This project explores the ways in which bicultural French individuals living in Australia experience, use and emotionally live cultures and languages across time and space. The project’s methodology will consist in eliciting oral narratives first in French and subsequently in English. The narratives will be examined for the choices behind, and effects of, living with French and Australian English cultures and languages, the ‘becoming’ of a bicultural Franco-Australian identity; and the processes in hybridization affecting the subjects’ relationships with the public and private spheres, be they French or Australian. This project will analyse findings in the light of sociological theories of ‘multiplicity of subjectivities’ and ‘otherness’ in order to explore the perceived benefits and challenges of maintaining two cultures and languages.

There are more bilinguals and bicultural people in the world than monolingual and monocultural people, and research in bilingualism and biculturalism has gained attention particularly from bilingual and/or bicultural researchers in order to counter the large amount of studies of such subjects from a monolingual and monocultural stance. So far scholarship has primarily come out of North America and Europe, and is only now starting to emerge in Australia, albeit mostly with a focus on bilingualism rather than biculturalism. The last Australian Census was in 2006 and reported almost 20 000 French-born people in Australia. Making French individuals in Australia subjects of enquiry remains the focus of little research, especially with regards to biculturalism. Building on the literature the implications of the present project involve furthering scholarship about people who adopt Australia as their homes, the processes involved in doing so, and inviting participants to reflect on and understand their own experiences.