I would first like to thank professors Stevenson, Erfurt and Haque for their contribution to the overall debate on language policies and to the more specific discussion of the inclusive and exclusive tensions at the heart of many modes of accommodation of diversity, in this case linguistic diversity. I will offer a brief overview of their papers and then turn to what I consider to be some common threads. I will conclude with a brief methodological discussion on the benefits of a comparative approach to study issues of inclusion/exclusion.

Professor Stevenson examines the discourse of citizenship and nationality as it takes place through the debate and policies pertaining to linguistic integration of immigrants in Germany and Austria. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the acceleration of glob-
alization in the 1990s, constitute the backdrop for discussions and concerns in these two countries regarding the way to manage cultural and linguistic diversity and feed the debate on whether they are countries of immigration. Stevenson thus explores the ideological ramifications behind the claims that immigrants must not only demonstrate proficiency in a single ‘national’ language but that a certain loyalty to this language is necessary for social cohesion and integration. Stevenson demonstrates how language is used to regulate immigration and the acquisition of citizenship. This use of language is part of what he has termed “the post-nationalist’ ideology of national languages” (17), whereas social integration is based on an effort by the immigrant only (i.e. the integrative effort is not shared by the host society in this discourse) to learn and become proficient in the ‘legitimate’ ‘national’ language in order to integrate and become citizen. In fact, the policies of language acquisition and the underlying citizenship requirements point to what seems to be an attempt at “reducing the observable evidence of otherness” (18); in other words, some implicit form of assimilation used to maintain and protect the actual monolingual order of Germany and Austria. Thus, language policies aimed at immigrants represent the reinforcement of an age-old discourse on the relation between language and nation, except that in this case, ‘nation’ is equated with the concept of ‘citizenship’ which renders difficult the social inclusion of newcomers.

Le professeur Erfurt étudie la façon dont les mécanismes de politisation de l’Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) provoquent des tensions de plus en plus grandes entre son rôle comme acteur politique mondial et l’enracinement de la francophonie dans les pratiques culturelles locales et régionales des pays membres. Il démontre que les changements stratégiques opérés par l’OIF à la suite de la chute du bloc soviétique (à l’instar de Stevenson)—et de l’incertitude quant à l’équilibre des pouvoirs qui s’ensuivie—s’inscrivent dans la mouvance de la mondialisation et la bataille pour devenir un acteur politique mondial important. Cette véritable lutte de pouvoir semble aboutir dans un changement de discours pour l’OIF qui s’allie à la Lusiphonie et à l’Hispanidad pour faire la promotion du plurilinguisme, et ce afin de faire contre-poids à l’anglicisation. Cette modification du discours s’avère-t-elle une variation stratégique, ou un changement de fond appelé à modifier la mission ultime de l’OIF ? L’auteur n’élaborre pas sur cette question, qui vaut tout de même la peine d’être sinon répondue, du moins considérée, d’autant plus que la mission de l’OIF s’inscrit dans une lutte (peut-être perdue d’avance) pour l’hégémonie linguistique. Erfurt examine ensuite les pratiques langagières locales et les politiques linguistiques d’un pays membre de la Francophonie : le Canada, plus particulièrement telles qui mises en œuvre dans la province de l’Ontario. Ces études de cas mettent en lumière la difficulté d’échapper à la dichotomie inclusion/exclusion. Dans le premier cas, autant les nouvelles possibilités économiques peuvent favoriser la reproduction linguistique et culturelle, autant elles confinent ces mêmes francophones à la marginalité sociale. Ajoutons que leur bilinguisme n’est en fait pas favorisé par ces nouveaux types d’employeurs pour ce qu’il est—c’est-à-dire une richesse
à cultiver et à promouvoir, un bien en soi—mais bien plutôt instrumentalisé afin de faveuriser la réussite entrepreneuriale des employeurs en question. Le deuxième cas à l’étude est celui de la création pour ainsi dire d’une néo-francophonie dans la région de Toronto, qui veut faire partie de la francophonie ontarienne tout en soulignant sa différence et en cherchant à obtenir la reconnaissance de cette différence. Erfurt met ici de l’avant, sans la nommer, l’idée des liens à créer entre la francophonie ontarienne de souche et la néo-francophonie qui sont en fait l’une pour l’autre l’altérité au cœur du soi.

Haque sets up the basis for a theoretical argument according to which the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism held in Canada in the 1960s created a hierarchy of language and citizenship rights “along racial and ethnic lines” (1). She focuses on two days of preliminary hearings during which various groups dispute the Commission’s terms of reference. Criticisms raised about these terms of reference are heard not only during those preliminary hearings, but are echoed in fact throughout the works of the Commission. Criticisms pertain to the assumption of Canada as a ‘bicultural’ country as per the title of the Commission and to the confusion between ‘other ethnic groups’ and ‘founding races’, and its potential implication of first and second-class citizens based on a claim of ‘prior history’. Haque highlights three main strategies used by ‘other ethnic groups’ to be included in the two founding groups. One is to reject the use of race and ethnicity and shift the focus to (bi)culture, strategy which Haque characterises as “a porous biculturalism where immigrant groups can make either of the bi-cultures ‘their own property’” (13). A second strategy from ‘other ethnic groups’ is to demand recognition as another ‘founding race’ through claims of prior history, territorial concentration, “spatial naturalization” of the language spoken by the claiming group and linguistic reproduction. The third strategy is used by an Aboriginal group who claims that Aboriginals are the real founding peoples and all other groups are ‘new Canadians’. This has the result of differentiating the group who claims founding status (for instance, groups of Ukrainian ancestry or Aboriginal groups) from recent immigrants. Haque’s overall argument helps demonstrate how semantics can reflect and offer a foundation for power relations in a given society. Even though some of the claims presented by Haque were resolved through the development of a multiculturalism policy (in terms of claims from ‘other ethnic groups’ but not from Aboriginal groups), the dispute raised by the Commission’s terms of reference highlights the difficulty of proposing founding principles in a multicultural and multilingual society, particularly when these founding principles are established through claims for recognition. As James Tully has pointed in an article entitled « Liberté et dévoilement dans les sociétés multinationales » (1999), recognition always entails some sort of injustice and a certain privileging of claims. This does not mean however that recognition should not be given: after all, refusing to give recognition to any claim in order to avoid differential treatment would not satisfy any group that requests such recognition. There needs to be an acknowledgement that recognition is contingent, endless, temporary, partial, as identities can never be identical to themselves to paraphrase Derrida. Hence identities are never set once and for all and are always changing, varying. Recognition given in the context of claims to the foundation of a
country could thus be particularly difficult to accept if one sees recognition as partial and temporary. “Foundation” and “recognition” seem to be antithetic to one another. But they are not necessarily so: demands and attributions of recognition, up to a point, found and crystallize relations of power, stop for a brief moment the flux of identities, which the political (in the case of the Commission’s works, embodied in contestation) helps energize again. Hence founding principles exist in every society, not so much as an essence but as a reflection of power structures put in place through historical processes of recognition. And it is because these founding principles are in place that the political exists and that contestation can take place. Without a foundation, there is nothing to protest against and therefore the impulse at the heart of the political is lost in flux.

The papers presented here all face the challenge raised by the concern of the “dogma of homogeneism” (as quoted by Stevenson following Blommaert and Verschueren). The OIF is concerned with its diminishing homogeneity and the difficulties brought about by the inclusion in its core of members that not only are not francophone but also have different political traditions at odds with the political mission assumed by the OIF. Austria and Germany face challenges brought about by the arrival of immigrants that do not speak German, therefore questioning the legitimacy of linguistic homogeneity. However, these two states have responded with a reinforcement of the “dogma of homogeneity” through the use of language proficiency “as a tool for policing migration” (19). The B&B Commission in Canada in the 1960s faced similar difficulties, its terms of reference being questioned for their presumed bias towards a certain homogeneous linguistic and cultural order (comprised of French and English). All of the examples presented during this panel demonstrate the entrenchment of power relations which not only govern the interactions of the actors in question and guide the development of language policies but which also found the political.

Finally, as I mentioned in my introductory remarks, I would like to offer some methodological remarks pertaining to the three papers, particularly regarding the use of comparative and contextual approaches. Indeed, the papers make use of these approaches to demonstrate the interplay of differences and similarities in patterns of inclusion/exclusion. Whether it is comparison between two countries, two regions of public policy intervention or two or three groups trying to make their voice heard, differences in strategies used to destabilize or confirm the hegemonic order are highlighted. They thus bring to light the ideology and the political interests behind (supra) governmental interventions in the field of language policies. Such a comparative approach draws attention to the importance of context in studying processes of inclusion and exclusion. An examination of a particular language policy taken out of its context or simply not located in it in the first place can make us miss some important insights. As Carens mentions, a contextual approach is useful as it can first

clarify the meaning of abstract formulations. Secondly it can provide access to normative insights that may be obscured by theoretical accounts that remain at the level of general principle. Thirdly, it can make us more conscious of the blinkers
that constrain our theoretical visions when they are informed only by what is familiar (Carens, 2000, 2).

Moreover, a comparative approach makes one look into less familiar grounds and thus destabilizes and brings to light preconceived ideas that both theorists and readers can at times hold. However, a contextual approach can perhaps « fail to recognize injustices that are pervasive and deeply embedded in practice » (Carens, 4), which makes the contextual approach such a challenge and such an exercise in nuance and skill. Stevenson, Erfurt and Haque have obviously taken on that challenge and proposed thoughtful reflections on processes of inclusion and exclusion in linguistic and cultural relations.
Bibliography / Bibliographie


