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Et puis, well: Discourse marker use in Ontarian Laurentian French

English and French have coexisted in what is now Ontario, Canada since the 18th century. This proximity between Ontarian-Laurentian French (hereafter OLF) and English has influenced OLF's lexicon, phonology, and semantic innovations (Mougeon 2004). A substantial amount of literature and recorded corpora exist investigating this influence (Mougeon 2004, Golembeski 1998, inter alia). However, comparing discourse marker (DM) use in majority versus minority French communities has not yet been studied. Expanding on existing research, I investigate a recent shift in the use of English and French DMs in OLF conversation in French-majority Hearst and French-minority Windsor.

OLF varieties developed in isolation from other LF varieties (e.g. Quebec, Manitoba), under ever-increasing English contact. This led to widespread lexical borrowing, semantic calquing, and increasing concerns about OLF's vitality (Golembeski 1998).

Recently, DMs have diverged from Standard French (1) to include English borrowings and calques adopted from English into French conversation. The result is the incorporation of English DMs such as *well*, illustrated in (2), and the semantic shift in the use and placement of French DMs *comme* (like) and *juste* (just), illustrated in (3) :

1. et puis les familles, **tsé**, sont plus, **disons**, françaises
and then the families, y'know, are more, say, French
2. euh, **well** dans l'hiver j'aime faire du ski
uh, well in winter I like to ski
3. Oui, c'est **juste comme** à cinq minutes de marche
Yes, it's just like a five-minute walk

Sankoff et al. (1997) define DMs as informal lexical items acquired through interaction and linked to speaker fluency, linguistic security and speech-community integration. OLF speakers have altered their use of DMs, either reducing overall use or preferring English. This in turn indicates greater impacts of language contact and potential loss of speaker fluency (Chambers & Lapierre 2011).

Following the approach of Sankoff et al. (1997), I investigate DMs including *yeah*, *well*, *ok*, *t'sais / tsé* (y'know), *disons* (say), *puis* (then/and), and *donc* (so). I also include the DMs *comme* (like) and *juste* (just) as their meanings and positions mirror those of English *like* and *just* (Canac-Marquis & Walker 2016).

I draw on data from the *Phonologie du français contemporain* corpus (PFC; Durand et al. 2002), including ten interviews respectively from the French-majority town of Hearst (Poiré & Tennant 2016), and the French-minority city of Windsor (Poiré et al. 2010). I explore the linguistic factors of overall DM use, overall English word use, and the DM's syntactic environment. Social factors include speaker's age, gender, and location (Canac-Marquis & Walker 2016).

Initial findings indicate a generational shift in the Windsor corpus, with older generations using French DMs (1), middle and younger generations incorporating English DMs (2), and younger generations decreasing overall DM use while increasing the use of direct translations *comme* and *juste* (3). How these findings compare to the majority context in Hearst sheds light on the influences of English on OLF, the current situation of the variety, and its future.

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