Plurilingual or not plurilingual?

Plurilingual competence and identity of Canadian EAL peers in a francophone post-secondary context

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Abstract

Despite emergent research on Canadian additional language (AL) learners' plurilingualism in post-secondary and officially monolingual school contexts, challenges persist in implementing plurilingual instruction: learners' plurilingual identities (PI) and plurilingual and pluricultural competence (PPC) are often ignored in favour of the monolingual native speaker model. To help validate learners' PPC and PI in AL classrooms, this article discusses parts of the results of a mixed-methods study pertaining to the self-perceived PPC and self-reported linguistic identities of adult English as AL student tutors and tutees (N = 20) in a francophone Montréal college. Data from a PI questionnaire, a PPC scale, and interviews reveal that: tutors tend to have higher PPC and identify as bi- or plurilingual; tutees tend to have lower PPC and identify as mono- or bilingual; a lower PPC level is directly related to identifying as monolingual; factors including AL competence level influence participants' PI. Implications for AL education are discussed.

Key words: plurilingualism, plurilingual and pluricultural competence, plurilingual identity, English as an additional language, post-secondary

Résumé

Malgré la recherche émergente sur le plurilinguisme des apprenants canadiens de langue additionnelle (LA) dans les contextes postsecondaires et monolingues, des défis de mise en œuvre de la didactique plurilingue persistent : les identités plurilingues (IP) et les compétences plurilingues et pluriculturelles (CPP) des apprenants sont souvent ignorées au profit d'un modèle monolingue. Pour aider relever ces défis, la présente étude a examiné la CPP et l'IP d'étudiants en anglais comme LA qui ont fait des tutorats (N = 20) dans un collège francophone à Montréal. Les résultats révèlent que : les mentors, ou tuteurs, ont tendance à avoir une CPP plus élevée et à s'identifier comme bi- ou plurilingues ; les participants mentorés ont tendance à avoir une CPP plus faible et à s'identifier comme

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mono- ou bilingues ; la CPP plus faible est directement lié à s'identifier comme monolingue ; quatre facteurs qui influencent l'IP des participants sont identifiés. Les implications pour l'enseignement des LAs sont discutées.

Mots-clés : plurilinguisme ; compétence plurilingue et pluriculturelle ; identité plurilingue ; l'anglais langue additionnelle ; postsecondaire

Introduction

While Canada is officially English–French bilingual, Canadians are increasingly multilingual. Between 2011 and 2016, the number of Canadians who speak more than one language at home grew from 17.5% to 19.4%, and 70% of the latter reported a mother tongue other than the official languages (Statistics Canada, 2016). In cities like Montréal, plurilingualism seems to be the new norm: at least 850,000 residents reportedly speak at least three languages (Statistics Canada, 2019), and research shows that most residents tend to identify as plurilingual (Galante & dela Cruz, 2021). These numbers highlight not only the intricacies of linguistic identities (Kramsch, 2009), but also the potential complex realities of plurilingual speakers who navigate officially mono- or bilingual spaces (Dagenais, 2013; Heller, 2007; Lamarre, 2013).

Yet, mainstream additional language (AL) instruction remains monolingual: learners' plurilingual practices in the classroom — such as using their ALs or mixing languages — are often seen as a problem rather than an asset, and are often discouraged (Cummins, 2007, 2017; Piccardo, 2017). In turn, this monolingual approach disparages students' plurilingual identity (Bono & Stratilaki, 2009; Krasny & Sachar, 2017; Oliveira &Ançã, 2009) in favour of an idealized monolingual native speaker model (Cook, 2016), which ignores the role of learners' plurilingualism in fostering AL development (Piccardo, 2019). In Canadian English as an Additional Language (EAL) education, many teachers and students still find it challenging to overcome this 'monolingual disposition' (Gogolin, 1994; Piccardo, 2013) despite research evidence pointing to the benefits of using learners' full repertoires when learning ALs (Lau, 2020; Lau & Van Viegen, 2020; Lightbown & Spada, 2020; Marshall, 2020a) like English (Göbel & Vieluf, 2014). This target-language-only approach persists in EAL education in the officially French-only province of Québec: monolingualism pervades classrooms, and teachers of multilingual adult learners receive little to no training on how to incorporate a plurilingual approach in their practice (Blandford et al., 2019; Boisvert et al., 2020). Ultimately, target-language-only instruction ignores students' plurilingual realities beyond the classroom (Kubota, 2020; Kubota & Bale, 2020; Kubota & Miller, 2017), potentially depriving them of valuable linguistic and non-linguistic re-

sources that could otherwise scaffold their language learning (Piccardo, 2019).

This article reports parts of the results of a mixed-methods study that investigated EAL student tutors' and tutees' plurilingual and pluricultural competence (henceforth PPC) and plurilingual identity (PI), as well as their plurilingual practices during their peer-to-peer pedagogical interactions in a francophone college (also known as *Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel* [CÉGEP]) in Montréal, Québec, Canada. This article focuses on results pertaining to these EAL students' PPC and PI (for results focusing on plurilingual practices, see dela Cruz, 2022).

Plurilingualism, plurilingual and pluricultural competence, and plurilingual identity

The dynamic language use of multilingual, transcultural, and often transnational AL speakers has emergently preoccupied language education research (Block, 2003; May, 2014). Studies have focused on examining learners' fluid linguistic repertoires and identities (Jaspers, 2018; Kubota, 2016; Ortega, 2014), drawing from theoretical lenses including heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981), polylingual languaging (Jørgensen, 2008), translanguaging (García, 2009), metrolingualism (Pennycook, 2010), flexible bilingualism (Creese et al., 2011), code-meshing (Canagarajah, 2011), and lingua franca multilingualism (Makoni & Pennycook, 2012). Plurilingualism (Coste et al., 1997/2009; Council of Europe [CoE], 2001), which the current study used as a theoretical framework, emerged as part of this 'multi/pluri' shift in language research.

Plurilingualism highlights the interconnectedness among speakers' languages and cultures, focusing not only on the development of an AL but rather on fostering a communicative competence in all languages and language varieties in speakers' repertoires (Cenoz & Gorter, 2013). While such repertoires might refer to a multilingual's different languages, it also refers to a monolingual's known varieties and registers of their mother tongue, like its non-standard or regional variants (CoE, 2020). Thus, an individual can be plurilingual without being fluent in all of their languages or in any other language aside from their mother tongue (Piccardo, 2019).

Further, plurilingualism posits that the AL learner is the locus of language use (Coste et al., 1997/2009): learners are social actors who possess the agency and competence to draw flexibly from their composite repertoire "to achieve effective communication with a particular interlocutor" (CoE, 2001, p. 4; see also Marshall & Moore, 2018; Moore & Gajo, 2009). This communicative competence refers to a partial and dynamic PPC (CoE, 2020), which shifts along learners' life trajectories (Castelotti & Moore, 2011; Coste, 2001; Coste et al., 1997/2009), as well as their needs, desires, values, and identities (Marshall et al., 2012; Marshall & Moore, 2013, 2018; Moore & Gajo, 2009;

Piccardo, 2013, 2017). Hence, unlike popular additive discourses on bi- and multilingualism, which view languages as discrete entities that can be counted as a list (Lambert, 1973; Piccardo, 2017; Zubrzycki, 2019), plurilingualism recognizes that linguistic identities are in constant flux (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Kramsch, 2009; Norton, 2013; Pavlenko, 2006; Piccardo, 2019) just as AL speakers' repertoires are dynamic (CoE, 2020). A plurilingual pedagogy thus draws from the learners' full linguistic repertoire (Marshall, 2020b; Taylor & Snoddon, 2013) to help heighten their awareness of their shifting PPC and PI, which leads "ultimately to an increased ability to learn languages" (Piccardo, 2019, p. 188).

Plurilingual research has elucidated the intricacies of language learners' PPC and PI across educational contexts. A study investigating the PPC of post-secondary EAL learners in Toronto, Ontario, Canada shows that students who received plurilingual instruction had significantly higher PPC levels after the study's intervention compared to learners who received monolingual instruction (Galante, 2018). These results indicate that plurilingual instruction fosters students' awareness of their PPC. Another study examining factors that contribute to identifying as plurilingual shows that participants who reported knowing more languages tended to have higher PPC levels (Galante & dela Cruz, 2021).

A study (Bono & Stratilaki, 2009) conducted in French–German universities shows that the more advanced AL learners are, the more they recognized and drew from the benefits of their plurilingual competence. However, not all learners who speak multiple languages identified as plurilingual, which was attributed to the disconnect in language use between the learners' educational and social contexts. Similar findings were found in a case study (Oliveira & Ançã, 2009) that investigated learners' perceptions of their plurilingual identities. Results show that students positively perceive their plurilingual identities when their AL programs validate their plurilingual repertoires in the classroom.

In Montréal, another study (Galante & dela Cruz, 2021) reveals that 92.9% of 250 adult residents identify as plurilingual when asked to identify as plurilingual or not. Participants, most of whom are local and international undergraduate students, reasoned that they are plurilingual because they have rich linguistic repertoires, but others reasoned that they are plurilingual because they are comfortable being in or adapting to situations involving language-mixing/switching. However, a few Canadian-born participants insisted that they are bilingual but not plurilingual because they are only proficient in English and French, Canada's official languages. Some participants also cited their lack of proficiency in their ALs for not identifying as plurilingual. These results echo findings from other studies

showing that AL proficiency is tied to identifying as bilinguals (Sia & Dewaele, 2006; Zubrzycki, 2019), or that Canadians tend to identify as bilinguals due to the strong influence of the country's official English–French bilingualism on Canadian language education and civic identity (Churchill, 2003). Beyond Québec and its French-only policy, research on EAL students in French immersion or English–French bilingual Canadian post-secondary contexts also shows that institutional discourses within learners' educational settings and learners' language ideologies can foster, disrupt or lead them to negotiate their plurilingual identities (e.g., Marshall et al., 2021; Moore et al., 2015, 2020; Séror & Gentil, 2020; Séror & Weinberg, 2021).

Overall, while past studies show that learners' PPC can be measured and are influenced by certain factors (Galante, 2020; Galante & dela Cruz, 2021), and that PPC and PI can be positively influenced by plurilingual instruction (Galante, 2018), none so far have investigated how exactly these two factors relate to each other. Further, while some trends have been identified regarding how AL learners perceive their PI (e.g., Bono & Stratilaki, 2009; Galante & dela Cruz, 2021; Oliveira & Ança, 2009; Sia & Dewaele, 2006; Zubrzycki, 2019), and despite emergent literature on EAL learners' PI in French immersion and bilingual Canadian higher education, (e.g., Marshall et al., 2021; Moore et al., 2015, 2020; Séror & Gentil, 2020; Séror & Weinberg, 2021), post-secondary EAL learners' PI in officially French-only settings like Québec remain underexplored.

Thus, since learners' awareness of their PPC and PI has been suggested to contribute to overall language learning abilities (Piccardo, 2019) and development (Göbel & Vieluf, 2014), it is paramount to understand how AL learners perceive their PPC and PI to help inform how teachers can effectively include a plurilingual dimension to their pedagogies (Kubota, 2020). This first step is necessary in contexts like Québec where implementation of plurilingual pedagogies remains a challenge (Blandford et al., 2019; Boisvert et al., 2020). Thus, this study aimed to examine the PPC and PI of adult EAL student tutors and tutees in a francophone college, how their PPC and PI relate, and the reasons for their linguistic identities.

The study asked three research questions (RQs):

1. What are adult EAL student tutors' and tutees' PPC levels?
2. Do EAL student tutors and tutees perceive their linguistic identity as mono-, bi- or plurilingual? For what reasons do they identify as mono-/bi-/plurilingual?
3. How do the EAL student tutors' and tutees' PPC levels relate to their linguistic identity?

Method

Context

The study was conducted in a francophone CÉGEP in Montréal. The participants were recruited from the CÉGEP's language help centre, where EAL students can apply to be an English tutor or tutee. Officially, French is the language of communication and instruction in the CÉGEP, except in language courses (e.g., EAL), in which the language of communication and instruction is the target language. The language help centre offered tutoring in English and Spanish, but had a de facto English-only policy for English tutors and tutees, which comprised the majority of students in the centre.

The tutoring centre assigned tutors to tutees based on students' availabilities. As such, pairings were not always exclusive (e.g., Tutor 1 could be working with Tutees 1 and 2, albeit not during the same tutoring sessions). Tutees received at least one one-hour tutoring session per week and they could request up to three tutoring sessions per week with the same or a different tutor. Multiple tutoring sessions could be happening in the centre at any time; however, a tutor-tutee pair typically works independently from other pairs.

Participants

Eleven student tutors and nine tutees between the ages of 18 and 56 participated in the study (N = 20); all participants were current students at the CÉGEP. The tutors were enrolled in or had successfully completed an EAL course designed to train them as English tutors. The tutees were taking a beginner EAL course. None of the participants had been trained to deliver, or had previously received plurilingual instruction.

All participants reported speaking at least three languages. The majority spoke French as their mother tongue (n = 16), while the rest reported speaking Spanish (n = 3) or Pulaar (n = 1). English was the most reported AL (n = 18), followed by French (n = 2); Spanish, German, Italian, and Japanese were also reported as ALs. Most of the participants were born in Québec (n = 15), while a few immigrated from Peru, Venezuela, Colombia, Ivory Coast, or Guinea.

Instruments

Three instruments and methods were used to collect the data in English and/or French, depending on the participants' preference. The French instruments were checked by a French mother tongue speaker.

Demographic questionnaire

A demographic questionnaire gathered information including the participants' name, age, country of origin, ethnicity, known languages, language use, and length of residence in Canada.

Plurilingual and pluricultural competence scale

The plurilingual and pluricultural competence (PPC) scale (Galante, 2020) is a valid instrument with 22 items on a 4-point Likert scale, which measures participants' PPC levels. Scores range from "1 = strongly disagree" to "4 = strongly agree". Participants rate items including, "When talking to someone who knows the same language as I do, I feel comfortable switching between one language to another language" or "When talking to someone who knows the same languages as I do, I do not feel comfortable mixing two (or more) languages in conversation".

Plurilingual identity questionnaire

The plurilingual identity questionnaire (PIQ), displayed in Table 1, asked participants to identify themselves as mono-, bi-, or plurilingual based on definitions drawn from the plurilingual framework and from popular discourses on additive bi-/multilingualism. Note that while the study's plurilingual framework recognizes the dynamic nature of linguistic identities, participants were given a choice to identify among three discrete linguistic identities to allow for later quantitative analysis of the PIQ data with the PPC scale data. Additionally, given the limitation of a questionnaire, pre-determined labels and definitions were given to participants to account for their potential lack of familiarity with the term *plurilingualism*. To address such methodological limitations, the PIQ also asked participants to write reasons for their choice, and a follow-up interview was conducted.

Table 1
Plurilingual identity questionnaire

Monolingual:	I know only one language, and I speak it all the time and in all contexts.
Bilingual	I know two languages, and speak them both comfortably.
Plurilingual	I know two or more languages, but I do not necessarily speak them at the same proficiency level or at the same amount. For example, I am better at/use mostly one language than the other. I know variations in the same language, for example, the way a language is used in different regions of a country or in other countries.

Semi-structured interviews

Individual interviews of approximately 20 minutes long were conducted with a smaller sample of participants to probe them about their PIQ responses. A guide was used to pose similar questions to all interviewees, but it allowed for further questions (Mackey & Gass, 2015). Questions included, "You scored high in

the PPC scale, meaning you perceive yourself as having a high plurilingual and pluricultural competence. And you also identified as plurilingual. Could you explain a bit more about this?" or "You scored high in the PPC scale, meaning you perceive yourself as having a high plurilingual and pluricultural competence. But still you indicated you're monolingual. Is there any reason for that?". The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher. The French transcriptions were checked by a French mother tongue speaker.

Data collection

The data were collected in Fall 2019. Participants (N = 20) filled out the demographic questionnaire, the PPC scale and the PIQ at the same time at the beginning of the semester. On the semester's last week, the semi-structured interviews were conducted with a non-random sample of six participants (n = 3 tutors; 3 tutees). Participants were selected for an interview if they scored high in the PPC scale yet chose to identify as mono- or bilingual (or the inverse), or if they scored high in the PPC scale and identified as plurilingual.

Data analysis

The study followed a sequential, convergent mixed methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018): different data types were collected to investigate the same RQs, and qualitative data were collected as a follow-up to initially collected quantitative data. These data sets were then analyzed separately before interpreting them together to look for convergences and divergences in how they address the RQs. To answer RQ1, PPC scale data were coded and analyzed via SPSS v25 (IBM, 2017) using descriptive statistics (e.g., mean, median, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (e.g., Mann-Whitney U test). Negatively worded items in the PPC scale were reverse coded.

To answer RQ2, data from the PIQ's checkboxes were quantified and analyzed in SPSS v25 using descriptive statistics. After, qualitative data from the PIQ's open-ended question and the semi-structured interviews were coded using in vivo coding (Saldaña, 2021) to keep emergent themes rooted in the participants' voices (i.e., codes emerged from participants' own language).

During coding, the qualitative data were broken down into smaller units (e.g., a sentence or a phrase within a sentence), which were assigned a code based on their dominant meanings. For example, the PIQ response

> I speak French, English, and Spanish. However, I do not have the same *level of competence* in Spanish than I do in English or in French

is coded as a unit under "competence level". If a unit could be assigned to more than one code, it was coded according to its most dominant meaning. For example, the interview response

> I really *like to mix* languages but for example, I speak a *little bit* of Japanese, a tiny little bit, and I *like to use* it when I'm speaking with people that understand me

was coded under "language preferences" instead of "amount of language use", another emergent code.

To increase the results' reliability, three rounds of coding were conducted. The first two rounds were conducted to establish an intra-coder agreement, which was 89.66% (26 out of 29 units were coded similarly between rounds) for the PIQ short text responses, and 85.7% for the interview data (12 out 14 units were coded similarly between rounds). The differently coded units were resolved during a third round of coding by assigning them to one code. After coding the qualitative data from the PIQ and interviews, they were analyzed using content analysis (Patton, 2015) to identify emergent patterns in participants' reasons for their linguistic identities. Qualitative data were coded and analyzed using NVivo 1.4.1 (QSR, 2020).

To answer RQ3, quantitative data from the PPC scale and the PIQ were analyzed in SPSS v25 using inferential statistics. Table 2 summarizes the study's design, including the data analyses conducted and data types used to answer the RQs.

Table 2
Study design and data analyses

Research questions		Data source	Data analysis
RQ1:	PPC levels	PPC scale	Quantitative
RQ2:	Linguistic identity	PIQ	Quantitative
	Reasons	PIQ	Qualitative
		Interviews	Qualitative
RQ3:	Relationship between PPC and linguistic identity	PPC scale	Quantitative
		PIQ	Quantitative

Results

RQ1: PPC levels

Overall, participants had a mean PPC score of 3.35 (*SD* = 0.35) and a median of 3.43. The lowest PPC score of 2.77 was from a tutee, and the highest PPC level of 3.97 was from a tutor. On average, tutors scored higher on the PPC scale than the tutees: tutors had a mean score of 3.56 (3.14;3.91, *SD* = 0.22) and a median of 3.59. Tutees had a mean PPC of 3.10 (2.77;3.59, *SD* = 0.31) and a median of 2.95. Table 3 summarizes the PPC scale's results.

Table 3
*Participants' **PPC** levels*

Participants	PPC levels				
	M	*SD*	*Mdn*	*Min*	*Max*
Tutors	3.56	0.22	3.59	3.14	3.91
Tutees	3.10	0.31	2.95	2.77	3.59
Total	3.35	0.35	3.43	2.77	3.91

As per RQ1, these results seem to suggest that tutors have higher PPC levels than their tutees. To further test this finding, a Mann-Whitney U test was conducted. Results show that there is a significant difference between the median PPC scores of tutors (Mdn = 3.59) and tutees (Mdn = 2.95), U = 12, p = 0.003. This finding further suggests that tutors are more aware of their PPC than their tutees.

RQ2: Linguistic identities

Overall, seven participants identified as plurilingual, eight identified as bilingual, and five identified as monolingual. Among tutors, seven identified as plurilingual and four identified as bilingual. Among tutees, four identified as bilingual, and five identified as monolingual. Interestingly, no tutors identified as monolingual, and no tutees identified as plurilingual. Table 4 shows the distribution of participants' linguistic identity.

Table 4
Participants' linguistic identities

Participants	Linguistic identity			Totals
	Monolingual	Bilingual	Plurilingual	
Tutors	0	4	7	11
Tutees	5	4	0	8
Total	5	8	7	20

To explore participants' reasons for their chosen linguistic identity, the PIQ's short text responses were analyzed for thematic patterns. Four emergent themes were identified: participants associate their linguistic identities to their (1) *competency levels* in their languages (n = 12); (2) *amount of language use* of the languages in their repertoires (n = 9); (3) *comfort levels* when using specific languages in their repertoires (n = 5); and (4) their *language preferences* (n = 3). Table 5 shows the number of coded units for each theme from the PIQ responses, sorted by participant group.

Table 5
Participants' reasons for their linguistic identities from PIQ

Themes	Number of coded units		Totals
	Tutors	Tutees	
Competency levels	9	3	12
Amount of language use	4	5	9
Comfort levels	2	3	5
Language preferences	2	1	3

Participants' PIQ responses suggest that they link their linguistic identity principally to perceived competency levels in their languages. This is particularly true for tutors, none of whom identified as monolingual. This is unsurprising, as most tutors expressed that they perceive themselves as highly proficient in at least two languages in their repertoire, which makes them plurilingual. Tutor 2 for instance shared that

> *Je parle française, anglais et espagnol. Cependant, je n'ai pas le même niveau de compétence en espagnol qu'en anglaise ou en français*
>
> 'I speak French, English, and Spanish. However, I do not have the same level of competence in Spanish than I do in English or in French'

a response that aligns with the PIQ's descriptors. Contrarily, some tutors emphasized that their lack of competence in their AL is what makes them not plurilingual, which was the case for Tutor 6. He wrote that

> I do not think I am comfortable enough to say I am plurilingual. I do speak Spanish a little, but I need to improve my level of Spanish.

On the other hand, none of the tutees identified as plurilingual because they mostly use their French mother tongue over their AL English. For instance, Tutee 6, who reported knowing and using French, English, and Japanese, identified as monolingual because she uses French all the time, unless when required to speak English at school. She clarified that knowing multiple languages does not necessarily make her bilingual:

> *Je parle français en tout temps, hormis lorsque je dois parler en anglais et il n'est pas super. Je connais aussi quelques mots en japonais, mais tout cela ne veut pas dire que je suis bilingue.*
>
> 'I speak French all the time, except when I have to speak in English and it's not good. I know some words in Japanese, but all this is not to say that I am bilingual'. (Tutee 6)

A number of participants also reasoned that they are plurilingual or bilingual because they are comfortable in using their AL English. For instance, Tutee 9 wrote that she is bilingual because

> *[elle est] autant à l'aise de communiquer en français qu'en anglais*
>
> '[she is] as comfortable communicating in French as in English).'

Inversely, Tutee 4 claimed that she is monolingual because she is not even

> comfortable enough in English to use it in a conversation.

Overall, fewer participants cited personal language preferences as a basis for their linguistic identity. For example, Tutor 10 highlighted how her preference to learn and speak multiple languages makes her plurilingual:

> *je parle souvent espagnol pour le fun car je veux toujours m'améliorer. J'adore connaître des nouvelles langues et mes connaissances en 3 langues me permettent de déchiffrer d'autres langues*
>
> 'I speak Spanish often for fun because I want to always improve myself. I love knowing new languages'

Conversely, Tutee 7 wrote that

> *je préfère parler en français afin de m'assurer que je ne dis pas n'importe quoi*
>
> 'I prefer to speak in French to make sure that I don't say whatever'

and she identified as monolingual due to this preference.

Similar emergent patterns were found from the interview responses. Specifically, interviewed participants revealed that they viewed their linguistic identities in light of their (1) *competency levels* in their languages (n = 6); (2) *comfort levels* with using their languages (n = 4); (3) *amount of language use* (n = 2) across languages in their repertoire; (4) and their *language preferences* (n = 2). Table 6 shows the number of coded units for each theme from the interview responses, sorted by participant group.

Table 6
Participants' reasons for their linguistic identities from interviews

Themes	Number of coded units		Totals
	Tutors	Tutees	
Competency levels	3	3	6
Amount of language use	1	3	4
Comfort levels	1	1	2
Language preferences	1	2	2

During the interviews, Tutor 4, who identified as bilingual, attributed his linguistic identity to his perceived language competencies. He rationalized that

> I could speak English at a university level, French, same, but Spanish very, very street level. Right? Very limited street level. So no, I would not be plurilingual.

On the other hand, Tutor 2 reasoned that her comfort with her languages played a role in why she perceived herself as plurilingual. She shared:

> I see myself as [plurilingual] because I'm comfortable with speaking in English with someone, kind of, like there's always that little hesitation but it's fine. French, I mean that's my native language so that's fine also. Spanish, at one point, ok, in elementary school I was better in it than English. But then I lost it a bit because I mean I never speak Spanish; I don't have Spanish classes but still I can have a conversation with someone. (Tutor 2).

In comparison, Tutee 7 claimed that she is monolingual because she would use mostly French over her AL English, highlighting how linguistic identity is also attached to participants' amount of language use. Tutee 7 recalled:

> I see me as more monolingual because I always just talk in French. I just never really had the opportunity to see that ok yeah, I can be a plurilingual.

By contrast, Tutee 1 focused on his language preferences, or lack thereof, expressing that he saw himself as bilingual because he knew his mother tongue Spanish and AL French well, while he spoke English only out of necessity as a lingua franca. He first explained that,

> *Personnellement, l'anglais c'est une langue qu'on a ensemble dans la planète, mais pour moi c'est mieux qu'on me reçoit en français parce que moi je suis plus doué dans la langue française.*
>
> 'Personally, English is a language that we have together in the planet, but for me it's better if people receive me in French because I am better in the French language.' (Tutee 1)

He then added that

> *[Anglais] par contre, je suis obligé d'apprendre l'anglais, tu vois? C'est une nécessité*"
>
> 'English, on the other hand, I am obligated to learn English, you see? It's a necessity'

emphasizing how his language choices (or lack thereof) also influenced his linguistic identity.

As per RQ1, interview results converge with findings from the PIQ, strongly suggesting that the abovementioned factors influence how the tutors and tutees perceive their linguistic identities. Overall, the interviewed tutors principally linked their plurilingual identity to perceived language competency levels, which converges with PIQ findings. Additionally, interviewed tutees

mainly associated their linguistic identities to their perceived low competency levels in their AL English, as well as their amount of use over the languages in their repertoire; this result diverges slightly from PIQ results, which suggest that tutees mostly ascribed their linguistic identities to how frequently — or in the case of their AL English, how infrequently — they use their languages.

RQ3: Relationship between PPC level and linguistic identity

Table 7 summarizes the results from the PPC scale and PIQ. Participants who identified as monolingual ($n = 5$) had the lowest mean and median PPC scores at 2.94 (2.77; 3.23, $SD = 0.17$) and 2.86, respectively. Participants who identified as bilingual ($n = 8$) had a mean score of 3.47 (2.95; 3.91, $SD = 0.31$) and a median of 3.59, and those who identified as plurilingual ($n = 7$) had a mean PPC score of 3.51 (3.14; 3.82, $SD = 0.23$) and a median of 3.53. As for RQ3, these results seem to suggest a relationship between PPC scores and linguistic identity, which appears to be strongest between a lower PPC score and a monolingual identity. To test this relationship, a Kruskal-Wallis H test and a Mann-Whitney U test were conducted to check for significance in score differences among and between linguistic identities.

Table 7
Summary of results from PPC scale and PIQ

Participants	PPC levels				
	M	*SD*	*Mdn*	*Min*	*Max*
Monolingual ($n = 5$)	2.94	0.17	2.86	2.77	3.23
Bilingual ($n = 8$)	3.47	0.31	3.59	2.95	3.91
Plurilingual ($n = 7$)	3.51	0.23	3.53	3.14	3.82
Total ($N = 20$)	3.35	0.35	3.43	2.77	3.91

To examine if there were significant differences in PPC scores among these groups, a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted. Results show that there is a significant difference among median PPC scores across linguistic identities ($Mdn_{mono} = 2.86$, $Mdn_{bi} = 3.59$, $Mdn_{pluri} = 3.53$): $H(2) = 8.93$, $p = 0.012$. To examine exactly where this difference lies, a series of Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted. Results show the median PPC score of monolinguals ($Mdn = 2.86$) was significantly different from the median score of non-monolinguals ($Mdn = 3.60$): $U = 3.50$, $p = 0.001$. However, there are no statistically significant differences between the median PPC score of participants who identified as bilingual ($Mdn = 3.59$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 3.27$), $U = 63.00$, $p = 0.271$, nor between those who identified as plurilingual ($Mdn = 3.53$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 3.23$), $U = 64.50$, $p = 0.135$. With

regard to RQ3, these results further suggest that there is a strong relationship between PPC scores and linguistic identity, but only between low PPC scores and a monolingual identity.

Discussion

This study aimed to examine the PPC and PI of adult EAL student tutors and tutees in a francophone college. Findings from the PPC scale suggest that tutors and tutees differ significantly in their PPC levels, with tutors having significantly higher PPC scores overall compared to tutees. This result echoes previous research findings showing that speakers of multiple languages tend to have higher PPC levels (Galante & dela Cruz, 2021), and that more advanced learners (i.e., the tutors), tend to have better awareness of their plurilingualism (Bono & Stratilaki, 2009). Importantly, the present results also confirm that not all AL speakers would necessarily recognize their plurilingual competence (Bono & Stratilaki, 2009).

Analyses of PIQ data and semi-structured interviews reveal that most participants identified as bi- or plurilingual. This result is somewhat expected given that most participants were Canadian-born and raised, a factor that previous research has shown to influence bilingual identity (Galante & dela Cruz, 2021). In this study, it could be that participants who identified as bilingual focused on their AL English proficiency (Sia & Dewaele, 2006; Zubrzycki, 2019), or were influenced by discourses on Canadian bilingualism in their setting (Churchill, 2003). Additionally, these results echo previous research showing that AL speakers' comfort with language-mixing contributes to their plurilingual identity (Galante & dela Cruz, 2021). Moreover, none of the tutors identified as monolingual, and none of the tutees identified as plurilingual. Again, this finding is consistent with existing research showing that less advanced learners have less awareness of their plurilingual selves (Bono & Stratilaki, 2009), especially in settings that are officially monolingual (Oliveira & Ança, 2009), which was the case for this study.

PPC scale and PIQ results show that PPC level is directly related to linguistic identity, but only for lower PPC scores and a monolingual identity. This result is not surprising since less advanced learners can be expected to have less awareness of their plurilingualism (Bono & Stratilaki, 2009), especially if they have never been exposed to plurilingual instruction (Galante, 2018). However, this result is important because this relationship is a novel finding in the quantitative literature, and because it shows that beginner EAL students with lower plurilingual awareness are precisely the ideal targets for plurilingual instruction, which could greatly scaffold not only the development of their emerging plurilingualism (Galante, 2018), but also of their AL (Göbel & Vieluf, 2014; Piccardo, 2019).

These findings have implications for EAL education. In the classroom, results point to the potential need for teachers to consider their learners' emergent plurilingual competences and identities when choosing their teaching materials. As research evidence emphasizes, plurilingual pedagogies that draw from learners' identities and full repertoires are effective in supporting their AL development (Lau, 2020; Lau & Van Viegen, 2020; Lightbown & Spada, 2020; Marshall, 2020a; Piccardo, 2013, 2019). Furthermore, results highlight how native speakerist English-only policies, which enforce a monolingual goal in AL competence, fail to validate and foster learners' plurilingual realities, especially among learners such as the tutees in this study, whose plurilingualism has only begun to emerge.

Nevertheless, the study has limitations. First, the small sample size could have influenced the quantitative results. AL researchers and teachers should exercise caution when generalizing the findings into their contexts. Future studies could investigate larger sample sizes for more robust statistical results. Second, the PPC scale has only been validated in English (Galante, 2020), and while the scale's French version used in this study has been checked by a French speaker, future research could look into validating the PPC scale in French and in additional languages, which could extend the scale's usefulness in plurilingual and other AL contexts. Third, the PIQ was conducted at the study's start, while the interviews were held weeks later. This methodological choice limited the study to investigate linguistic identity as if it were static, whereas a plurilingual framework acknowledges otherwise. Future studies could strengthen their designs by capturing the dynamism of participants' PI over time, something that this study did not examine.

Conclusion

This study sheds light on the plurilingual competence and identity of adult EAL learners in a French-only post-secondary context in Québec. Given the rising plurilingualism of Canadians inside and beyond the AL classroom, teachers are increasingly in need of guidance on the incorporation of plurilingual dimensions into their teaching practice. The first step for effective implementation of plurilingual instruction, however, is for language educators — and the larger AL educational system — to recognize and validate students' complex plurilingual realities.

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