

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Acadian and French Language Services

Report of the training workshop on “Nouvelle orthographe”

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Tuesday, October 30, 2012, 8 AM – 11:30 AM

A half-day training workshop on “la nouvelle orthographe,” the spelling reforms in written French, was held at the Nova Scotia Department of Education on October 30, 2012.

This workshop was jointly sponsored by the Acadian and French Language Services Division of the Department of Education, and by Acadian Affairs (Department of Community, Culture and Heritage), and organized by the Department of Education. It was one of the activities in support of the implementation of “la nouvelle orthographe” within the Department of Education and the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial.

THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

On September 1, 2010, the Department of Education officially adopted all the spelling reforms published in the Journal officiel de la République française on December 6, 1990, and since adopted by several French-language jurisdictions. As of September 1, 2011, all documents written in French by and for the Department of Education are required to use the reformed spellings. Longer texts are required to display a logo indicating that the text complies with the new spellings. The requirement to teach these new spellings as the standard took effect September 2011, for kindergarten students in Acadian schools, and with subsequent kindergarten cohorts each September thereafter.

For the time being, during the transition period, when teachers or Departmental testing officials are correcting written tests, both the traditional and reformed spellings are considered correct. This practice also applies to the 2011 cohorts mentioned above.

For French second language programs, a detailed implementation plan for the requirement to teach these new spellings as the standard will be communicated at a later date.

At the moment, the Department of Education is the only provincial department that has officially adopted la nouvelle orthographe, and therefore has an important role to play in its eventual implementation in publications by other provincial departments. By partnering with Acadian Affairs, the Department of Education was able to reduce the costs of the training session, as well as enable knowledge transfer (via both its own translators and those of Acadian Affairs) to the rest of the provincial government.

THE ROLE OF ACADIAN AFFAIRS

Acadian Affairs agreed to split the costs of the workshop, and invited their staff to attend. Although the translation services at Acadian Affairs are not ready to adopt the new terminology, it was important for their translators to participate in the workshop and educate themselves on the changes, since they handle translations for almost the entire provincial government (with the exception of the Department of Education).

THE TRAINER

The workshop was conducted by H el ene Dumais, a professional editor and trainer from Qu ebec City. H el ene Dumais has over 20 years of experience in giving customized training sessions in written communication, including “la nouvelle orthographe” and non-sexist language. She has given these sessions in New Brunswick and Qu ebec. The participants’ guide that she provided to participants in the October 30 workshop showed that she has an extensive grasp of the extent to which la nouvelle orthographe has been adopted among the different Canadian provinces, as well as world-wide.

PARTICIPANTS

The workshop was attended predominantly by staff of the Department of Education, by French-language services coordinators from provincial departments and agencies, by consultants from the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (including two in the area of literacy), as well as staff of Acadian Affairs, a representative of the federal department of Canadian Heritage and the assistant director of the F ed eration acadienne de la Nouvelle- cosse. One of the Department of Education employees, and two of the Acadian Affairs employees, were professional translators, and the federal employee was a former translator. (See appendix A for a detailed list of participants.) One of the translators has already been using la nouvelle orthographe, while others were familiar with it, even though they have not yet been asked to implement it.

SUMMARY OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop opened with an introduction by Jacqueline LeVert, Executive director of the Acadian and French Language Services branch of the Department of Education. Harold Rennie, the French-language Services Coordinator, used the occasion to make known the diversity of the audience and to give housekeeping details. Madame Dumais then started her presentation, which introduced the new spelling reforms, explained the rationale for them and gave an overview of where they had been adopted. The participants’ manual, which was provided in advance by Madame Dumais, included an overview of the history of French orthography, rules of thumb in applying the spelling reforms, a bibliography and a list of web sites. Several in-class exercises were particularly useful. The facilitator was open to questions throughout the workshop.

For some participants, the spelling changes are now part of their work and have been integrated into publications. Others were new to the whole spelling reform and needed to learn where and why it had been adopted.

For francophone participants, the spelling reforms became real with the announcement that “b uche de No el” had lost its circumflex! However, one of them felt reassured to learn that he would not have to change the spelling of his surname.

RESULTS

This training session responded to two specific activities planned for this year by the DSALF. Firstly, the new spelling will be applied to the DSALF’s website, as part of a plan to improve the navigability of the site. Secondly, the promotion of French courses and information sessions for DoE employees has as its aim the improved knowledge by staff of the government’s approach to offering services in French, and this workshop was one of the steps towards that goal.

Department of Education staff, in particular, are now better positioned to advise on the teaching of la nouvelle orthographe and to incorporate it into department publications. Maintaining the quality of French-language publications is part of maintaining good working relations with the Acadian and francophone community.

A greater facility with la nouvelle orthographe by DoE staff will benefit students in the classroom by helping to spread and implement the spelling reforms. The training session, which brought together the CSAP, the FANE and Acadian Affairs, along with several French-language services coordinators, also established the DoE's lead position in the adoption of these spelling reforms. The use of a logo indicating that the translated documents are in conformity with the new spelling rules will help confirm for the Acadian and francophone community that the French language is respected in this province and that the changes are intentional, and are not spelling mistakes.

Participants in this workshop will become the focal points to inform their own institutions and agencies about these changes.

This workshop reflected the cooperative and collaborative work of the French-language services coordinating committee, under the aegis of Acadian Affairs, in support of Nova Scotia's *French-language Services Act* (2004). Both Acadian Affairs and the individual French-language services coordinators who attended are now in a good position to inform their departments about what la nouvelle orthographe is, and what implications it may have for the users and recipients of provincial government publications and communications.

The tripartite nature of the exchange, involving federal, provincial and community contacts, was a mutually enriching experience. The presence of federal and community representatives confirms the broad interest shown in this topic.

ANNEXE A

Liste de participants à la session de formation sur l'orthographe rectifiée

MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION

DSALF

Jacqueline LeVert
Stacie Coughlan
Mark Bannerman
Harold Rennie
Pierre Igot (traducteur)

Évaluations

Caroline Nasrallah

Français langue seconde

Elaine Melanson
Susan MacDonald
Christal Boutilier
France Ruel

Services aux élèves

Daniel Demers

Conseil scolaire acadien provincial

Margaret Gillespie-deGooyer
Roy Bourgeois
Krista Murphy

English Program Services

Eric Thérien

AUTRES MINISTÈRES PROVINCIAUX

Affaires acadiennes (CCP)

Ina Amirault
Ashley Woodworth
Melany Close (traductrice)
Sylvain Filion (traducteur)

Justice

Léda Zlotnick

Service Nouvelle-Écosse et Relations avec les municipalités

Michelle Saulnier
Jamie Benoît

Santé et Mieux-être
Michelle Newman

Travail et Éducation postsecondaire
Sylvia Tremblay
Micheline Babin
Maggie Hope-Simpson

Capital Health
Danielle Saulnier

AUTRES ORGANISMES

Fédération acadienne de la N.-É.
Nicole LeVert

Patrimoine Canada
Diane Haché

ANNEXE B

PLAN DE LA SESSION

Présentation

- Position de l'Office québécois de la langue française et du Ramat de la typographie
- Trucs pratiques pour présenter des textes et documents :
 - procédure de correction automatique de Word;
 - logiciel Antidote pour correction et révision;
 - logo de conformité, signature : courriel, lettre
- Attestations de la nouvelle orthographe
- Règles de la nouvelle orthographe
- Exercices et corrigé

ANNEXE C

TABLE DES MATIÈRES (EXTRAIT DU GUIDE DE LA PARTICIPATION)

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Bibliographie
Sites Web
Repères chronologiques
Position de l'Office québécois de la langue française
Position du Ramat de la typographie
Abrégé historique
Formation des maitres
Trucs pratiques pour présenter des textes et des documents
Procédure de correction automatique de Word
Mise à jour d'Office
Logo de conformité et signature courriel
Exemples de notes explicatives
Attestations de la nouvelle orthographe
Implantation de la nouvelle orthographe
Règles de la nouvelle orthographe
Complément d'information
Formulaire d'adhésion au GQMNF