al., 2010; Hibel & Jasper, 2012; Riley, 2019). Minoritized students are individuals from racialized or other socially marginalized groups, such as those with immigration backgrounds, who experience marginalization within educational institutions and broader society because of power dynamics (Black et al., 2023).

Placement decisions may be influenced not only by academic performance but also by subjective interpretations of students' behaviour, motivation, and family context (Bonizzoni et al., 2016; Mathivat et al., 2024; Querrien, 2022; Tajic & Bunar, 2023). For students learning the language of schooling, these processes may be further complicated by the difficulty of distinguishing between challenges related to second-language acquisition and indicators of learning disabilities, which can affect students' educational paths (Carothers & Parfitt, 2017).

Although existing research has examined pedagogical practices in welcoming classes (Armand, 2021; Beauregard et al., 2020), students' experiences in integration programs (Aarsæther, 2021; Resch et al., 2023), and broader patterns of educational placement (Mathivat et al., 2024; Tajic & Bunar, 2023), fewer studies have analyzed how different actors simultaneously construct and interpret the processes that shape immigrant students' educational trajectories. Government policies define the official objectives of integration programs, school personnel implement these policies through everyday practices and placement decisions, and students experience the consequences of these decisions in their educational paths. Examining these perspectives together makes it possible to better understand how integration and placement are constructed within the school system. This study addresses this gap by comparing the discourses of government, school personnel, and immigrant students about the placement of students in a linguistic integration program in Quebec.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In school contexts, the construction of difference is closely connected to deficit thinking, which reduces minoritized students to presumed "deficiencies," defined according to the values of the dominant group (Davis & Museus, 2019). Deficit thinking is grounded in a meritocratic ideology that assumes everyone has

an equal chance of success while obscuring structural inequalities (e.g., systemic racism; Valencia, 1997). This perspective often assigns the failures of minoritized students to supposed individual or cultural shortcomings rather than to structural inequalities, thereby encouraging a focus on correcting presumed deficits. For immigrant students, their “difficulties” may be explained by insufficient family support or inadequate prior schooling experiences, while systemic barriers remain unexamined (Davis & Museus, 2019).

This is connected to broader dynamics of othering, through which certain groups are constructed as different and positioned as inferior within institutional contexts (Krumer-Nevo & Sidi, 2012). Dominant groups shape power relations (Dhamoon, 2009) and justify them through the construction of difference (Derwin, 2015). These justifications obscure the underlying dynamics of power and processes of inferiorization (Dhamoon, 2009). Those in positions of authority impose their own cultural definitions and, in turn, capital for themselves and others (Bourdieu, 1980, 1996). In relation to public schooling contexts, othering is expressed through the categorization and inferiorization of minoritized students during different educational practices (teaching practices and interventions carried out by school personnel) and social interactions (between teachers and students) (Darchinian et al., 2021). Within this framework, deficit thinking can be understood as a mechanism that reinforces processes of othering. Deficit thinking legitimizes hierarchical distinctions between students and reinforces the perception that some groups deviate from institutional norms. These processes contribute to the normalization of student behaviour within schools (Soares, 2025).

Such normalization operates through a governmental regime and its processes of disciplinarization. According to Foucault’s (1975) understanding of disciplinary power, specific techniques are implemented to ensure compliance with institutional norms. These techniques are applied by “judges of normality,” figures responsible for maintaining institutional rules, the school curriculum, and often reproduced by teachers in schools (Bert, 2016; Foucault, 1975). That includes the control of time (e.g., sanc-

tioning lateness and absences), space (e.g., controlling movement), and activities (e.g., regulating attention and participation), as well as ways of being (e.g., punishing disobedience or unexpected behaviour). Through these mechanisms, students’ bodies are disciplined to conform to institutional expectations (Foucault, 1975). More broadly, schools operate through a disciplinary logic aimed at normalizing behaviour through systems of rewards and punishments (Foucault, 1975). Students are evaluated according to their compliance with institutional standards in terms of skills, performance, and behaviour, which contributes to their categorization as “good” or “bad” students (Ford, 2003). Those who do not conform may be perceived as resistant, a form of inadequacy within the school system. In this way, schools reinforce expectations of student docility and productivity (Ford, 2003; Ryan, 1991).

From a Foucauldian perspective, governmental documents do more than communicate educational policy. In the case of education and immigration, they participate in the production of legitimate knowledge about students, integration, and schooling. Policy documents establish categories, define institutional objectives, and specify the criteria through which students are assessed and classified. In this sense, they contribute to a governmental discursive regime that shapes how immigrant students become intelligible within the education system and how placement decisions are justified (Foucault, 1969, 1980). Examining these documents therefore makes it possible to analyze not only official policy but also the discursive production of norms that guide educational practice.

Thus, the concepts of othering (Ahmed, 2013; Dhamoon, 2009), deficit thinking (Davis & Museus, 2019), and disciplinarization (Foucault, 1975) were selected for the analysis because they complement one another and provide a coherent analytical framework for examining processes of difference, normalization, and control in school contexts. More precisely, because this research concerns the experiences of immigrant students in relation to language, it examines the role of normalization in linguistic terms. Several elements may contribute to the disciplinarization of recently arrived immigrant students: (1) the obligation

to learn the language of schooling, (2) the existence of a curriculum and pedagogy delivered in that language, and (3) the stance of the host society against bilingual or plurilingual education, given the existence of a mandatory language of schooling. These elements function as strategies of assimilation, as technologies of power, since they tend to reflect the interests and monolingual ideology of the dominant group (Bondy, 2011).

METHODOLOGY

This study presents the results of qualitative ethnographic research conducted from a critical epistemological perspective (Madison, 2019), which examines how knowledge is produced, validated, and distributed within relations of power (Foucault, 1980). It argues that what counts as legitimate knowledge is shaped by historical, social, and political contexts (Foucault, 1980). It is used to analyze how dominant knowledge systems can reproduce social inequalities while also opening space to recognize marginalized ways of knowing (L. Cohen et al., 2017).

In terms of positionality, it is important to clarify that I did not attend school in Canada during my primary or secondary education but arrived as an adult to pursue my doctoral studies. I am also not the parent of a student, nor am I a school professional. Nevertheless, my experience as an immigrant has inevitably shaped the way I conceptualized this research and conducted the analysis of the data. My own trajectory enables me to understand the challenges imposed by the host society of having to learn a second language within a different educational system, as well as the injustices associated with forms of linguistic discrimination that may arise in this context. I can also relate to the challenges involved in adapting to the culture of the host society, as well as to the possibility of being othered, of not fully belonging, and of encountering xenophobia.

Consistent with a critical ethnographic approach, multiple sources of data were used to document and analyze the social processes under study. Three types of data collection and analysis were carried out. First, a discourse analysis of documents was conducted to examine how institutional discourses frame immigrant

students and language practices within the school system (Cellard, 1997; Foucault, 1969). Second, observations of social interactions were undertaken (Pepin, 2011; Vienne, 2005), focusing on the definition of the situation, that is, how social actors interpret and make sense of their interactions (Goffman, 1959). These observations made it possible to analyze how norms and expectations are enacted in everyday school interactions. Finally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants to document their experiences and interpretations of these processes (May, 2011).

The interviews were analyzed using narrative and thematic analysis (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2021). The narratives presented by school personnel can be regarded as dominant, while those of the students can serve as counternarratives, offering alternative viewpoints. Specially the narratives of minoritized students can be ignored, unlike the narratives of dominant groups (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Recruitment was based on calls for participation shared on social networks, emails sent to school service centres, and the snowball method. The research was approved by the research ethics committee of the university in which the study was conducted.

The following 10 documents¹ produced by the Government of Quebec were analyzed:

- 1 Programme de formation de l'école québécoise : intégration linguistique, scolaire et sociale (2010) : (a) progression des apprentissages au secondaire, (b) domaine des langues au secondaire, et (c) paliers pour l'évaluation du français au secondaire; Cadre de référence: accueil et intégration des élèves issus de l'immigration au Québec (2014) : (a) portrait des élèves – soutien au milieu scolaire, (b) organisation des services, (c) protocole d'accueil et d) partenariat – école, famille et communauté; Entrevue initiale: accueil et intégration des élèves issus de l'immigration au Québec : éducation préscolaire, enseignement primaire et enseignement secondaire (2014); Évaluation initiale des compétences langagières en français : accueil et intégration des élèves issus de l'immigration au Québec : enseignement secondaire (2014); Soutien au milieu scolaire 2024–2025: intégration et réussite des élèves issus de l'immigration et éducation interculturelle (2024).

- Quebec School Training Program: Linguistic, Academic and Social Integration (2010):
 - » Progression of Learning in Secondary School
 - » Language Domain in Secondary School
 - » Levels for the Evaluation of French in Secondary School
- Reference Framework: Welcoming and Integrating Students from Immigrant Backgrounds in Quebec (2014):
 - » Student Profile – Support for the School Environment
 - » Organization of Services
 - » Welcoming Protocol
 - » Partnership – School, Family and Community
- Initial Interview: Welcoming and Integrating Students from Immigrant Backgrounds in Quebec: Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education (2014)
- Initial Assessment of French Language Skills: Welcoming and Integrating Students from Immigrant Backgrounds in Quebec: Secondary School (2014)
- Support for the School Environment 2024–2025: Integration and Success of Students from Immigrant Backgrounds and Intercultural Education (2024)

The following 10 hours of social interactions were observed: six pre-placement meetings (six hours); a meeting to welcome parents of secondary school students who would soon be attending the welcoming class (one hour); two periods of French lessons in a welcoming class for secondary school students (two hours); and social interactions in the corridors of a school (one hour). Finally, 37 interviews were conducted with school personnel, being 14 teachers, 12 educational advisors, three professionals from other types of support, and eight professionals from different administrative positions; as well as seven interviews that were conducted with secondary school students who attended the welcoming class. Each interview lasted around one

hour. It should be noted that not all documents, spaces of observations, or interviews were mentioned in the results and in the analysis.

As for the interviews with school personnel, the recruitment criteria were as follows: (1) to work in a school, (2) to be in connection with the welcoming class, (3) to mainly interact with secondary school students, and (4) to reside in the metropolitan area of Montreal. Regarding their profile, the majority (27 of 37) of participants were born in Canada and have French as their first language (26 of 37). In terms of the interviews with students, the recruitment criteria were as follows: (1) to be or to have been a secondary school student, (2) to have attended the welcoming class, (3) to reside in the metropolitan area of Montreal, and (4) to be at least 18 years old at the time of the interview. Regarding their profiles, two were born in Sudan, one in Benin, one in Pakistan, one in Ivory Coast, one in Mexico, and one in Venezuela. As for their time spent in the welcoming class, three spent one year of schooling or less, three spent one and a half or two years of schooling, and one spent three years of schooling. Upon arrival in the welcoming class, five stated that they had no knowledge of French and two indicated that they spoke French well. In fact, French-speaking students can be directed to the welcoming class if their writing and reading skills need to be improved. After their stay in the welcoming class, five students were placed in regular schooling (four out of the five below their age level), one student was directed to a partial integration model, and one student went through different paths (regular schooling, special education, and adult education). The data collection guides focused on the participants' perceptions of the linguistic integration model of the welcoming class in Quebec. The study especially underlines social situations directly related to the research topic. In addition, the extracts presented in this article were translated from French to English for the purpose of clarity.

RESULTS

The analysis of the results takes into consideration the main themes identified as well as the narrative of different social actors concerned: (1) integration as an institutional expectation, (2) the construction of the “successful” immigrant student, (3) placement decisions as mechanisms that structure educational trajectories, and (4) students’ experiences of integration and placement.

Integration as an Institutional Expectation

Across the different sources of data, integration is primarily defined as the responsibility of immigrant students to adapt to the linguistic, academic, and social norms of the host education system. Government policy documents emphasize that newly arrived students must learn French and become familiar with the functioning of Quebec schools and society. According to these documents, integration services aim to ensure the “harmonious integration into school and Quebec society” of immigrant students (Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2014, p. 4). The welcoming class is presented as a key mechanism through which this integration is achieved.

School actors frequently reproduce this institutional framing. Observations of meetings with parents and classroom interactions showed that the welcoming class is often presented as an essential resource offered by the Quebec education system. During one meeting with parents, for example, a school administrator emphasized that “we are lucky in Quebec to have the welcoming class,” portraying the program as a privileged service available to newly arrived students. Interviews with school personnel also describe the welcoming class as a necessary stage before entering regular schooling. As one teacher explained, the program “serves as a springboard for integration into regular schooling.” In this perspective, the welcoming class is not only a place where students learn French but also where they learn about the school and the social environment.

Students’ narratives, however, reveal a more ambivalent experience. Several students indicated that they and their parents received

limited information about how the education system operates, including the role of the welcoming class and the possible placements that may follow. For some students, the evaluation procedures used to determine their initial placement in the welcoming class were perceived as unclear or based on unfamiliar expectations. Regina (born in Mexico), for example, described the assessment as consisting of a very simple interaction: “The lady asked me a question, what is your name or something like that.... The only thing they had to know that I did not speak French was that I had not answered the question.” Similarly, Akissi (born in Ivory Coast) explained that she believed she had completed the written test correctly, but later realized that other answers were expected: “When I took the test, I thought I was going to get a good grade, because I did it my way, but the answer they wanted, that’s not how I did my test.” These narratives suggest that the evaluation process may rely on implicit expectations.

Taken together, these perspectives illustrate how integration is largely framed as a process requiring the adaptation of immigrant students to institutional norms.

Constructing the “Successful” Immigrant Student

Various criteria are used to evaluate students’ readiness for regular schooling, which contribute to defining what constitutes a “successful” immigrant student within the school system. Upon their arrival in the local educational system as well as after their stay in the welcoming class, students are assessed to verify whether they have the skills necessary to study in regular schooling. As stated in the government documents, it involves “making an overall judgment on the student’s ability to learn in regular schooling” (Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2010, p. 11).

Government documents indicate that students are evaluated according to a range of elements: “the degree of development of transversal skills, the pace of learning, socio-school adaptation” and “any other information deemed relevant to promote integration into regular schooling” (Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2010, p. 17). This evaluation

is intended to determine if students possess the skills necessary to succeed within regular schooling.

During both observations and interviews, school actors mentioned similar criteria when describing placement decisions. In addition to students' knowledge of French and mathematics, participants frequently mentioned factors such as participation, motivation, and academic engagement when discussing students' readiness for regular schooling. For example, one teacher said about a student, "she's a studious student. She works hard; she does more than I ask of her." Participants also referred to a broader set of expectations. As one educational advisor explained, students must demonstrate strength in several areas to succeed in regular schooling: "You have to be strong to succeed in regular schooling, you have to be strong psychologically, you have to be strong academically, you have to be strong on the organizational side."

Students' narratives also reflect awareness of these expectations. Some described making considerable efforts to demonstrate motivation and active participation in class to meet the expectations of teachers and improve their chances of entering regular schooling. As one student explained, "I like to work, I like to participate, so I often asked for more work to improve" (Rajaa, born in Sudan).

These different perspectives illustrate how the evaluation of immigrant students extends beyond academic performance and incorporates normative expectations related to behaviour, engagement, and adaptation to school practices.

Placement Decisions and Educational Pathways

Although the welcoming class is officially described as a transitional stage leading to integration into regular schooling, the data reveal that several alternative educational pathways are possible following students' stay in the program. The empirical data show that students' trajectories after this stage are not limited to integration into regular schooling. School actors identified a range of possible placements for students leaving the welcoming class. These include extended stays in the welcoming class,

partial integration into regular schooling, placement in regular class (often below the students' age level), referral to adult education programs, and referral to special education programs. As noted by participants, several educational options can be considered after the stay in the welcoming class depending on the perceived readiness of the student to succeed in regular schooling. Extended stays in the welcoming class were described as relatively common. According to one educational advisor, "up to 30 months in secondary school, I would say that it is considered acceptable." In practice, this means that students can remain in the welcoming class for several years before transitioning to other educational pathways. Another possibility is partial integration, where students attend certain classes in regular schooling while continuing to receive instruction in the welcoming class. However, school actors indicated that this model remains relatively uncommon. As one educational advisor explained, "[There are] some great initiatives on this, but it is not yet widespread enough at all."

Students may also be integrated into regular schooling at a grade level below their age group. School personnel described this strategy as facilitating academic success in contexts where academic expectations are perceived as demanding. As one participant noted, "in secondary school, there are more issues...with ministerial exams, and all that, and the level is higher in maths.... It is true that we might hold back some students." While intended to increase students' chances of success, this strategy may contribute to academic delay in their educational trajectories.

Some students can also be directed toward adult education programs, particularly when their age makes it difficult to complete their studies within the youth sector, which can be discouraging. As one participant explained, "when they go to adult education, it's a bit...they study with people who could be their parents. Sometimes, it's demotivating for them." Others are referred to special education programs due to perceived learning difficulties. In some cases, these pathways can lead to vocational options oriented toward the labour market, which one teacher described critically: "It is learning to cut carrots, internships like that, it is not very rewarding."

Some school actors interviewed also noted that students from welcoming classes appear to be overrepresented in special education. According to one participant, “it is clear that there is an overrepresentation in special education, because we do not know the language acquisition processes well.” Another participant also pointed to a racialized pattern in these placements: “Systematically all our students in special education are Black or brown, well, maybe the problem is the system, it is perhaps not all Black or brown children.”

These different placement options illustrate how decisions made within the welcoming class system can significantly shape students’ educational trajectories.

Students’ Experiences of Placement and Integration

Students’ narratives provide insight into how these institutional processes are experienced from their perspective.

Several students described the stay in the welcoming class as a period that could delay their educational progress compared with peers in their countries of origin. As one student explained, “my friends in Mexico, they had already finished school last year, a year before me, so I was eager to finish too and I thought it was a bit of a waste of time” (Regina, born in Mexico). Students also reported that the transition to regular schooling can be challenging, even after spending time in the welcoming class. Some felt that teachers in regular schooling were not always prepared to support students who were still developing proficiency in French. As one student noted, “I feel obliged to say [to remind them] that I do not speak French perfectly or that I was not born here or that I come from the welcoming class, even to the teachers” (Regina, born in Mexico). Language support services were described as an important resource, when available. Students who received such support reported that it helped them better understand course content and adapt to academic expectations. As one student explained, “the linguistic support helped me a lot.... The things I did not understand, we did them together” (Ajah, born in Sudan).

Finally, some students indicated that placement decisions, which affected their educational trajectories, were made without their active participation or that of their parents. In certain cases, students reported receiving recommendations for alternative programs without fully understanding their implications. One student recalled a meeting with a guidance counsellor in which a different educational pathway was proposed: “The guidance counsellor met with me, and he said to me, ‘What I propose to you, given your difficulties, is to go to [name of the program],’ it’s like professional training...with young people in difficulty” (Ianna, born in Benin). Reflecting on the experience, the student added: “The guidance counsellor, who doesn’t know me, who has never met me [before].... I wasn’t even accompanied by my parents, I was alone during this meeting. There are half of the things that I didn’t understand” (Ianna, born in Benin). These accounts highlight the gap that may exist between institutional definitions of integration and students’ lived experiences within the education system.

DISCUSSION

By comparing institutional discourse, professional practices, and students’ experiences, the analysis highlights tensions in the ways integration and educational trajectories are defined within the school system. According to the research results, linguistic integration models, including the welcoming class, are presented as mechanisms designed to promote the linguistic, academic, and social integration of newly arrived immigrant students. Government documents emphasize the importance of acquiring proficiency in the language of schooling and understanding how Quebec schools and society work. In response, school actors largely reproduce this framing in their professional discourse, presenting the welcoming class as a necessary stage that prepares students for the expectations of regular schooling.

From this perspective, integration appears to be defined primarily as a process through which students must adapt to the linguistic, academic, and social norms of the host educational institutional environment. Linguistic integration programs therefore exist to assist students in ad-

justing to current institutional norms (Mathivat et al., 2024; Resch et al., 2023). In this sense, the discourse surrounding the welcoming class reflects a hierarchical posture of othering (Dharmoon, 2009), in which immigrant students are positioned as individuals who must adapt to succeed in the dominant educational environment. Such a framing may also obscure broader dynamics of power and racialization shaping integration processes (Darchinian et al., 2021).

Such government integration educational programs are often presented as a benevolent response by the host society to the needs of immigrant students. For instance, the welcoming class may be described to parents as a privilege intended to facilitate students' success. However, the analysis suggests that students and their parents are not always adequately informed about how the school system operates, including the functioning of the welcoming class and the potential consequences of placement decisions before and after the placement in the welcoming class. This lack of transparency highlights how institutional definitions of integration may coexist with limited communication about how these processes operate in practice and their actual consequences. The analysis also illustrates how a student's readiness to enter regular schooling is evaluated through criteria that extend beyond language proficiency or academic knowledge in maths. Both institutional documents and school personnel refer to factors such as learning pace, motivation, autonomy, and socio-school adaptation when assessing students' potential for success.

These criteria contribute to the construction of an implicit model of the "successful" immigrant student, defined according to locally valued norms of behaviour and performance. When students are perceived as not meeting these expectations, difficulties are often attributed to individual characteristics such as academic delay, learning difficulties, insufficient motivation, or limited family support. These obstacles are defined according to local educational norms and attributed to students, their families, or their backgrounds, while the role of the host environment receives less attention, even when structural issues are acknowledged, such as lack of resources. Interpreted through the concept of deficit thinking (Davis & Museus,

2019), these explanations illustrate how educational challenges may be framed primarily as individual shortcomings rather than as the result of structural or institutional constraints, such as social inequalities.

The findings further reveal that the welcoming class functions not only as a linguistic integration program but also as a key site in which students' educational trajectories are structured. While the official objective of the welcoming class is to facilitate integration into regular schooling, observations of placement meetings show that several alternative pathways may follow students' participation in the program. These include extended stays in the welcoming class, partial integration, placement in regular schooling below students' age level (with or without language support), referral to adult education, or placement in special education programs.

Observations also revealed that the welcoming class functions as a space where respect for classroom rules is considered essential for learning, success, and integration, in accordance with the expectations of the Quebec education program. These processes reflect broader mechanisms through which educational institutions classify and organize students according to their perceived ability to meet institutional expectations. From the perspective of disciplinarization (Foucault, 1975), schools operate through governmental mechanisms that regulate students' behaviours and performances in relation to established norms. Students perceived as aligning with these norms are more likely to be integrated into regular schooling, whereas those considered less prepared may be directed toward alternative educational pathways. Furthermore, although school personnel often defend the welcoming class as an important support mechanism, students' narratives highlight perceived limitations, particularly the possibility of academic delay.

The welcoming class is frequently described in the literature as a transitional space intended to facilitate students' integration into the education system (Tajic & Bunar, 2023). However, research also highlights limitations associated with such models, including the insufficient adaptation of schools to the needs of immigrant students (Resch et al., 2023). These critiques

resonate with the deficit-oriented explanations identified in this study, which emphasize students' perceived shortcomings without sufficiently examining structural conditions shaping their experiences (Davis & Museus, 2019).

From a more critical perspective, recent research advocates for a more inclusive approach, one that involves adapting the school environment to students rather than requiring students to conform to institutional norms (Bélanger & Taleb, 2006; Mathivat et al., 2024). Inclusive education has been described as pursuing two complementary objectives: equity, which aims to improve the functioning of the education system, and social transformation, which seeks to question and transform its underlying structures (Borri-Anadon et al., 2024).

However, some critiques argue that such inclusion discourse may still operate within a framework of hospitality, in which rights are extended to individuals seeking to belong to a dominant group (Calabrese Barton & Tan, 2020). By contrast, critical perspectives oriented toward social justice propose reframing the discussion in terms of legitimate presence. Rather than focusing solely on integration into existing structures, this perspective emphasizes the right of historically marginalized groups to occupy social spaces from which they have often been excluded. Legitimacy is established through the presence of these individuals and through the recognition of intersectional social injustices, making visible existing power relations and opening possibilities for social transformation (Calabrese Barton & Tan, 2020).

These findings show how placement decisions take shape within a governmental discursive regime that defines legitimate linguistic competence and establishes the terms of educational success and school belonging. Policy documents create the institutional categories through which students are assessed. School personnel then enact these categories in everyday practice, sometimes negotiating or questioning the norms they carry. From a Bourdieusian perspective, students whose linguistic and cultural resources align more closely with the expectations of Quebec schools are better positioned to acquire institutionally recognized forms of capital, whereas other students are often identified as requiring further intervention

and may be directed toward alternative educational pathways. Students' narratives, however, complicate any account of them as passive subjects of these processes. They exercise agency as they work toward academic success, seek support, and interpret the decisions affecting their education, even though their capacity to shape those decisions remains constrained.

This ethnographic research study sheds light on the mechanisms and impacts of placement procedures for minoritized immigrant students before and after their participation in the welcoming class. The findings highlight how integration processes are shaped not only by pedagogical practices but also by institutional norms, power relations, and interpretations of student success. Nevertheless, several limitations remain and suggest avenues for future research. Further studies could explore parental perspectives or conduct extensive ethnographic investigations within specific school contexts to learn how integration processes unfold in practice.

In terms of recommendations for school environments, the results suggest several possible directions: (1) providing clearer information to students and their parents about how the school system operates, including the welcoming class and its placement procedures and potential consequences; (2) involving students and their parents more actively in placement decisions; (3) valuing students' languages and cultural backgrounds rather than imposing the norms of the host society; (4) exploring alternative integration models, such as direct integration into regular schooling with appropriate linguistic support; and (5) ensuring that school personnel have sufficient resources to support the diverse needs of immigrant students and their families.

Overall, these reflections call for a reconsideration of current integration practices and for a transformation of educational approaches that more explicitly address educational and social inequalities to better welcome and include newly arrived immigrant students.

CONCLUSION

This ethnographic study examined how different social actors (government, school personnel, and immigrant students) construct meanings around the integration of newly arrived immigrant students and the placement decisions associated with the welcoming class in Quebec. By analyzing policy documents, school observations, and interviews with both school actors and students, the research sought to understand how integration and educational trajectories are interpreted before, during, and after students' participation in this linguistic integration program.

The findings consistently suggest that integration is framed less as institutional adaptation and more as students' adjustment to pre-existing educational norms. Government policies emphasize the acquisition of the language of schooling and the development of competencies necessary for participation in regular schooling. School actors largely reproduce this institutional framing in their professional practices, evaluating students' readiness for regular schooling according to criteria such as motivation, autonomy, academic progress, and socio-school adaptation.

Students' narratives reveal a more complex experience. Students reported receiving limited information on how the school system operates and the implications of placement decisions that significantly influence their educational trajectories. They highlight challenges associated with academic delay, transition to regular schooling, and access to language support services.

Together, these findings show how placement decisions associated with the welcoming class contribute to structuring students' educational pathways within the school system. While the program is officially presented as a transitional stage leading to regular schooling, other alternative trajectories may emerge, including extended stays in the welcoming class, placement in regular schooling below students' age level, or referral to adult or special education programs. Through the lenses of othering, deficit thinking, and disciplinarization, the study illustrates how integration is shaped by institutional norms and by interpretations of students' readiness to conform to them.

By bringing together institutional, professional, and student perspectives, this research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of how linguistic integration programs operate within educational systems. The findings suggest the importance of examining not only the pedagogical aspects of integration programs but also the institutional processes through which placement decisions are made and justified.

More broadly, these findings help illuminate some of the educational questions at stake in contemporary debates about immigration in Quebec and Canada. As governments continue to revisit immigration policy and place greater emphasis on integration, schools remain central to how these priorities are enacted. Yet the findings indicate that immigrant integration cannot be understood only in relation to language learning or access to schooling. It also requires attention to the institutional norms that shape students' experiences, including how placement decisions are made and how educational success is defined. Policies designed to support newcomer integration should therefore be accompanied by educational practices that make decision-making processes more transparent and equitable. Such practices should also recognize the diverse linguistic and cultural capital that immigrant students bring to schools.

REFERENCES

- Aarsæther, F. (2021). Learning environment and social inclusion for newly arrived migrant children placed in separate programmes in elementary schools in Norway. *Cogent Education*, 8(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2021.1932227>
- Abu-Laban, Y., Tungohan, E., Gabriel, C., Dobrowolsky, A., Fernando, S., Guo, S., Perry, J. A., & Zhyznomirska, L. (2023). Symposium on Containing Diversity: Canada and the Politics of Immigration in the 21st Century (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2023). *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 55(1), 125–145. <https://doi.org/10.1353/ces.2023.0005>

- Ahmed, S. (2013). *Strange encounters: Embodied others in post-coloniality*. Taylor & Francis.
- Allen, D. (2006). Who's in and who's out? Language and the integration of new immigrant youth in Quebec. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 10(2–3), 251–263. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603110500256103>
- Allen, D. (2007). Just who do you think I am? The name-calling and name-claiming of newcomer youth. *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 10(2), 165–175. <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/CJAL/article/view/19740>
- Amireault, V., & Lampron-de Souza, S. (2022). « J'ai appris que c'était plus dur que je pensais de venir dans un autre pays et d'apprendre une nouvelle langue »: Rencontres entre élèves du secteur régulier et élèves de classe d'accueil dans une école secondaire de Montréal. *Alterstice : Revue internationale de la recherche interculturelle*, 11(1), 45–55. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1091894ar>
- Armand, F. (2021). L'enseignement du français en contexte de diversité linguistique au Québec: Idéologies linguistiques et exemples de pratique en salle de classe. In M. Potvin, M.-O. Magnan, J. Larochelle-Audet, & J.-L. Ratel (Eds.), *La diversité ethnoculturelle, religieuse et linguistique en éducation: Théorie et pratique* (2nd ed., pp. 220–233). Fides Éducation.
- Armand, F., Lory, M.-P., & Rousseau, C. (2013). « Les histoires, ça montre les personnes dedans, les feelings. Pas possible si pas de théâtre. » (Tahina) Ateliers d'expression théâtrale plurilingues en classe d'accueil. *Lidil*, 48, 37–55. <https://journals.openedition.org/lidil/pdf/3311>
- Armand, F., Sirois, F., & Ababou, S. (2008). Entrée dans l'écrit en contexte plurilingue et défavorisé: Développer les capacités métaphonologiques et sensibiliser à la diversité linguistique. *Revue canadienne des langues vivantes*, 65(1), 61–87. <https://elodil.openum.ca/files/sites/249/2023/12/armand-sirois-ababou-2008-entree-dans-ecrit.pdf>
- Beauregard, C., Caron, M.-E., & Caldairou-Bessette, P. (2020). Favoriser la conscience émotionnelle et la restauration du lien social par le dessin: Le cas d'enfants immigrants en classe d'accueil [Fostering emotional awareness and restoring social connectedness through drawing: The case of immigrant children in reception classes]. *Canadian Journal of Art Therapy*, 33(2), 70–79. <https://doi.org/10.1080/26907240.2020.1844417>
- Bélanger, N., & Taleb, K. (2006). Une mise en scène du rôle des comités d'identification de l'enfance en difficulté en Ontario français. *Éducation et sociétés*, 18(2), 219–236. <https://shs.cairn.info/revue-education-et-societes-2006-2-page-219?lang=fr>
- Bert, J.-F. (2016). Réguler par la norme: Les institutions disciplinaires. In J.-F. Bert, *Introduction à Michel Foucault* (pp. 27–54). La Découverte. <https://www.cairn.info/introduction-a-michel-foucault-9782707192370-page-27.htm>
- Bianco, M., & Leech, N. L. (2010). Twice-exceptional learners: Effects of teacher preparation and disability labels on gifted referrals. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 33(4), 319–334. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406409356392>
- Black, C., Cerdeña, J. P., & Spearman-McCarthy, E. V. (2023). I am not your minority. *Lancet Regional Health - Americas*, 19, 100464. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lana.2023.100464>
- Bondy, J. M. (2011). Normalizing English language learner students: A Foucauldian analysis of opposition to bilingual education. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 14(3), 387–398. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2010.543392>
- Bonizzoni, P., Romito, M., & Cavallo, C. (2016). Teachers' guidance, family participation and track choice: The educational disadvantage of immigrant students in Italy. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 37(5), 702–720. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2014.982860>

- Borri-Anadon, C., Ouellet, K., & Prud'homme, L. (2024). Pratiques soutenant la participation à la classe ordinaire d'élèves plurilingues émergents au sein d'un modèle de services hybride d'accueil et de soutien à l'apprentissage du français: Quels constats pour l'éducation inclusive ? *Revue hybride de l'éducation*, 8(5). <https://doi.org/10.1522/rhe.v8i5.1622>
- Bourdieu, P. (1980). *Le sens pratique*. Éditions de Minuit.
- Bourdieu, P. (1996). *Contre-feux*. Seuil.
- Breton-Carbonneau, G. (2011). « Bienvenue au Québec ! » the integration of newly arrived immigrant students in Quebec classes d'accueil [Master's thesis, Concordia University]. Spectrum. <https://spectrum.library.concordia.ca/7322/>
- Calabrese Barton, A., & Tan, E. (2020). Beyond equity as inclusion: A framework of "rightful presence" for guiding justice-oriented studies in teaching and learning. *Educational Researcher*, 49(6), 433–440. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X20927363>
- Carothers, D., & Parfitt, C. M. (2017). Disability or language difference: How do we decide? *American Journal of Qualitative Research*, 1(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ajqr/5788>
- Cellard, A. (1997). L'analyse documentaire. In J. Poupard, J.-P. Deslauriers, L.-H. Groulx, A. Laperrière, R. Mayer, & A. Pires (Eds.), *La recherche qualitative: Enjeux épistémologiques et méthodologiques* (pp. 251–271). Gaëtan Morin.
- Cohen, J. (2012). Imaginary community of the mainstream classroom: Adolescent immigrants' perspectives. *Urban Review*, 44, 265–280. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-011-0194-x>
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2017). *Research methods in education* (8th ed.). Taylor & Francis.
- Collins, T. (2024). Contrasting educator and Black student perspectives of the special education placement process: A DisCrit counter-narrative analysis. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 47(4), 283–301. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08884064241255219>
- Darchinian, F., Magnan, M.-O., & Soares, R. (2021). The construction of the racialized Other in the educational sphere: The stories of students with immigrant backgrounds in Montréal. *Journal of Culture and Values in Education*, 4(2), 52–64. <https://doi.org/10.46303/jcve.2021.6>
- Davis, L. P., & Museus, S. D. (2019). What is deficit thinking? An analysis of conceptualizations of deficit thinking and implications for scholarly research. *NCID Currents*, 1(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/currents.17387731.0001.110>
- De Koninck, Z., & Armand, F. (2012). Entre métropole et régions, un même raisonnement peut-il soutenir un choix de modèles de services différent pour l'intégration des élèves allophones? *Diversité urbaine*, 12(1), 69–85. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1019212ar>
- Dervin, F. (2015). Discourses of othering. In *The international encyclopedia of language and social interaction* (pp. 1–9). John Wiley & Sons. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118611463.wbielsi027>
- Dhamoon, R. (2009). *Identity/difference politics: How difference is produced, and why it matters*. University of British Columbia Press.
- Feuerverger, G. (2011). Re-bordering spaces of trauma: Auto-ethnographic reflections on the immigrant and refugee experience in an inner-city high school in Toronto. *International Review of Education*, 57, 357–375. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-011-9207-y>
- Ford, M. (2003). Unveiling technologies of power in classroom organization practice. *Educational Foundations*, 17(2), 5–27. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ775217.pdf>

- Foucault, M. (1969). *L'archéologie du savoir*. Gallimard.
- Foucault, M. (1975). Discipline. In M. Foucault, *Surveiller et punir* (pp. 157–264). Gallimard.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972–1977*. Pantheon Books.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Anchor Books.
- Gouvernement du Canada. (1982). *La Charte canadienne des droits et libertés*. <https://www.justice.gc.ca/fra/sjc-csj/dlc-rfc/ccdl-ccrf/>
- Gouvernement du Canada. (1985). *Loi sur les langues officielles*. <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/fra/lois/o-3.01/TexteComple.html?txthl=x>
- Gouvernement du Canada. (2024, octobre 24). *Le gouvernement du Canada réduit l'immigration*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2024/10/government-of-canada-reduces-immigration.html>
- Gouvernement du Québec. (1977). *Charte de la langue française*. <https://www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/fr/document/lc/c-11>
- Gouvernement du Québec. (2025, novembre 6). *Dépôt des orientations en matière d'immigration pour la période 2026-2029 et du Plan d'immigration 2026 et mesures complémentaires*. <https://www.quebec.ca/en/news/actualites/detail/tabling-orientations-immigration-2026-2029-plan-2026-complementary-measures-66844>
- Hibel, J., Farkas, G., & Morgan, P. L. (2010). Who is placed into special education? *Sociology of Education*, 83(4), 312–332. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040710383518>
- Hibel, J., & Jasper, A. D. (2012). Delayed special education placement for learning disabilities among children of immigrants. *Social Forces*, 91(2), 503–530. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/sos092>
- Hilt, L. T. (2017). Education without a shared language: Dynamics of inclusion and exclusion in Norwegian introductory classes for newly arrived minority language students. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 21(6), 585–601. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2016.1223179>
- Institut de la statistique du Québec. (2023, May 24). *Démographie québécoise: Les migrations internationales alimentent une forte croissance de la population en 2022*. <https://statistique.quebec.ca/fr/communiquer/demographie-quebecoise-migrations-internationales-alimentent-forte-croissance-population-2022>
- Kanouté, F., Vatz Laaroussi, M., Rachédi, L., & Tchimou Doffouchi, M. (2008). Familles et réussite scolaire d'élèves immigrants du secondaire. *Revue des sciences de l'éducation*, 34(2), 265–289. <https://doi.org/10.7202/019681ar>
- Krumer-Nevo, M., & Sidi, M. (2012). Writing against othering. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 18(4), 299–309. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800411433546>
- Lamarre, P. (2012). English education in Quebec: Issues and challenges. In R. Bourhis (Éd.), *Decline and prospects of the English-speaking communities of Quebec* (pp. 175–214). Patrimoine canadien et Institut canadien de recherche sur les minorités linguistiques.
- Madison, D. S. (2019). *Critical ethnography: Method, ethics, and performance* (3rd ed.). SAGE.
- Mathivat, N., Rey, J., & Kloetzer, L. (2024). Entre inclusion et sélection: L'orientation des élèves primo-arrivants allophones dans les conseils de classe d'accueil en Suisse. *Éducation et Sociétés*, 52(2), 41–61. <https://doi.org/10.3917/es.052.0041>
- May, T. (2011). Interviewing: Methods and process. In *Social research: Issues, methods and process* (4th ed., pp. 131–160). Open University Press.

- Maynard, C., & Armand, F. (2016). Écriture de textes identitaires plurilingues et rapport à l'écrit d'élèves immigrants allophones. *Nouveaux cahiers de la recherche en éducation*, 19(2), 134–160. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1042853ar>
- Mc Andrew, M. (2010). *Les majorités fragiles et l'éducation : Belgique, Catalogne, Irlande du Nord, Québec*. Presses de l'Université de Montréal.
- Mc Andrew, M., Balde, A., Bakhshaei, M., Tardif-Grenier, K., Audet, G., Armand, F., Guyon, S., Ledent, J., Lemieux, G., Potvin, M., Rahm, J., Vatz Laaroussi, M., Carpentier, A., & Rousseau, C. (2015). *La réussite éducative des élèves issus de l'immigration : dix ans de recherche et d'intervention au Québec*. Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal.
- McCloud, J. (2015). “Just like me”: How immigrant students experience a U.S. high school. *The High School Journal*, 98(3), 262–282. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44075297>
- Michael, A., Andrade, N., & Bartlett, L. (2007). Figuring “success” in a bilingual high school. *The Urban Review*, 39(2), 167–189. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-007-0045-y>
- Ministère de l'Éducation. (2024). *Soutien au milieu scolaire 2024-2025: Intégration et réussite des élèves issus de l'immigration et éducation interculturelle*. Gouvernement du Québec. http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/education/diversite/Guide-soutien-milieu-scolaire_2024-2025.pdf
- Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport. (2010). *Programme de formation de l'école québécoise. Intégration linguistique, scolaire et sociale: Domaine des langues au secondaire*. Gouvernement du Québec. http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/education/jeunes/pfeq/PFEQ_integration-linguistique-scolaire-sociale-secondaire.pdf
- Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport. (2014). *Cadre de référence: Accueil et intégration des élèves issus de l'immigration au Québec: 2. Organisation des services*. Gouvernement du Québec. http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/education/diversite/AccueilIntegr_2_OrganisationServices.pdf
- Moya, M. B. C., & Butler-Kisber, L. (2019). Latin Americans' perceptions of their secondary school education in Montreal. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 51(1), 89–110. <https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/78/article/716004/pdf>
- Nilsson, J., & Bunar, N. (2016). Educational responses to newly arrived students in Sweden: Understanding the structure and influence of post-migration ecology. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 60(4), 399–416. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2015.1024160>
- Paillé, P., & Mucchielli, A. (2021). L'analyse thématique. In *L'analyse qualitative en sciences humaines et sociales* (5th ed., pp. 269–357). Armand Colin.
- Papazian-Zohrabian, G., Mamprin, C., Lemire, V., & Turpin-Samson, A. (2018). Prendre en compte l'expérience pré-, péri- et post-migratoire des élèves réfugiés afin de favoriser leur accueil et leur expérience socioscolaire. *Alterstice : Revue internationale de la recherche interculturelle*, 8(2), 101–116. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1066956ar>
- Pepin, M. (2011). L'ethnographie scolaire: Comprendre quoi, comment et pour qui? *Recherches qualitatives*, 10, 30–46. <https://www.erudit.org/en/books/collection-hors-serie-les-actes-de-la-revue-recherches-qualitatives/comprendre-les-phenomenes-daujourd'hui-pour-demain/5049co.pdf>
- Pugh, K., Every, D., & Hattam, R. (2012). Inclusive education for students with refugee experience: Whole school reform in a South Australian primary school. *Australian Education Researcher*, 39, 125–141. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-011-0048-2>

- Querrien, D. (2022). L'inclusion scolaire pour les élèves allophones issus de l'immigration. In M. Paquet (Ed.), *Nouvelles dynamiques de l'immigration au Québec* (pp. 123–142). Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal.
- Razafimandimbimanana, E., & Blanchet, P. (2011). Enquêter sur le plurilinguisme d'enfants migrants: Méthode et enjeux au regard d'un terrain québécois. *Child Health and Education*, 3(1), 31–46. <https://shs.hal.science/halshs-01456216v1/document>
- Resch, K., Gitschthaler, M., & Schwab, S. (2023). Teacher's perceptions of separate language learning models for students with immigrant background in Austrian schools. *Intercultural Education*, 34(3), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14675986.2023.2180487>
- Riggs, D. W., & Due, C. (2011). (Un)common ground? English language acquisition and experiences of exclusion amongst new arrival students in South Australian primary schools. *Identities*, 18(3), 273–290. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2011.635373>
- Riley, T. (2019). Exceeding expectations: Teachers' decision making regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 70(5), 512–525. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487118806484>
- Rogers, R. (2002). Through the eyes of the institution: A critical discourse analysis of decision making in two special education meetings. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 33(2), 213–237. <https://doi.org/10.1525/aeq.2002.33.2.213>
- Ryan, J. (1991). Observing and normalizing: Foucault, discipline, and inequality in schooling: Big Brother is watching you. *The Journal of Educational Thought*, 25(2), 104–119. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23767268>
- Shields, J., & Lujan, O. (2018). *Immigrant youth in Canada: A literature review of migrant youth settlement and service issues*. Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement. <https://youthrex.com/report/immigrant-youth-in-canada-a-literature-review-of-migrant-youth-settlement-and-service-issues/>
- Soares, R. (2024). *Les procédures de classement des élèves du secondaire avant et après le séjour en classe d'accueil dans la région métropolitaine de Montréal: Une analyse sociologique* [Doctoral thesis, Université de Montréal]. Papyrus. <https://papyrus.bib.umontreal.ca/xmlui/handle/1866/32976>
- Soares, R. (2025). L'expérience des élèves en apprentissage de la langue de scolarisation à l'égard des services éducatifs complémentaires au Québec : Entre soutien et altération. *Éducation et francophonie*, 53(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1118105ar>
- Soares, R., Borri-Anadon, C., Russo, K., & Gonçalves, G. (2023). Points de vue de parents immigrants à l'égard d'un modèle de services d'accueil et de soutien à l'apprentissage du français hybride au Centre-du-Québec. *Éducation et francophonie*, 51(2), 1–22. https://acelf.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/51-2_06_FINAL_De-Oliveira-Soares-Borri-Anadon-Russo-et-Goncalves.pdf
- Solórzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2002). Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for education research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(1), 23–44. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107780040200800103>
- Statistique Canada. (2022, octobre 26). *Les immigrants représentent la plus grande part de la population depuis plus de 150 ans et continuent de façonner qui nous sommes en tant que Canadiens*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/221026/dq221026a-fra.htm>

- Steinbach, M. (2010a). *Eux autres versus nous autres*: Adolescent students' views on the integration of newcomers. *Intercultural Education*, 21(6), 535–547. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14675986.2010.533035>
- Steinbach, M. (2010b). *Quand je sors d'accueil*: Linguistic integration of immigrant adolescents in Quebec secondary schools. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 23(2), 95–107. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07908311003786711>
- Steinbach, M. (2015). Les défis de l'intégration sociale des jeunes immigrants à l'extérieur de la métropole québécoise. *Diversité urbaine*, 15(1), 69–85. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1037872ar>
- Suárez-Orozco, C., Rhodes, J., & Milburn, M. (2009). Unraveling the immigrant paradox: Academic engagement and disengagement among recently arrived immigrant youth. *Youth & Society*, 41(2), 151–185. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X09333647>
- Suárez-Orozco, C., Gaytán, F. X., Bang, H. J., Pakes, J., O'Connor, E., & Rhodes, J. (2010). Academic trajectories of newcomer immigrant youth. *Developmental Psychology*, 46(3), 602–618. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018201>
- Tajic, D., & Bunar, N. (2023). Do both 'get it right'? Inclusion of newly arrived migrant students in Swedish primary schools. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 27(3), 288–302. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2020.1841838>
- Terhart, H., & von Dewitz, N. (2018). Newly arrived migrant students in German schools: Exclusive and inclusive structures and practices. *European Educational Research Journal*, 17(2), 290–304. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1474904117722623>
- The Racialization of Asian International Students Collective. (2026). *Not your cash cow, not your scapegoat: Student migration and Canadian universities*. Fernwood Publishing. <https://fernwoodpublishing.ca/book/not-your-cash-cow-not-your-scapegoat>
- Valencia, R. R. (Ed.). (1997). *The evolution of deficit thinking: Educational thought and practice*. The Falmer Press/Taylor & Francis.
- Vatz Laaroussi, M., Armand, F., Kanouté, F., Rachédi, L., Steinbach, M., & Rousseau, C. (2013). *Écriture et histoires familiales de migration: Une recherche action pour promouvoir les compétences à écrire des élèves allophones immigrants et réfugiés dans les écoles primaires et secondaires du Québec*. Fonds québécois de la recherche sur la société et la culture (FQRSC). Actions concertées, Programme de recherche sur l'écriture. <https://frq.gouv.qc.ca/histoire-et-rapport/ecriture-et-histoires-familiales-de-migration-une-recherche-action-pour-promouvoir-les-competences-a-ecrire-des-eleves-allophones-immigrants-et-refugies-dans-les-ecoles-primaires-et-secondaires-du-q/>
- Vienne, P. (2005). Mais qui a peur de l'ethnographie scolaire? *Éducation et sociétés*, 16(2), 177–192. <https://shs.cairn.info/revue-education-et-societes-2005-2-page-177?lang=fr>