Language Variation and Change? Gender Agreement in Franco-American Descriptive Adjectives

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Abstract

Studies of Franco-American French (FAF) suggest that this obsolescing variety spoken in the northeastern United States is resistant to grammatical changes that are typical in situations of language contact, restriction, and shift. Here we address the issue through an examination of gender agreement in descriptive adjectives. Our analysis of data from four communities shows that a tendency toward morphological reduction in the direction of the masculine variant that has been widely documented in the popular French of France and in many North American varieties is widespread in terms of number of speakers that exhibit this behaviour, but infrequent overall. Variation is conditioned by the nature of the final segment and by speaker community of residence and education in French. We relate these factors to widespread negative attitudes about FAF that have contributed to a community-wide shift to English on the one hand and to grammatical conservatism among speakers who have maintained French on the other.

Résumé

Les études effectuées sur le français franco-américain (FFA) suggèrent que cette variété résiste aux changements grammaticaux qui sont typiques des situations de contact de langues et de transfert linguistique. Ici, nous abordons la question par un examen de la variabilité dans l'accord des adjectifs descriptifs. Notre analyse des données d'entrevues sociolinguistiques auprès de locuteurs habitant quatre villes dans le nord-est des États-Unis montre qu'une tendance vers la réduction morphologique dans la direction de la variante masculine qui a été largement documentée dans le français populaire de France et dans de nombreuses variétés du français nord-américain est répandue pour ce qui est du nombre de locuteurs qui la manifeste, mais peu fréquente. La variation est conditionnée par la nature du segment final, par la communauté de résidence et par l'éducation en français des locuteurs. Nous relions ces facteurs aux attitudes négatives au sujet du FFA qui ont contribué au transfert à l'anglais à l'échelle de la communauté d'une part, et au conservatisme linguistique parmi ceux qui ont maintenu le français de l'autre.

Language Variation and Change?
Gender agreement in Franco-American Descriptive Adjectives

Introduction

Studies that have examined morphological variation in Franco-American French (FAF) suggest that this obsolescing variety spoken in the northeastern United States is resistant to grammatical changes that are typical in situations of language contact, restriction, and shift and that have been noted in other North American varieties of the language (Fox, 1998, 2005; Stelling, 2008, 2011).[1] For example, in a study of auxiliary variation in the *passé composé* in the FAF spoken in Southbridge, Massachusetts, and Woonsocket, Rhode Island, Stelling (2008, 2011) found that grammatical simplification as measured by the rate of replacement of *être* by *avoir* does not approach the rate reported by Picone and Valdman (2005) for Cajun French, whose situation of advanced shift toward English closely resembles that of FAF, but actually occurs with the same frequency (34%) as has been reported by Nadasdi (2005) for speakers of Quebec French and for unrestricted speakers of French in Ontario. Stelling (2011) also noted that social factors exercise significant influence on variation, a finding that further distinguishes FAF from what is usually reported for obsolescing varieties (cf. Dorian, 1978, 1989).

In this paper we address the issue of grammatical conservatism in FAF through an examination of variation in gender agreement in descriptive adjectives. Canonically, French adjectives must agree with the noun they modify in number (singular or plural) and gender (masculine or feminine). When agreement is overtly marked (i.e., variable adjectives), it generally involves alternations between vowel-final masculine forms and consonant-final, feminine forms as in (1) and (2) or with additional vocalic alternations as in (3) and (4):

(1)	*gros*	/gRo/	*grosse*	/gRos/	[fat, big]
(2)	*intelligent*	/ɛ̃tɛliʒɑ̃/	*intelligente*	/ɛ̃tɛliʒɑ̃t/	[intelligent]
(3)	*canadien*	/kanadjɛ̃/	*canadienne*	/kanadjɛn/	[Canadien]
(4)	*beau*	/bo/	*belle*	/bɛl/	[beautiful]

Variable adjectives where both variants end in a consonant (5), that are distinguished by some form of suffixation (6), or that are distinct words (7) are less common (Rigault, 1971):

(5)	*actif*	/aktif/	*active*	/aktiv/	[active]
(6)	*traître*	/trɛtr/	*traîtresse*	/trɛtrɛs/	[traitor]
(7)	*mâle*	/mal/ [male]	*femelle*	/fɛmɛl/	[female]

We focus here on a tendency toward morphological reduction in the direction of the masculine variant that affects adjectives of the types exemplified in examples (1) through (4). This phenomenon has been widely attested in descriptive studies of the popular French of France and of many North American varieties, especially when the adjective occurs in predicate position (Bauche, 1920/1946; Conwell & Juilland, 1963; Frei, 1929/1971; Gadet, 1992; Guiraud, 1965; Highfield, 1979; Hull, 1956; Locke, 1949; Niederehe, 1991; Papen & Rottet, 1997; Péronnet, 1989; Rottet, 2001; Thogmartin, 1970), without having been an object of particular study.[2] Like the replacement of *être* by *avoir*, it is a trend that we could

expect to be quite widespread in FAF, given the advanced state of language shift toward English in communities where the variety is spoken, but that appears to be surprisingly limited.

In an earlier analysis of FAF, Fox (1998), analyzed data from fourteen speakers in Cohoes, New York, that provided some evidence of morphological reduction in the direction of the masculine variant. For instance, Fox (1998) reported that when the female speaker quoted below recalls a conversation in which she insists that she identifies with her mother's French ancestry rather than her father's Irish one, she uses the vowel-final, masculine form *français*/frɑ̃sɛ/ rather than the consonant-final, feminine form *française*/frɑ̃sɛz/ to describe her own cultural identity: "*Maman disait 'ben oublie pas ton père est irlandais.' Ah ben j'ai dit 'Ben moi, j'suis français'* [Mom would say, 'well, don't forget your father's Irish.' Ah well I said, 'well, I'm French']" (Fox, 1998, p. 65).

However, the loss of feminine gender marking was not widespread. In fact, it was most apparent in the speech of this same individual whose French was also characterized by numerous examples of a morphological regularization in the opposite direction, that is, the use of a consonant-final, feminine variant with reference to a masculine noun, a trend that has not been reported as such elsewhere.[3]

*(8) *le premier* [prəmjer] *degré*	[the first grade]
*(9) *le gros* [gros] *banquet*	[the big banquet]

These competing tendencies appeared to be conditioned by the position of the adjective so that, as in the examples above, the generalization of the masculine (vowel-final) form was favoured in predicate position while the generalization of the feminine (consonant-final) form was more likely in prenominal position.

The data for the present analysis come from sociolinguistic interviews with speakers of FAF from several communities in southern New England. The interviews were recorded in the context of a multiyear collaborative project whose primary goal was to collect a representative sampling of FAF across New England.[4] In a preliminary analysis of data from 86 speakers, we identified 263 cases of gender mismatches involving 69 different variable descriptive adjectives and their referent in the speech of 54, or 63%, of those interviewed. Of the 69 tokens that appeared in prenominal position, 43 (62%) exhibited the use of a feminine adjective with a masculine noun as in (10):

*(10) *mes premières* [prəmjɛr] *pas*	[my first steps] (WO18)

while 54 of 70 tokens that occurred in postnominal position (77%) and 109 of 124 tokens that occurred in predicate position (88%) showed the use of a masculine adjective with a feminine noun as in (11) and (12), respectively:

*(11) *les formes différents* [diferɑ̃]	[different forms] (BR12)
*(12) *elle voulait être certain* [sɛrtɛ̃]	[she wanted to be certain] (S015).

The extension of Fox's (1998) investigation to this larger and more geographically diverse sample of FAF allows us first to confirm and then to explore further the phenomena noted in Cohoes, New York. We begin with a description of the four communities targeted in our study and of the speakers whose language we recorded. We then present our analysis

of the effect of three linguistic (type of adjective, gender of referent and number of referent) and nine extralinguistic (sex[5], age, social class, frequency of use of French, community of residence, generations in the United States, period of immigration, education in French at the primary level, and education in French after primary school) factors on data elicited in the first instance via a task in which participants were asked to translate English sentences into French, and in the second from conversation that occurred naturally in the course of semidirected sociolinguistic interviews. Because of the complexity of the phenomena, our analysis focuses on adjectives that appear in predicate position only; adjectives in prenominal and postnominal position will be treated in a separate study.

Franco-American Communities in Southern New England

Bristol, Gardner, Southbridge, and Woonsocket are representative of the cities and towns in the northeastern United States where over the course of the 19th and early 20th centuries, rapidly expanding factories eventually attracted nearly a million French Canadian and Acadian immigrants in need of work.[6] The four communities were specifically selected for study because they can also be compared and contrasted in several ways.[7] For example, Woonsocket and Southbridge were among the earliest southern New England communities to attract French Canadian immigrants and they drew their populations from the same villages of western Quebec. In the case of Woonsocket, the first family to arrive came from St-Ours and had settled permanently by 1814 or 1815 (Bonier, 1920/1981); Southbridge's first French Canadian family settled in 1832 (Gatineau, 1919). In both communities, the francophone population increased steadily and, by 1900, had become the majority. During these years, the immigrants established a robust French language infrastructure that included churches, schools, hospitals, and newspapers, and produced politically active leaders whose influence extended throughout New England.

In contrast with Southbridge and Woonsocket, Bristol and Gardner have in common that francophone immigrants did not begin arriving until the second half of the 19th century and that their numbers never allowed them to achieve majority status or indeed to establish more than a single French parish and school (Clouette & Roth, 1985; Josephson, 1974; Moore, 1967). In addition, both communities experienced a second wave of immigration that began after World War II and extended into the early 1970s. However, the two communities are very different in the composition of their respective populations. Franco-Americans in Bristol trace their origins to the Beauce region of Quebec, to northwestern New Brunswick, to Maine's Saint John Valley, and to a variety of other Franco-American communities (Bagaté et al., 2004). In Gardner, French Canadian immigrants who came during the *Grande migration* had settled and established a presence some 20 years before Acadians began arriving in substantial numbers. The second wave of immigration generally brought francophones from either northwestern or southeastern New Brunswick. (Henceforth, when this distinction is pertinent to our analysis, we will refer to Franco-Americans whose presence in the United States is the result of the first wave of immigration as *Traditional Francos* and those whose presence is the result of the second wave as *New Francos*.)

In all four communities and across the northeastern United States, Franco-Americans saw their institutions begin to weaken in the 1930s when changes in immigration laws and in economic conditions brought the first wave of immigration to a close. The period following World War II especially was one of great social transformation

not just in the United States, but also in Canada. By leaving Traditional Francos without their accustomed point of reference, changes across the border would add social and political dimensions to the geographical distance that already separated them from their linguistic and ethnic heritage even as, in some communities, New Francos were arriving and establishing their presence.

At the time of their selection, all four communities reported at least 1,000 French home speakers with a minimum of 20% of the population of French (French Canadian or Acadian) ancestry.[8] Despite their many similarities, Woonsocket and Southbridge stand today on opposite ends of a continuum of French language maintenance. For example, whereas almost 75% of the speakers we interviewed in Woonsocket reported using French frequently if not daily, fully 60% of the speakers in Southbridge stated that they used French rarely or not at all.[9] In terms of French language maintenance, Bristol and Gardner fall in-between: 61% of speakers interviewed in Bristol and 69% of speakers interviewed in Gardner reported using French frequently or daily; frequency of use was lowest among Franco-Americans whose presence in these communities was the result of immigration during the first wave prior to 1930 (Fox & Smith, 2005).

Methods

The Sociolinguistic Interviews

A total of 131 individuals, 67 men and 64 women, were interviewed in French in the four southern New England communities. These first, second, third, and fourth generation Americans ranged in age from 22 to 98 years old, but the majority ($N = 118$) were 50 years or older, an indication of the degree to which French is no longer being transmitted to the youngest generations. With the exception of the translation task, the interviews were semidirected conversations that sought to elicit unmonitored speech. Speakers discussed a range of topics that included their family history, their past and current use of French, their attitudes about the language, their ties to Canada and France, and their participation in Franco-American traditions and activities.

The individuals included in this study all learned French as their first language at home, but had various degrees of exposure to French instruction during their primary grades. Some attended local public schools where English was the language of instruction, others attended schools in parts of Canada where the language of instruction was French. Many attended bilingual parish schools that offered instruction in English for half of the day and instruction in French for the other half. The experience of those who continued to study French after the primary grades varied between those who attended schools where French was the medium of instruction for all subjects with the assumption that students were native speakers of the language (henceforth, French in L1 setting) and those who attended English-language schools where the study of French was limited to classes in which the language was taught as a foreign or second language to students who were assumed to be non-native French speakers (henceforth, French in L2 setting).

Interviews lasted between 45 minutes and three hours, but were typically between 60 and 90 minutes long. After initial contact had been made in the community, most participants were identified through social networks and, with few exceptions, had no difficulty completing the interview in French.[10]

Results

Descriptive Adjectives in Translation Task

During the interview, speakers were asked to translate a series of English sentences into French. Of these, four sentences elicited the variable adjective *chanceux* [lucky] in predicate position with reference to a singular male subject (a), a singular female subject (b), a plural (default) male subject (c), and a plural female subject (d):

(13)	a. He was lucky.	*Il était chanceux.*	/ʃɑ̃sø/
	b. She was lucky.	*Elle était chanceuse.*	/ʃɑ̃søz/
	c. They were lucky.	*Ils étaient chanceux.*	/ʃɑ̃sø/
	d. They (= girls) were lucky.	*Elles étaient chanceuses.*	/ʃɑ̃søz/

Two other sentences elicited the variable adjective *canadien* [Canadian] in predicate position with reference to a singular male subject (a) and a singular female subject (b), respectively.

(14)	a. He was Canadian.	*Il était canadien.*	/kanadjɛ̃/
	b. She was Canadian.	*Elle était canadienne.*	/kanadjɛn/

Although the data provided by these sentences are quite limited, they nevertheless allow for the controlled comparison of an adjective of the type exemplified in (1) in which variation is marked by a contrast between a masculine variant that ends in an oral vowel and a feminine variant whose final segment is an oral consonant, and an adjective of the type exemplified in (3) in which variation is marked by a contrast between a masculine variant that ends in a nasal vowel and a feminine variant whose final segment contains the corresponding oral vowel followed by a nasal consonant.

Our analysis is based on data from 88 speakers from Bristol ($N = 21$), Gardner ($N = 17$), Southbridge ($N = 27$), and Woonsocket ($N = 23$).[11] These 46 men and 42 women whose ages ranged from 22 (Bristol BR12, a second generation New Franco male) to 92 (Southbridge SO11, a third generation Traditional Franco male) years old, together provided 426 total tokens with an overall agreement rate of 94%. Eighty-three percent of the speakers ($N = 73$) made all possible agreements.

In the following sections we examine first the overall distribution of these tokens with respect to several linguistic and extralinguistic factors that could be affecting agreement; we then present the results of a binomial variable rule analysis with respect to those same factors.

Linguistic factors affecting adjectival agreement during translation.

In an analysis of the linguistic factors that might affect adjectival agreement, we found that rates remained stable at 94% when the adjective type (*canadien* vs. *chanceux*) and the number of the referent (singular vs. plural) were taken into account. Agreement rates did change, however, when the gender of the referent was considered. When the subject was masculine, agreement was made in 97 % of cases; when the subject was

feminine, agreement happened in only 91% of cases. These results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Effect of Three Linguistic Factors on Rate of Agreement

	Discord	Agreement	Total	% Agreement
Adjective Type				
canadien	9	152	161	94
chanceux	17	246	263	94
Number of the Referent				
Singular	19	282	301	94
Plural	7	116	123	94
Gender of the Referent				
Masculine	7	211	218	97
Feminine	19	187	206	91
Total	26	398	424	94

Four of the seven cases in which an adjective was marked as feminine when the subject was masculine can be attributed to Bristol speaker BR25, a 43-year-old second generation New Franco female, who demonstrated invariable use of *chanceuse/s* (/ʃɑ̃søz/). Southbridge speaker SO07, a 77-year-old second generation Traditional Franco male, was responsible for a fifth token that also provided evidence of subject-predicate discord in the opposite direction:

*(15) *Elle est canadien.* [She is Canadian.]—masculine
*(16) *Il est chanceuse.* [He is lucky.]—feminine

The remaining cases of a feminine form used with a masculine referent might be explained by the nature of the task. In each instance, speakers translated the (default) masculine plural *they were lucky* as **ils étaient chanceuses* (/ʃɑ̃søz/) immediately after having translated the feminine singular *she was lucky* as *elle était chanceuse (/ʃɑ̃søz/).* When we consider the translation task data together, then, they confirm that simplification in predicate position appears to be moving toward levelling in favour of the masculine form with referents of both genders. Gardner speaker GA25, a 40-year-old second generation New Franco male whose use of the masculine form was categorical during the translation task, provides an example of this trend.

Extralinguistic factors affecting agreement during translation.

Our analysis of the data from the translation task also took into account nine extralinguistic factors: community of residence, wave of immigration, number of generations in the United States, age, sex, socioeconomic status, language(s) of instruction in primary school, and exposure to French in secondary and/or postsecondary education. In

the following section, we discuss our observations for all of the above except social class, which showed no effect, and number of generations in the United States and frequency of use of French, which showed no apparent patterns.

Table 2
Effect of Community of Residence and Period of Immigration on Rate of Agreement

	Discord	Agreement	Total	% Agreement
Community of Residence				
Bristol, CT	6	80	86	93
Gardner, MA	10	85	95	89
Southbridge, MA	7	129	136	95
Woonsocket, RI	3	104	107	97
Immigration Period				
Traditional Francos	12	271	283	96
New Francos	14	127	141	90
Total	26	398	424	94

With respect to community of residence, French speakers from Woonsocket show the highest agreement rate (97%) closely followed by speakers from Southbridge (95%) and Bristol (93%). Speakers from Gardner produced the highest number of tokens showing adjectival discord ($N = 10$) as well as the lowest rate of agreement overall (89%).

Speakers were also grouped according to whether their presence in the United States is explained by the *Grande migration* of 1840-1930 or by the new wave of immigration that began after World War II. Agreement rates were lower (90%) among the New Francos than among the Traditional Francos (96%; Table 2).

Table 3
Influence of Speaker Age and Sex on Rate of Agreement

	Discord	Agreement	Total	% Agreement
Age				
≥ 80	3	74	77	96
70-79	5	116	121	96
60-69	4	94	98	96
50-59	7	74	81	91
≤ 49	7	40	47	85
Sex				
Female	9	194	203	96
Male	17	204	221	92
Total	26	398	424	94

The relationship between speaker age and rates of adjectival agreement is reported in Table 3. The rate is identical for speakers in their 90s, their 80s, their 70s and their 60s

(96%), before dropping to 91% for speakers in their 50s and to 85% for speakers younger than 50. Figures for the distribution of agreement rates by speaker sex (Table 3) reveal that men showed discord in approximately twice as many tokens ($N = 17$) as women ($N = 9$). Accordingly, women had an agreement rate of 96 % compared to 92 % among men.

Table 4
Effect of Language of Instruction on Rate of Agreement

	Discord	Agreement	Total	% Agreement
Primary Education				
French	3	75	78	96
Bilingual	11	284	285	96
English	12	29	51	76
Exposure to French in Secondary/Postsecondary Education				
L1 setting	4	136	140	97
L2 setting	12	148	160	93
No French	10	81	91	89

The effect of the language instruction on the rate of adjectival agreement was measured in two ways (Table 4). For the primary years, speakers were categorized as to whether they had French as the medium of instruction, English as the medium of instruction, or received a bilingual education. For the secondary years, they were categorized as to whether they received instruction in French as an L1, instruction in French as an L2, or no instruction in French.

Notably, speakers who had had French as the medium of instruction in primary school either for all of the day or for part of it had identical rates of agreement (96%) while speakers whose schooling was in English showed a much lower agreement rate of 76 %. This was the lowest agreement rate among any factor considered in the analysis of the translation task data.

Speakers who attended secondary or postsecondary institutions where French was the medium of instruction were also most likely to maintain adjectival agreements. Those who studied French in this L1 setting showed the highest agreement rate at 97%. Those who studied French in an L2 setting showed a somewhat lower agreement rate of 93%. Finally, those who had had the lowest agreement rate in the factor group at 89% had no formal study of French at the secondary or postsecondary level.

Variable rule analysis of data from the translation task.

In order to measure the statistical significance of the three linguistic and nine extralinguistic factors on adjectival discord in the translation task data, we performed a binomial variable rule analysis with GOLDVARB X. For this, we excluded from our original count 39 tokens for which a piece of information on one or more extralinguistic factors was missing. Also, we excluded tokens from all fourth generation speakers due to lack of variation. These four Traditional Francos (Southbridge SO01, a 62-year-old male; Woonsocket WO28, a 58-year-old female; Bristol BR02, a 75-year-old male; and Gardner GA06, a 74-year-old male) each made all 20 agreements in all of the 20 tokens that they

supplied. After these exclusions were made, we had a total of 365 tokens. Agreement was made in 92.9% ($N = 339$) of these cases.[12]

Results from the variable rule analysis are presented in Table 5.[13] Of the linguistic factors, only the gender of the referent had a significant effect on adjectival discord. When the referent is feminine, the factor effect (0.659) strongly favours adjectival discord whereas when the referent in masculine, the factor effect (0.349) strongly favours adjectival agreement.

Table 5
Contribution of Significant Factors to Adjectival Discord in Translation Task

Significant Factors	Factor effect	Discord	Agreement	Total	% Agreement
Gender of referent					
Masculine	0.349	7	181	188	96.3
Feminine	0.659	19	158	177	89.3
Primary Education—Language(s) of Instruction					
English	0.849	12	39	51	76.5
Bilingual	0.424	11	243	254	95.7
French	0.458	3	57	60	95.0
Total		26	339	365	92.9

$p = .006$

Of the extralinguistic factors considered, only language(s) of instruction during primary education had a significant effect. The factor effects for Franco-Americans who had bilingual (French-English) schooling during their primary education (factor effect = 0.424) and for those who had French as a sole medium of instruction (factor effect = 0.458) do not favour adjectival discord. However, the factor effect for those who had their primary education entirely in English (0.845) very strongly favours adjectival discord.

In summary then, the translation data set does not provide evidence of widespread morphological reduction. However, it does confirm that when adjectival simplification in predicate position is taking place, it is the masculine form that is generalizing. Although the pattern of simplification in relationship to the individual extralinguistic factors we examined suggests that variation may be related to specific social factors such as community of residence, immigration history, age, sex, and education in French, only education in French at the primary level turned out to have a statistically significant effect.

Descriptive Adjectives in Conversation

For the analysis of morphological reduction in conversation, we searched the interviews from Bristol, Southbridge and Woonsocket in order to extract only and all examples of variable descriptive adjectives that: a) occurred in predicate position, b) were used in reference to a noun that is morphologically feminine and c) provided at least two tokens showing indication of simplification toward the masculine.[14] We identified 64 speakers (Bristol = 20, Southbridge = 17, Woonsocket = 27) who used a variable predicate

adjective that referred to a feminine noun. Of these 28 men and 36 women whose ages again ranged from 22 (Bristol BR12) to 92 years old (Southbridge SO11), 25 individuals (39%) produced evidence of simplification taking place in their speech.

Fourteen adjectives (298 tokens) met our original search criteria. Three of these adjectives, *assis* [seated] (*N* = 17/18), *familier* [familiar] (*N* = 5/5) and *parfait* [perfect] (*N* = 2/2) were either categorically or nearly categorically marked as masculine. Since they did not exhibit variation—and in fact appear to have simplified in the direction of the masculine—they were excluded from consideration.

Table 6
Agreement Rates for 11 "Simplifying" Adjectives in Conversation[15]

Variable adjective	Total used with feminine referent	Total showing feminine morphology	Total showing simplification	Rate of agreement (%)
canadien(ne)	72	67	5	93
français(e)	42	38	4	90
franco-américain(e)	21	19	2	90
content(e)	27	24	3	89
certain(e)	31	27	4	87
petit(e)	29	24	5	83
intéressant(e)	15	11	4	73
gentil(le)	7	5	2	71
important(e)	5	3	2	60
surpris(e)	21	8	13	38
prêt(e)	3	1	2	33
Total	273	227	46	83

Of the remaining 11 adjectives (273 tokens), 83% (*N* = 227) were morphologically marked as feminine, that is, they showed agreement with their feminine referent; the other 17% (*N* = 46) showed agreement rates that varied from 93% (*canadien*) to 33% (*prêt*). These 11 adjectives, listed in Table 6, were coded for two linguistic and nine extralinguistic factors. The results of these analyses are discussed below.

Linguistic factors affecting simplification in conversation.

As seen in Table 6, all of the adjectives that we identified involve alternations between vowel-final masculine forms and consonant-final, feminine forms. Within this general category of adjective, however, our examples fall into three types. Type 1 adjectives follow the same pattern as *chanceux*, that is, the masculine-feminine contrast is based solely on the nature of the final segment (vowel vs. vowel and oral consonant):

intéressant [ɛ̃tɛrɛã] *intéressante* [ɛ̃tɛrɛãt] [interesting]

Type 2 and Type 3 adjectives involve additional, predictable vowel alterations. In Type 2, the final oral vowel that marks the masculine variant is subject to obligatory rules that are

conditioned by the nature of the syllable (closed vs. open). In this type of adjective, the final consonant that marks the feminine variant is also oral.

petit	[pətˢi]	*petite*	[pətˢIt]	[small]

In Type 3, the final segment that marks the masculine variant is a nasal vowel that is subject to obligatory denasalization rules in syllables that are closed by a nasal consonant. In this type, the final consonant that marks the feminine variant is also nasal:

certain	[sɛrtɛ̃]	*certaine*	[sɛrtɛn]	[sure, certain]

Whereas Type 2 adjectives were not represented in the translation task data, *canadien* is an example of a Type 3 adjective.

Table 7
Effect of Type of Adjective on Rate of Agreement

Adjective Type	Discord	Agreement	Total	% Agreement
Type 1	31	90	121	74
Type 2	5	24	29	83
Type 3	10	113	123	92
Total	46	227	273	83

In contrast to what we saw in the translation task, the differences in rates of agreement for the three adjective types in conversation, reported in Table 7, suggest that there is a correlation between the nature of the final segment and the tendency toward (or resistance to), morphological reduction. In general, adjectives whose feminine variant is marked by a nasal consonant (Type 3 = 92%) are more resistant to simplification than are adjectives whose feminine variant is marked by an oral consonant (Type 2 = 83%, Type 1 = 74%). Similarly, adjectives whose masculine variant is a vowel that is not subject to positional variation (Type 1 = 74%) are more subject to morphological simplification than are adjectives that exhibit a vocalic alternation between the masculine and feminine variants (Type 2 and Type 3). Adjectives of Type 1 are thus most susceptible and adjectives of Type 3 are most resistant to morphological reduction.[16]

Our analysis of the relationship between morphological reduction and the grammatical number of the referent (Table 8) also contrasted with what we found in the translation data. It revealed that adjectives whose referents were plural exhibited a lower agreement rate (75%) than the adjectives whose referents were singular (84%). Since our conversational data set only provided 24 tokens where the feminine referents in subject position were plural, however, these results are far from conclusive. Rather, they suggest that future investigations of gender in the adjectival system should take grammatical number into account.

Table 8
Influence of Grammatical Number on Rate of Agreement

Number	Discord	Agreement	Total	% Agreement
Singular	40	209	249	84
Plural	6	18	24	75
Total	46	227	273	83

Extralinguistic factors affecting simplification in conversation.

For our analysis of the conversation data, we looked at the same nine speaker characteristics that we used to analyze the translation task data: community of residence, period of immigration, number of generations in the United States, frequency of use of French, age, sex, socioeconomic status, language(s) of instruction during primary education, and exposure to French during secondary and/or postsecondary instruction. As was the case with the translation data, we found that socioeconomic class had no effect on agreement rates, and that the effect of the number of generations in the United States and frequency of use of French showed no discernible pattern. The results for the remaining extralinguistic variables differed in various ways from what we observed in the translation data.

Table 9
Influence of Community of Residence on Rate of Agreement

Community of Residence	Discord	Agreement	Total	% Agreement
Bristol, CT	6	67	73	92
Southbridge, MA	14	41	55	75
Woonsocket, RI	26	119	145	82
Total	46	227	273	83

The analysis of the effect of community of residence on morphological simplification (Table 9) suggests that speakers from Bristol are more conservative with respect to adjectival agreement than are speakers from Woonsocket and Southbridge: 70% of speakers from Bristol made all feminine agreements in predicate position as compared to 56% of speakers from Woonsocket and 59% of speakers from Southbridge. Moreover, among those that showed some tendency toward the loss of feminine morphology, speakers from Bristol nevertheless made agreements in 92% of cases, while speakers from Woonsocket made them in 82% of cases, and speakers from Southbridge in 75% of cases.

Table 10
Influence of Period of Immigration on Rate of Agreement

Immigration	Discord	Agreement	Total	% Agreement
Traditional Francos	32	158	190	83
New Francos	14	69	83	83
Total	46	227	273	83

Our results from the translation task suggested that speakers whose presence in the United States was due to the first, pre-1930 migration (Traditional Francos) were more conservative than speakers who immigrated during the second wave (New Francos); results from the conversation data revealed no difference in the agreement rates of the two groups (Table 10).

Table 11
Effect of Age on Rate of Agreement

Age	Discord	Agreement	Total	% Agreement
≥ 80	1	21	22	95
70-79	14	72	86	84
60-69	12	33	45	73
50-59	16	76	92	83
≤ 49	2	22	24	88
?	0	4	4	100
Total	46	227	273	83

Data from the translation task pointed to a sharp contrast between speakers in their 60s and above, and those younger than 60 with respect to agreement rates; this was not reflected in the conversation data (Table 11). Here, agreement rates are highest among the oldest group of speakers (95%), decline by some 10% in the two subsequent age groups, and then begin to rise again for the two youngest age groups. The findings for both the oldest and the youngest group are based on too few cases to be reliable, however. On the other hand, the fact that the low agreement rate for speakers in the 60s is based on a similar number of tokens ($N = 12$) as those of speakers in their 70s ($N = 14$) and their 50s ($N = 16$) but less than half the number of possible cases ($N = 33$), points to an apparent difference between speakers in this age group and speakers in the other two age groups with respect to adjectival agreement.

As can be seen in Table 12 below, the overall percentage of agreements between male speakers (80%) and female speakers (84%) varies by 4%. Males provided one quarter the number of tokens ($N = 54$) that were produced by females ($N = 219$).

Table 12
Effect of Sex on Rate of Agreement

Sex	Discord	Agreement	Total	% Agreement
Female	35	184	219	84
Male	11	43	54	80
Total	46	227	273	83

As in the translation data, the exposure to French in both primary and in secondary and postsecondary education had an effect on the rate of adjectival agreement. Table 13 shows that speakers who received their primary education exclusively in English showed the lowest agreement rate (61%). Agreement rates for speakers who received bilingual schooling (84%) were notably higher, and similar to rates of speakers for whom French was the sole medium of instruction (87%).

Table 13
Effect of Language of Instruction in Primary School on Rate of Agreement

Primary Education—Language(s) of Instruction	Discord	Agreement	Total	% Agreement
English	9	14	23	61
Bilingual	27	145	172	84
French	10	67	77	87
?		1		
Total	46	227	273	83%

There were few tokens ($N = 23$) produced by informants who did not have any exposure to French in the classroom at the secondary or postsecondary level, but the difference in the rates of agreement for speakers who learned French in an L2 setting (76%) and those who had French as an L1 (94%) was substantial. These findings, summarized in Table 14, suggest that Franco-Americans who were exposed to French as an L1 in the classroom are resistant to the simplification of gender in descriptive adjectives.

Table 14
Effect of French in Secondary and Postsecondary Education on Rate of Agreement

Secondary/Postsecondary Education—Exposure to French	Discord	Agreement	Total	% Agreement
L1 setting	7	101	108	94
L2 setting	31	97	128	76
No French	6	17	23	74
Total	46	227	273	83

Variable rule analysis of conversation data.

Our variable rule analysis of the conversation data measured the contribution of significant linguistic and extralinguistic factors to adjectival discord (evidence of simplification) with a variable predicate adjective that referred to a feminine noun. For this analysis, we excluded 18 tokens for which a piece of information on one or more extralinguistic factors was missing and/or unclear. After these tokens were excluded, we had a total 255 tokens. The overall agreement rate was 82.7% ($N = 211$).[17]

The 11 variable adjectives (discussed above and listed in Table 5) were coded for two linguistic and nine extralinguistic factors. The linguistic factors were: the type of adjective (Type 1, Type 2, or Type 3, as described above) and the number of the referent (singular vs. plural). The nine extralinguistic factors were: community of residence, wave of immigration, number of generations in the United States, age, sex, socioeconomic status, language(s) of instruction in primary school, and exposure to French in secondary and/or postsecondary education. Among the factors considered, one linguistic factor (type of adjective) and two extralinguistic factors (community of residence and exposure to French in secondary/postsecondary education) were found to have a significant effect on simplification in favour of masculine forms when a variable predicate adjective refers to a feminine noun.[18]

Table 15
Contribution of Significant Factors to Adjectival Discord in Conversation

Significant Factors	Factor effect	Discord	Agreement	Total	% Agreement
Type of adjective					
1	0.724	29	82	111	73.9
2	0.427	5	23	28	82.1
3	0.299	10	106	116	91.4
Community of Residence					
Bristol, CT	0.237	5	62	67	92.5
Southbridge, MA	0.700	14	41	55	74.5
Woonsocket, RI	0.560	25	108	133	81.2
Secondary/Postsecondary Education—Exposure to French					
L1 setting	0.269	7	97	104	93.3
L2 setting	0.661	31	97	128	75.8
No French	0.694	6	17	23	73.9
Total		44	211	255	82.7

$p = 0.003$

Table 15 shows Type 1 adjectives strongly favour (factor effect = 0.724) simplification toward use of masculine adjectival forms to refer to a feminine noun in predicate position. For Type 1 adjectives, the masculine-feminine contrast is based solely on the nature of the final segment (vowel vs. vowel and oral consonant). The factor effects of adjectives of Type 2 (0.427) and Type 3 (0.299) show that adjectives that involve additional, predictable vowel alterations do not favour simplification.

Among the three communities, residence in Southbridge very strongly favours adjectival simplification (factor effect = 0.700). In Woonsocket, the factor effect (0.560) also favours simplification, but to a much lesser degree. Residence in Bristol (factor effect = 0.269) was found to strongly disfavour adjectival simplification.

Exposure to French in secondary/postsecondary education also was found to have a significant effect in the conversation data. Unsurprisingly, a lack of exposure to French in secondary or postsecondary education (factor effect = 0.694) favours simplification of gender agreement in the adjectival system. Notably, exposure to French in L2 settings (factor effect = 0.661) also favours simplification. In this factor group, exposure to French in L1 settings (factor effect = 0.269) strongly favours maintaining gender agreements when a predicate adjective refers to a noun that is morphologically feminine.

Discussion

The linguistic data that we have examined here confirm that variable descriptive adjectives in predicate position are subject to morphological reduction in the direction of the masculine variant. Although individual adjectives are affected at different rates,

simplification is conditioned overall by the nature of the final segment. Our analyses of extralinguistic variables at play suggest a complex dynamic between forces that encourage (language shift) and those that discourage (education in French) change.

According to the classic Labovian (1972) principles of linguistic style, data elicited through a task such as translation should represent a more formal style than data collected using semidirected interview techniques because the former method requires a greater degree of attention to speech than does the latter method. While we cannot go so far as to claim that the difference in average overall agreement rates for our two data sets (94% for translation and 83% for conversation) represents proof that our speakers control a stylistic range, our results certainly suggest that they are aware of the norms of Standard French with respect to adjectival agreement and can apply them with a high degree of accuracy when faced with a narrowly focused task. Indeed, the metalinguistic commentary that accompanied many of the responses indicates that speakers viewed this portion of the interview as a test of their knowledge of French grammar [19]:

(14) *Elle était chanceux chanceuse oui oui feminine* (SO07)
(15) *Ils étaient* e-t-a-i-e-n-t *chanceux* with an x (SO12)
(16) *Elles étaient chanceuses* with a e-s you have to put the plural in there (WOS4)

These remarks are especially notable in that speakers refer to the rules of written French, the morphology of which can vary greatly from that of the spoken language. For example, Woonsocket WOS4, a 70-year-old third generation Traditional Franco male, mentions the need for a written *s* that will distinguish the feminine singular *chanceuse* from the feminine plural *chanceuses*, forms that are always pronounced identically.[20]

These overall results point to the most robust of our findings when the influence of any single sociolinguistic factor on rates of agreement is considered, namely, that agreement is tied to education in French. Regardless of the task, speakers whose primary school education was delivered in French for all (96%/87%) or even part (96%/84%) of the day showed agreement rates that were 20% higher than those of speakers who received their primary school education exclusively via English (76%/61%). In addition, primary schooling in French was the extralinguistic factor group that proved to be statistically significant in the variable rule analysis of the translation data (see Figure 1).

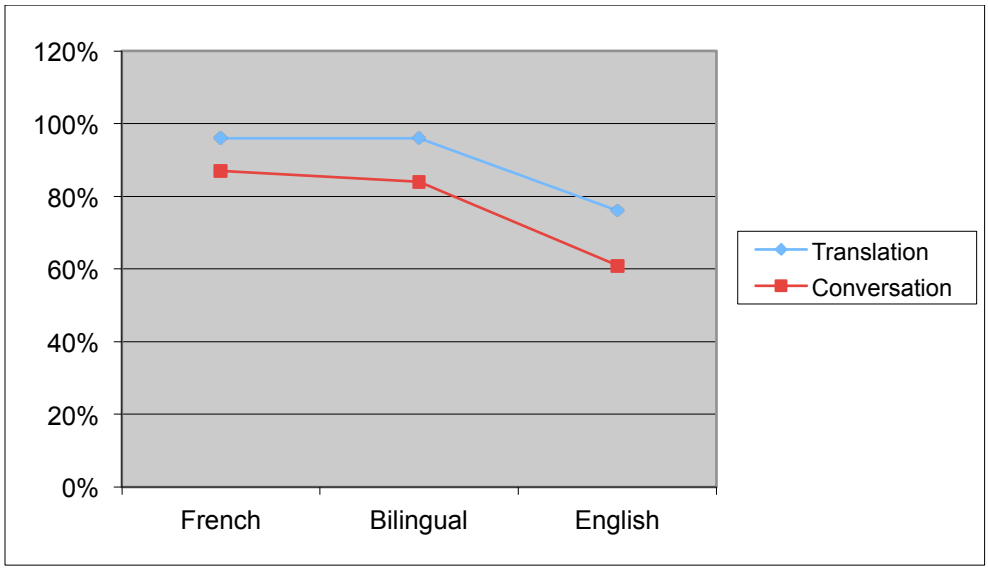

Figure 1. Comparative effect of instruction in primary school on rate of agreement.

Agreement rates were also very high for speakers who received instruction in French as a first language at any point beyond their primary schooling, but were quite mixed for those who had received instruction in French as a second or foreign language during those years (Figure 2). Although the L2 group performed almost as well on the translation task as the L1 group (93% vs. 97%) and somewhat better than the No French group (93% vs. 89%), there was virtually no difference between the L2 and the No French groups in conversation. There, the L2 group agreement rates plunged by almost 20% (76%) and were markedly below the rates of the L1 group (94%). Education in French after primary school also proved to be one of two statistically significant extralinguistic factor groups in our variable rule analysis of the conversation data.

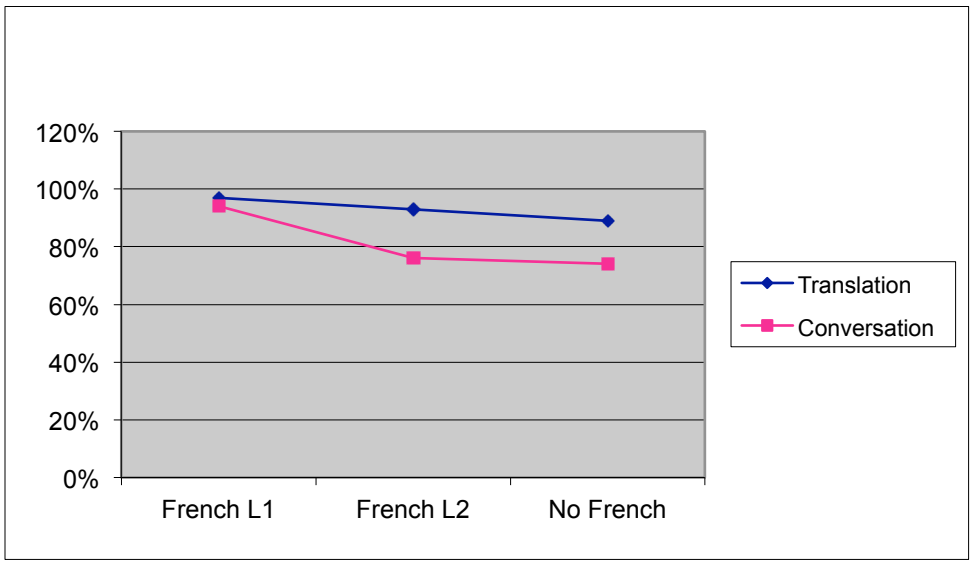

Figure 2. Comparative effect of education in French after primary school on rate of agreement.

These results were somewhat unexpected, but not entirely surprising. Franco-Americans often had very negative experiences in school because their variety of French was not recognized as legitimate. This would certainly have been true in L2 classrooms where France's potent normative tradition is keenly felt and "Standard Parisian French" has always been promoted as the only worthy target (cf. Auger & Valdman, 1999). For example, in the poignant example below, Southbridge SO06 describes an incident where a teacher mocked a classmate for the use of *patate* instead of *pomme-de-terre* to mean *potato*:

> and he ridiculed him and laughed at him and I immediately felt ashamed for my language and for being Canadian that we were less than and that French was what we should learn to speak…*je dis aujourd'hui que j'ai étudié français mais je parle canadien* […today I say that I studied French but I speak Canadian].

However, criticism was also routine in the parochial schools where the children's working class variety would be unfavourably compared to the French of the educated Quebec *élite* that served as the model. In another affecting anecdote, Southbridge SOS6, a 77-year-old third generation Traditional Franco female, describes the severity with which non-standard speech was dealt with:

> We had French in school and nuns…if you didn't speak the right way it was nothing...every one of us knew how to speak French because all the families... learned it at home but the parents were not that well educated so they made it very difficult. Because they'd say some word and if you repeated it the nuns would say, "I think you better ask somebody what you're talking about. I don't know."

It is possible to imagine that such classrooms could be quite successful at raising awareness of prescriptive grammar rules (i.e., the translation task) without affecting linguistic performance (i.e., the conversation task), although the reasons for the lack of "success" in the latter domain are likely highly complex and certainly beyond the scope of this paper.[21]

Several of the other extralinguistic variables that we investigated were selected because they represented different ways of approaching the effect of language shift on linguistic outcomes. We hypothesized, for example, that agreement rates would be lowest in communities such as Southbridge where language shift was most advanced, among speakers who had been in the United States the longest (as measured by the period of immigration and the number of generations in this country) and among speakers whose use of French was the most limited or least frequent.

Of these factors, frequency of French and number of generations in the United States did not have an effect on adjectival agreement rates. In the case of frequency of French, it is clear that there is no direct relationship between how often speakers report using French and their fluency or control of the language. This is because French is no longer used community-wide or tied to particular domains, but is associated with individuals: friends, spouses, parents, children, siblings, relatives, and, for some, clients. For many speakers, the use of French did not diminish gradually over time, bringing with it morphological erosion, but ended abruptly when those with whom they used the language were no longer present. Such is the case of Woonsocket WO13, a 59-year-old second generation Traditional Franco female. At the time of the interviews, the recent death of her mother—with whom she had always spoken exclusively in French—had prompted this very

fluent, but suddenly no longer daily French speaker to join a club that would afford her the opportunity to continue to use the language "at least once a month":

> *Aussi longtemps que ma mère a vécu on a toujours parlé en français, mais après qu'elle est partie, on se parlait en anglais entre nous-autres…Il y a des fois que mon frère va me dire quelque chose en français, on va parler en français un peu, et puis il y a des fois qu'on parlera pas du tout pour une secousse. Mais au moins je parle une fois par mois.*
>
> [As long as my mother was alive we always spoke in French, but after she was gone, we would speak English amongst ourselves…There are times when my brother will say something to me in French, we'll talk French for a bit, and then there are times that we won't speak it at all for a while. But at least I speak it once a month.]

In the context of this project, number of generations in the United States is also a flawed variable for measuring the linguistic effect of language shift. In this case, it is because it cannot take into account the complexity of Franco-American immigration patterns and, in particular, the time frame that separates the first from the second wave of immigration. Measured in number of generations alone, a speaker born of first-wave parents in the United States in 1922 and another born of second-wave parents in 1959 are both second-generation Franco-Americans, but the social and linguistic contexts in which they came into the world are vastly different.

The results for the variable "community of residence" (Figure 3) are not easy to interpret. For instance, the distribution of the raw data shows Southbridge reporting lower rates of agreement than Woonsocket on both translation (95% vs. 97%) and conversation (75% vs. 82%) data sets, but this apparent pattern bears little relation to agreement rates reported in Bristol, which has the lowest agreement rate for the translation task (93%) but the highest agreement rate in conversation (92%). In addition, the difference between the two rates for Southbridge (20%) and Woonsocket (15%) is much greater than the difference between the two rates for Bristol (1%).

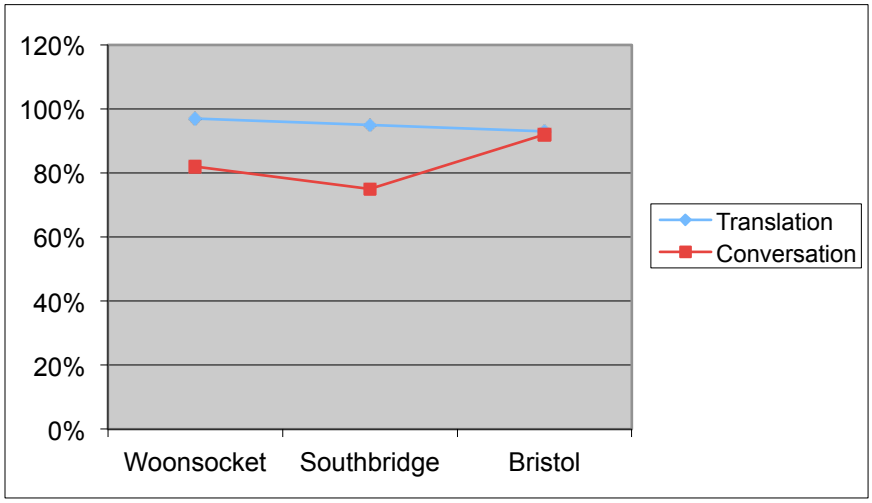

Figure 3. Comparative effect of community of residence on rate of agreement.

Nevertheless, the results of the variable rule analysis of the conversation data indicate that community of residence is the second statistically significant extralinguistic factor group, with residence in Bristol strongly favouring adjectival agreement, and residence in the other communities disfavouring (Woonsocket) and strongly disfavouring (Southbridge) it.

Since the francophone population of Bristol received a considerable infusion of new blood from more robust Canadian francophone communities following World War II, it is reasonable to suppose that their presence might account for the higher maintenance of variable adjective morphology in conversation, while the communities of Southbridge and Woonsocket, which are largely composed of Traditional Francos, show a pattern of morphological reduction that is also consistent with the degree to which the shift to English has advanced in the two communities. However, when we look at the data for period of immigration, we find that Traditional Francos made a higher percentage of agreements in the translation task, and that the period of immigration had no effect on percentages reported in the conversation data (Figure 4). In addition, if we then consider the period of immigration data from Bristol alone, we find that speakers who were born in Bristol and in other Franco-American communities had a 96% agreement rate while those who emigrated from Canada (New Brunswick and Quebec) had an agreement rate of only 89%. In other words, although Bristol New Francos are more conservative (89%) than speakers from Woonsocket (82%) and Southbridge (75%) overall, Bristol Traditional Francos (96%) are the most conservative speakers of any of these groups.

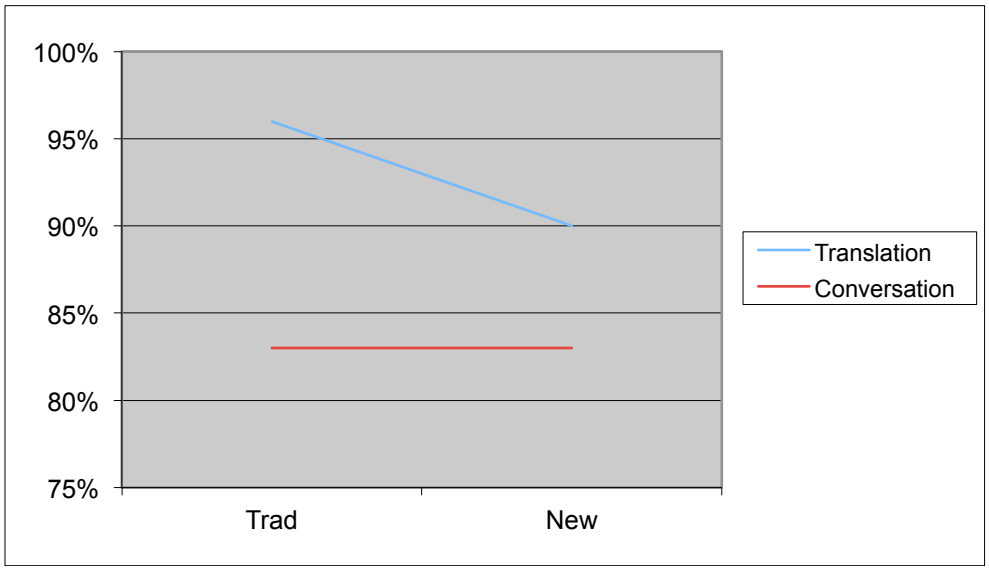

Figure 4. Comparative effect of period of immigration on rate of agreement.

In an analysis of the question of language shift in Bristol, Bagaté et al. (2004) noted that the different immigration streams that contributed to the continued growth of the overall francophone population following World War II were never fully assimilated into the existing Franco-American community, but remained distinct, close-knit, francophone sub-groups. Although French is still used to varying degrees within these groups, it is not and may never have been the language generally used between groups. One of the telltale signs of the lack of a cohesive identity among Bristol francophones is their sensitivity to

and attitude toward regional differences in their speech. For example, in one telling anecdote, Bristol BR24, a 45-year-old first generation New Franco from Quebec, explains how, as a child, she refused to speak French for a time because she did not want to be associated with speakers from Maine and New Brunswick:

> *Un été j'avais 13 ans et qu'est-ce qui avait arrivé c'est il y a beaucoup des gens qui viennent du Maine et du Nouveau-Brunswick ici et…leur langage c'était pas disons c'était pas un français qui était acceptable pour moi. Ça fait que je voulais pas que le monde pense que je venais du Maine…Ça fait que je voulais pas être française disons…j'ai arrêté de parler français à la maison, à mes parents, à tout le monde pour une couple de mois…J'avais même insulté mon père. J'avais dit on devrait changer comment qu'on épelle notre nom…mais ça a passé.*
>
> [One summer I was 13 and what happened was that there are a lot of people who come from Maine and from New Brunswick here and…their language wasn't let's just say it was a French that wasn't acceptable to me. So I didn't want people to think I came from Maine...So I didn't want to be French…I stopped speaking French at home, to my parents, to anyone for a couple of months...I even insulted my father. I told him we should change the way we spell our name…but I got over it.]

Given this situation, it is reasonable to suspect that the elevated rate of agreement among Traditional Francos in monitored (translation task) speech in general and in Bristol conversation overall is also related to the question of linguistic insecurity. It may be that Traditional Francos feel more pressure to conform to standard norms under test-like conditions such as the translation task than do New Francos. It should also be pointed out that the Traditional Francos interviewed for this project are notable in that they did not abandon French in spite of quite intense pressures of various sorts to do so. It is certainly possible that, in the case of a highly standardized language such as French, morphological conservatism, that is, "better" French, provides a psychological buffer of sorts against linguistic assimilation.

The results from our analysis of the effect of the remaining extralinguistic variables (age, social class, sex) on adjectival agreement also support the idea that Franco-American resistance to change is tied to linguistic attitudes. For example, raw data from the translation task for age seem to suggest an apparent change in progress, but raw data from the conversation task seem to tell a different story (Figure 5). There, the results for the oldest (80s and above) and youngest (40s and below) groups are based on too few cases to be reliable, but the pattern for the middle groups is clear: speakers in their 70s and their 50s show nearly identical agreement rates (84% and 83% respectively) while speakers in their 60s have the lowest agreement rate overall (73%).

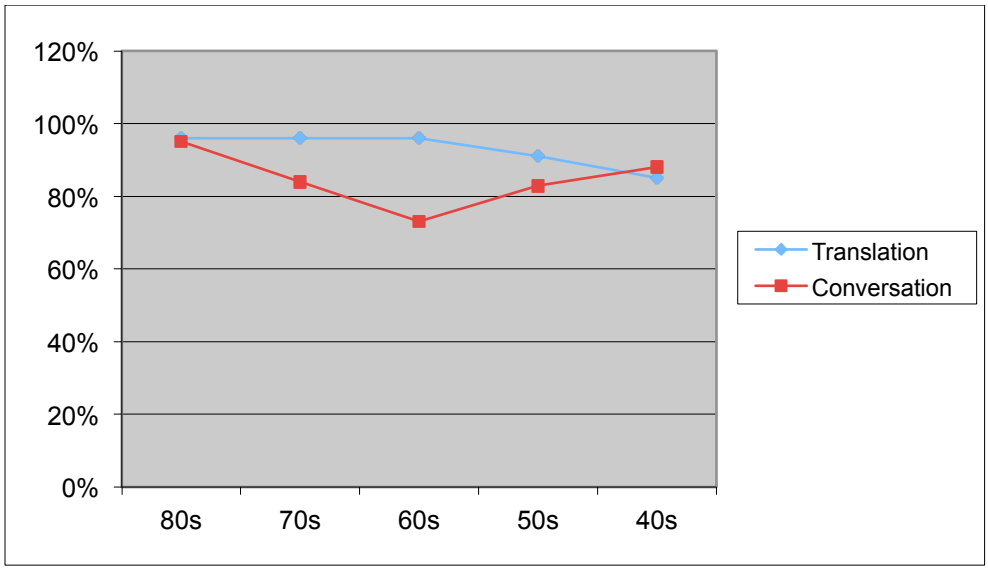

Figure 5. Comparative effect of speaker age on rate of agreement.

The explanation for this distribution may lie in the relationship between the frequency of use of French and the lack of effect of social class on adjectival variation. On the one hand, regardless of the community in question, speakers in their 60s report using French often or daily and are thus using the language more frequently than speakers in other age groups. On the other hand, the fact that social class has no effect on agreement rates contrasts with the situation reported by Stelling (2008, 2011) for auxiliary variation in FAF and suggests that the loss of adjectival agreement does not have the same degree of salience as the replacement of *être* by *avoir,* a proscribed, highly stigmatized grammatical feature. Assuming that frequent users of FAF are also the least self-conscious speakers of this variety, then they are also the speakers least likely to be self-monitoring during conversation, especially over a feature that does not carry strong social meaning. The fact that women appear to be somewhat more conservative than men with regard to this feature, however, is consistent both with findings in the language obsolescence literature which show that sex is frequently the only social factor that plays a role (Dorian, 1989) and with Labovian (1990, 2001) principles of linguistic change, namely that for change in progress above the level of awareness, women use the standard more than men.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have shown that morphological reduction of variable adjectives in predicate position in favour of the vowel-final, masculine variant is widespread in FAF in terms of the number of speakers who show evidence of this trend, but relatively infrequent in terms of the overall number of tokens and the limited number of adjectives that are affected. We have shown that simplification is sensitive to the nature of the final segment and that linguistic conservatism is tied to education in French and to community of residence. We have argued that women and Traditional Francos, whose presence in the United States is the result of the first wave of francophone emigration from Canada, are the most conservative speakers and that, overall, these results can be explained by widespread negative attitudes about the quality of FAF. We also hypothesized that speakers whose

grammar is more standardized may be more resistant to the pressure to abandon French despite the community-wide shift to English.

In a future analysis, it would be instructive to compare our findings with data from Franco-American communities such as Plattsburgh, New York, where education in French was never available (Castellucci, 2011). To what extent these finding apply when variable adjectives appear in other syntactic positions also needs to be examined.

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Notes

[1] We would like to acknowledge the work of Gregg A. Castellucci who served as a research assistant for the present study and to thank two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on an earlier draft.

[2] It is interesting to note that studies that consider the question of variation in gender marking in Quebec French tend not to approach the problem in terms of adjectival morphology. We believe this is because researchers are largely focused on the question of the feminization of vowel-initial nouns, a characteristic thought to be particular to this variety. See, for example, Barbaud, Ducharme and Valois (1982) and Klapka (2002).

[3] By convention, the asterisk is used to indicate examples that would be judged grammatically incorrect.

[4] "Collaborative Research: A Sociolinguistic Investigation of Franco-American French" was funded by the National Science Foundation (BCS-0003942; BCS-0004039) from 2001-2005. We would like to thank the many Franco-Americans whose generous participation enabled us to bring the project to fruition.

[5] We deliberately use the term *sex* to avoid confusion with grammatical gender.

[6] Brault (1986), Chartier (1991), Roby (1990, 2000), and Weil (1989), among others, provide detailed accounts of Franco-American immigration to the United States.

[7] See Fox and Smith (2005) for a more detailed discussion of the selection of communities and a more complete description of the speakers interviewed for this project.

[8] Data about ancestry and home language use were based on the 1990 U.S. Census. Figures from the 2000 U.S. Census were released when the fieldwork was already underway.

[9] If the 2000 U.S. Census figures had been available when the target communities were selected, Southbridge would not have met our criteria.

[10] Southbridge is notable in that we had some difficulty recruiting Franco-Americans who still spoke French. Only three of the speakers under the age of 70 were able to sustain a conversation in the language.

[11] Speakers who for one reason or another did not complete the translation task, or whose interviews have not been fully transcribed, could not be included in this portion of our analysis.

[12] The removal of tokens for the variable analysis did not change the patterns that we observed in our examination of the raw data.

[13] For this analysis, we tested the contribution of factors toward adjectival discord. Factor weights greater than .500 favour discord; factor weights less than .500 favour agreement.

[14] Because the transcription of all of the material gathered in Gardner has not been completed, our analysis of adjectival simplification in conversation does not include data from that community.

[15] The 11 adjectives are: *Canadian*, *French*, *Franco-American*, *glad*, *certain*, *small*, *interesting*, *nice*, *important*, *surprised*, and *ready*.

[16] The three adjectives that showed (near) categorical simplification toward the masculine provide additional support for this analysis: *assis* and *parfait* are Type 1 adjectives, while *familier* is a Type 2 adjective.

[17] The removal of tokens for the variable analysis did not change the distributional patterns that we observed in our examination of the raw data.

[18] In this analysis, we tested the contribution of factors toward adjectival discord with feminine nouns. Factor weights above .500 favour discord; factor weights below .500 favour agreement.

[19] Note that the translation task was administered orally. In a few rare cases, it became clear that the speaker's ability to understand spoken English was insufficient and the speaker was given a written copy of the sentences.

[20] Southbridge SO12, who also makes specific reference to spelling, is a 63-year-old second generation Traditional Franco male.

[21] Brault (1964) provides an excellent overview of the experience of Franco-American children in French classrooms.

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