



LINGUISTIC DUALITY, DE JURE AND DE FACTO

Marking the 50th Anniversary of the *Official Languages Act*

FALL / WINTER 2019

Bonjour
Hi



MIRIAM TAYLOR
ROBERT J. TALBOT
JEAN-PHILIPPE WARREN
JEAN JOHNSON

DIANE GÉRIN-LAJOIE
GEOFFREY CHAMBERS
RICHARD Y. BOURHIS
JEAN-PIERRE CORBEIL

JACK JEDWAB
RICHARD SLEVINSKY
MATTHEW HAYDAY
FRED GENESEE

SHANA POPLACK
NATHALIE DION
SUZANNE ROBILLARD
BASILE ROUSSEL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 INTRODUCTION
**CANADA'S OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT AT 50:
BILINGUALISM, PLURALISM AND IDENTITIES**
Miriam Taylor
- SECTION 1 – IDENTITY AND POLITICS**
- 6 WHY LINGUISTIC DUALITY STILL MATTERS,
50 YEARS AFTER THE OLA: AN ANGLOPHONE
MAJORITY PERSPECTIVE
Robert J. Talbot
*With a foreword from Raymond Th  berge, Commissioner
of Official Languages of Canada*
- 12 THE PRIME MINISTER OF A BILINGUAL COUNTRY
MUST BE BILINGUAL
Jean-Philippe Warren
- SECTION 2 – MINORITY VOICES: THE EVOLUTION AND
DEFENSE OF MINORITY LANGUAGE COMMUNITIES**
- 17 50 YEARS AFTER FIRST *OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT*,
THE STATUS OF FRENCH IN CANADA IS RECEDING
Jean Johnson
- 19 IDENTITY AND DIVERSITY UNDER CANADA'S
OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT
Diane G  rin-Lajoie
- 23 SHOULD ENGLISH-SPEAKING QUEBECERS CARE
ABOUT THE *OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT*?
Geoffrey Chambers
- 27 OFFICIAL BILINGUALISM IN CANADA AND THE
PLANNED DECLINE OF THE ENGLISH-SCHOOL
SYSTEM IN QUEBEC
Richard Y. Bourhis
- SECTION 3 – THE STATE OF BILINGUALISM:
FACTS, FIGURES AND WAYS FORWARD**
- 34 THE EVOLUTION OF FRENCH-ENGLISH
BILINGUALISM IN CANADA OVER THE PAST
50 YEARS: A REFLECTION OF THE EVOLUTION
OF RELATIONS BETWEEN FRENCH AND
ENGLISH-SPEAKING CANADIANS?
Jean-Pierre Corbeil
- 39 BONJOUR, HI AND OLA
Jack Jedwab
- SECTION 4 – LANGUAGE EDUCATION:
OVERVIEW AND CHALLENGES**
- 44 THE EVOLUTION OF FRENCH LANGUAGE
TERMINOLOGY IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION
FROM CONFEDERATION THROUGH TO THE
PRESENT
Richard Slevinsky
- 48 CAUGHT IN A TIMELOOP: 50 YEARS OF
REPEATED CHALLENGES FOR OFFICIAL
LANGUAGES IN EDUCATION
Matthew Hayday
- SECTION 5 – A BILINGUAL CANADA: SUBJECT AND
GENERATOR OF CUTTING-EDGE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**
- 52 EXPLORING CANADA'S BILINGUAL LANDSCAPE
Fred Genesee
- 56 LANGUAGE MIXING CAUSES A STIR: CONFRONTING
SCIENCE AND PUBLIC OPINION
Shana Poplack, Nathalie Dion, Suzanne Robillard
and Basile Roussel

CANADIAN ISSUES IS PUBLISHED BY



Patrimoine
canadien

Canadian
Heritage

ASSOCIATION FOR CANADIAN STUDIES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elected November 7, 2018

CELINE COOPER

The Canadian Encyclopedia, Historica Canada, School of Community and Public Affairs, Concordia University, Montréal, Québec

THE HONOURABLE HERBERT MARX

Montréal, Québec

YOLANDE COHEN

Université du Québec à Montréal, Montréal, Québec

JOANNA ANNEKE RUMMENS

Ryerson University, Toronto, Ontario

LLOYD WONG

University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta

THE HONOURABLE MARLENE JENNINGS

P.C., LLb., Lawyer, Montréal, Québec

AYMAN AL-YASSINI

Montréal, Québec

MADÉLINE ZINIAK

Canadian Ethnic Media Association, Toronto, Ontario

CHEDLY BELKHODJA

Concordia University, Montréal, Québec

HOWARD RAMOS

Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia

JEAN TEILLET

Pape Salter Teillet LLP, Vancouver, British Columbia

JULIE PERRONE

Vaudreuil, Québec

Canadian Issues is a biannual publication of the Association for Canadian Studies (ACS). Opinions expressed in articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the ACS. The Association for Canadian Studies is a voluntary non-profit organization. It seeks to expand and disseminate knowledge about Canada through teaching, research and publications.

Canadian Issues acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada History Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage for this project.

LETTERS

Comments on this edition of *Canadian Issues*?
We want to hear from you!

Canadian Issues / ACS
850-1980, rue Sherbrooke Ouest
Montréal, Québec H3H 1E8

Or e-mail us at <miriam.taylor@acs-aec.ca>



@CANADIANSTUDIES



JACK JEDWAB
Publisher

MIRIAM TAYLOR
Managing Editor

MIRIAM TAYLOR AND CHLOE NIGNOL
Translators

CAMILAHGO. STUDIO CRÉATIF
Design & Layout

INTRODUCTION

CANADA'S OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT AT 50: BILINGUALISM, PLURALISM, IDENTITIES

MIRIAM TAYLOR

Miriam Taylor is the Director of Partnerships and Publications at the Association for Canadian Studies and the Canadian Institute for Identities and Migration. She is Managing Editor of *Canadian Issues* and *Canadian Diversity*.

It has been half a century since Canada first enacted the legislative keystone of our country's bilingualism, giving French and English official and equal status in the government and in all the services it controls, and creating the office of the Official Languages Commissioner to oversee its implementation. The *Official Languages Act* (OLA) sought to ensure that citizens could obtain, wherever population size warranted it, services of equal quality in the official language of their preference. The *Act* also aimed to improve the representativity of the Federal Civil Service to better reflect the composition of the country. Subsequent amendments to the *Act* articulated the Federal government's obligation to recognize and support the official language minorities, that is Quebec's English-speaking minority and of the French-speaking minorities in the rest of the country.

There is no doubt that the OLA has played a role

in transforming our country. Five decades on, the linguistic duality of Canada has become part of our national identity, the majority of Canadians valuing bilingualism both in principle and practice, with support for it growing over time since its initial implementation. Indeed, the relationship between English and French speakers has become essential to understanding how the story of our country has evolved.

However, history has also revealed some important fault lines in our duality. Developing a workable model and finding an appropriate policy balance in a country as asymmetrical and complex as ours is no mean feat, particularly in the context of changes brought about by growing diversity. We are a vast country that stretches from sea to sea, and the distribution of language speakers within our borders is uneven and subject to some interesting paradoxes. Quebec, the only unilingual

French-speaking province is home to the largest language minority, some of whose well-established institutions are a source of pride throughout the country. Our one officially bilingual province, New Brunswick, has witnessed the strongest and most vocal pushback against bilingual services related to cost, and the struggles faced by minority language groups in general have even become a focus of the most recent federal election campaign.

Apart from the bilingualism of institutions and government services, the bilingualism of the individuals who make up our country is equally complex. While the growing popularity of French immersion across the country has made it impossible for supply to keep up with demand, the motor for the growth of bilingualism in the country is to be found in the only province that champions its unilingualism as essential to its self-preservation.

The contributions in this edition of *Canadian Issues*, without claiming to be exhaustive in their consideration of all the issues, give us a taste of the multiplicity of perspectives and of the many possible ways of looking at the evolution, challenges and paths forward for an officially bilingual Canada.

The edition is divided into five sections. The first, entitled *Identity and Politics*, looks at the impact of bilingualism on our national identity. With a foreword by Language Commissioner, Raymond Th  berge, outlining how the OLA has shaped us, Robert Talbot then draws on a very personal account of his own experience with French immersion to describe the transformative power of reaching across the language divide, ending with a plea to further Canadian duality with more awareness and opportunities for greater outreach and cross-com-

munity engagement. Jean-Philippe Warren, for his part, examines how being officially bilingual has changed the Canadian political landscape, it now being generally accepted that the Prime Minister of a bilingual country must show proficiency in both official languages.

The second section, *Minority Voices*, gives us a glimpse into the perspective of the minority language communities, the protection of whose rights constitutes an important dimension of the Act. While recognizing the positive impact for the Francophone and Acadian communities generated by the OLA, Jean Johnson, makes a strong case for giving the Act more muscle, so as to reinforce the status and legitimacy of French as having an important role in our country's future. The need for modernization is also raised by Diane G  rin-Lajoie in the context of the shift within Francophone minority communities towards greater ethnic and racial diversity, particularly among Franco-Ontarians.

Pointing to the size, diversity and contribution of the English-speaking minority in Quebec, Geoffrey Chambers underlines the vital role played by the OLA in protecting English-speaking rights against the upheavals created by provincial language legislation. He calls on the Anglophone community to view the OLA as a tool that needs to be updated, the better to preserve and improve the community's vitality. In the same vein, Richard Bourhis describes the OLA as a bulwark against deliberate efforts by provincial governments in Quebec to weaken Quebec's English educational system.

Section 3 considers the *State of Bilingualism in Canada*. Both Jean-Pierre Corbeil and Jack Jedwab report on the growing but still relatively low rates of

French-English bilingualism in the population as a whole and note that the largest number of bilingual Canadians are to be found in Quebec. Corbeil regrets that the English-speaking population outside Quebec has seen its level of knowledge of French stagnate and calls for measures and initiatives that could remedy this. Jack Jedwab's article anticipates future trends, calling on the need to keep pace with technological changes and to consider the way in which growing diversity will impact our two language communities.

In Section 4, two authors consider where things stand with regard to *Language Education*. Richard Slevinsky traces the history of language education from Confederation to the present, laying out the crucial role played by legislators, educational institutions and parents in preserving and advancing language learning in our country. While celebrating the great popularity of French immersion, Matthew Hayday deplores that structural challenges that have prevented us from reaching the stage where official languages programs are considered a core part of the education system, rather than a frill for a small minority of the population.

The final section, *A Bilingual Canada: Subject and Generator of Cutting-Edge Scientific Research*, gives us a sense of the way in which the unique nature of our country has generated valuable cutting-edge research that has enabled Canadian academics to challenge myths and contribute to views about language and bilingualism at home as well as on the international stage. Fred Genesee shows that the valuable work of Canadian researchers has led to a paradigm shift around the world in attitudes to bilingualism and multilingualism, viewing them as normal natural phenomena. In their extensive

research on language borrowing worldwide, Shana Poplack, Nathalie Dion, Suzanne Robillard & Basile Roussel raise the spectre of linguistic insecurity and touch on the interface between science and politics, myths, fears and facts.

Milestones often provide an opportunity for reflection. After fifty years of bilingualism, the studies and appeals assembled in this edition give us the opportunity to look back on how things have developed, assess where we stand today, and project ourselves forward to imagine how best to address the key challenges emerging as our country moves into the third decade of the 21st century.

WHY LINGUISTIC DUALITY STILL MATTERS, 50 YEARS AFTER THE OLA: AN ANGLOPHONE MAJORITY PERSPECTIVE

ROBERT J. TALBOT

Robert Talbot is Manager of Research in the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

FOREWORD

Raymond Théberge, Official Languages Commissioner of Canada

Fifty years ago, we decided as a country to recognize the equal status of English and French in Canadian society by adopting the *Official Languages Act*. We decided that Francophones and Anglophones both had the right to access federal services of equal quality in the official language of their choice.

Significant challenges remain, but much progress has been made since the first *Act* came into effect. Canadians have far greater access to services in both languages, federal employees have greater opportunities to work in both languages, our public service is more representative of our English- and French-speaking communities, official language minority communities have greater recognition and support, important advances have been made on the legal and constitutional fronts, and our federation remains united, thanks in no small part to the *Act*. Perhaps the greatest lesson that the *Act* has taught us these last fifty years is that it is indeed possible, advantageous even, for different peoples to coexist within the same political community. That, in turn, has been Canada's lesson to the world. As Robert Talbot explains in the following pages, the *Act* has helped to make Canada greater than the sum of its parts.

The success of our linguistic regime depends on the work of dedicated federal employees who are committed to respecting language rights, and on citizens who are committed to the vitality of official language minority communities and the promotion of English and French in Canadian society. It also depends on political will, including of course, the political will of the majority. While we must always remember that

it is official language minority communities who are the most vulnerable, it remains critical, as Robert Talbot points out, that we continue to engage with the majority, so that they can see how the promotion and protection of minority language rights benefits us all.

As a bilingual Anglophone originally from the prairies, I consider myself lucky.

In 1983, the Regina public school board began offering French-as-a-second language (FSL) immersion education. My parents, having learned about this free opportunity for children to be educated in both of Canada's official languages, switched my oldest sister, then in Grade 1, from the English track to the new program. My other siblings and I would soon follow, all having the opportunity to complete the K-12 French immersion program in Saskatchewan and later in Manitoba. We were very much the exception, however. To this day, most Anglophone kids outside Quebec still do not have access to the opportunity to become bilingual via the public education system.¹

Neither of my parents are exactly what you might consider bilingual. Dad can read most French, he can even speak it a little, and he enjoys watching the news in French to see how the "other half" is getting along. Mom can read a little French, too, and she served as a volunteer with the Regina chapter of Canadian Parents for French (CPF). When I asked her why she and my father put us

in French immersion, my mother responded simply, "Well, why not?" To her, learning to read, write and speak in both languages (and for free!) and thus gaining access to the potential cultural and professional benefits that came with it only made sense. Besides, the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* had just been adopted, affirming official language rights and the equal status of English and French in the constitution. Moreover, bilingualism was important for national unity and the future of the country. Although they could only speak one of the languages fluently, living in a country with two official languages was integral to my parents' identity as Canadians.

You don't have to be bilingual to support official languages, any more than you need be a doctor to support public medicine, a musician to appreciate music, or a high school chemistry whiz to value science. The available survey data bear this out. As of the 2016 census, just under 7% of the population of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, where I grew up, was bilingual. And yet, a telephone survey conducted that same year showed that 83% of Saskatchewanians and Manitobans supported the aims of the *Official Languages Act*.²

1 Canadian Parents for French, *French as a second language enrollment statistics, 2012–2013 to 2016–2017* (<https://cpf.ca/en/research-advocacy/research/enrolmenttrends>).

2 Statistics Canada, *Focus on Geography Series, 2016 Census*, November 2017 (www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/fogs-spg/Index-eng.cfm); Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages (OCOL), *Official languages and bilingualism survey*, 2016 (www.clo-ocol.gc.ca/en/publications/other/2016/official-languages-and-bilingualism-survey-research).

Why this apparent high level of support? Public opinion is always subject to change, of course, and support for an ideal does not always translate into support for concrete measures. How then, to foster and strengthen this support among the Anglophone majority outside Quebec, whose language is not at risk,³ but upon whom the political possibility of advancing our linguistic regime ultimately rests? How can we continue to make the promotion and protection of official languages relevant to them?

First, the Anglophone majority must constantly be reminded that our linguistic regime is necessary for the very existence of the political community in which we live. Without recognition of the two languages there wouldn't be a Canada as we know it. Paradoxically, making this point has been more straightforward in times of crisis – in the decade following the Conscription Crisis of 1917, in the 1960s and '70s with the rise of the Quebec sovereignty movement, and during the 1980 and 1995 referendums, for instance. But the point is as valid today as it was half a century ago; the *Official Languages Act* is a foundational piece of legislation that makes Canada politically possible.

Second, the Anglophone majority needs to see that it, too, can benefit from the advantages that come with the protection and promotion of the minority language. This is why it is absolutely critical that those who wish it for themselves or for their children have some level of access to the opportunity

to become bilingual. As the Commissioner's recent study with CPF on FSL education explained, ensuring meaningful access to the opportunity to become bilingual "is key to the continuing success of the *Official Languages Act*, the advancement of the equality of status and use of English and French in Canadian society, and the fostering of a bilingual public service that can work, and serve Canadians, in both languages."⁴

Third, in order to more fully appreciate the importance of protecting and learning the minority language, then, the Anglophone majority needs to have a greater awareness of the vibrant and dynamic Francophone minority communities in its midst, and more opportunities to engage with those communities – in *both* languages. In as far as possible, they need to see (and hear) that French is part of the tangible, lived reality of Canadians both in and outside of Quebec.

When Anglophones think of French in Canada, they can have a tendency to think only of Quebec. This should come as no surprise; it is the country's only French-majority province, and seven out of eight Francophone Canadians live there. Conceptualizing of Canada's French fact in this way, however, can lead to a territorial delineation of linguistic duality along a "French Quebec/English Rest-of-Canada" axis. This is problematic for two reasons. First, it's inaccurate; one in eight francophones and one in four Canadians who can speak French live outside Quebec – that's nearly

3 Although the future of specifically *Canadian* variants of English and the culture associated with it may be less secure. See, for instance, John Allemang, "Who is speaking up for Canadian English?" *Globe and Mail*, 11 August 2014 (www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/whos-speaking-up-for-canadian-english/article19984471/).

4 OCOL, *Assessing Opportunity: A study on challenges in French-as-a-second-language education teacher supply and demand in Canada*, February 2019 (www.clo-ocol.gc.ca/en/publications/studies/2019/accessing-opportunity-fsl).

three million people!⁵ Second, it's not how the *Law works*: our federal linguistic regime, including the *Official Languages Act* and the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, recognizes and enshrines rights associated with both languages in all of Canada, and not just in any one province or territory.

I will never forget the first time that I visited the town of Hearst, in northern Ontario, some twenty years ago while en route to moving to Ottawa. We stopped in at the local Macdonald's for a quick bite, and to my pleasant surprise, everyone around me was speaking in French! Having grown up in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, provinces whose story is famously marked by the legacy of Louis Riel, and having a passing high school knowledge of Acadian history, I was certainly aware that there are Francophones outside Quebec, but I had no idea that Ontario was home to over half a million of them – the second-largest Francophone population in the country!

The experience was as enlightening as it was validating, for it presented me with what had been, until then, a rare opportunity to use my French-language skills in a “real life” context outside the classroom. It is hard to convey just how satisfying it can be, after years of learning French in school, to get to use it successfully! French-language skills retention is a major challenge for FSL graduates, due in no small part to the fact that, depending on where they live, they may not have many opportunities to use it

after high school.⁶ Even then, when they try to use it with a French native speaker, the latter might switch to English, well intentioned but unwittingly leaving their Anglophone acquaintance feeling crestfallen and discouraged. This is why, outside Quebec, it is so important to foster Francophone spaces where French is seen and heard by Anglophones and Francophones alike as the presumed language of interaction; in such spaces, Anglophones who are bilingual could be encouraged to use their French with Francophones and with each other, thus contributing to the vitality of Francophone spaces wherein the community can more fully live in its language.

Finally, and most importantly, the Anglophone majority needs to be encouraged to see official languages and linguistic duality as belonging to *all* of us. Even if most of us aren't bilingual, having two official languages and two pan-Canadian linguistic collectivities is a part of our history, our cultural distinctiveness, and our shared values of inclusiveness and diversity. In short, linguistic duality helps to make our country greater than the sum of its parts. It has, for example, driven Canada's development as an independent nation. Throughout our history, the advancement of our self-government, parliamentary democracy and federalism and of our place on the international stage has developed largely as a result of Francophone-Anglophone partnerships and of Francophone leaders and sympathetic Anglophones continuously pushing the agenda.⁷

5 Statistics Canada, “Focus on Geography Series, 2016 Census.”

6 See Jean-Pierre Corbeil and René Houle, Statistics Canada, “Language Statistics for Canada, 2011 to 2036,” *Ethnicity, Language and Immigration Series*, January 2017 (www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/catalogue/89-657-X2017001).

7 Robert J. Talbot, “Francophone-Anglophone Accommodation in Practice: Foreign Policy and National Unity between the Wars,” in *Fighting With the Empire*, eds. Steve Marti and William John Pratt (UBC Press, 2019), pp.86-104.

I would even argue that linguistic duality has helped to make *English-speaking Canada* a more tolerant and open people. As 19th century British intellectual John Dalberg-Acton explained, “The most certain test by which we judge whether a country is really free is the amount of security enjoyed by minorities.”⁸ It was through this lens that the *Vancouver Sun*, writing in 1969, viewed the adoption of the new *Official Languages Act*: “the legislation testifies to the innate decency and generosity of the country as a whole,” it wrote. “French-speakers outside Quebec must have the same rights as English-speakers in Quebec.”⁹ Over the course of our history, learning (sometimes with great difficulty) to accommodate two languages instead of just one has helped Anglophone Canadians to see how diversity and difference are strengths, not weaknesses, and this in turn has fostered greater openness toward other cultures. Indeed, having two languages of integration instead of just one remains our best defence against the homogenizing policy of “melting pot” assimilationism that has prevailed elsewhere. It was not by accident that the 1969 *Official Languages Act* and the 1971 Multiculturalism Policy were designed to be mutually reinforcing. Nor was it a coincidence that they shared the same origins: the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1963-1969). “A country like Canada must admit diversity within unity, show itself hospitable, and refuse to tolerate any kind of discrimination,” explained the commissioners. Every Canadian, they continued, should be encouraged to integrate into either or both of the official language communities without “the loss of...

[their] original language and culture.”¹⁰

Seeing Canada’s broader diversity through the window of official languages has been part of my own lived experience. By learning French, I learned intrinsically that different cultures can have different ways of seeing the world and present different alternatives for approaching an issue or addressing a challenge. Learning French also gave me a sense of the breadth of diversity of the pan-Canadian and international Francophonies. My French immersion teachers and instructors included a variety of local Anglophones, Franco-Manitobans and Fransaskois, as well as an Acadian, an Anglo-Montrealer, a Romanian, a Vietnamese, a west African, western Europeans, and of course a number of francophone Quebecers.

The *Act* has never sought to oblige anyone to become bilingual, but for half a century now it has stood as an invitation for those who wish it for themselves or for their children. Having had access to the opportunity to become bilingual, I consider myself lucky. The *Act* has also stood as an invitation to embrace difference and all the richness that comes with it. For that, I think we can all consider ourselves to be lucky, too.

8 John Dalberg-Acton, “The History of Freedom in Antiquity,” 26 February 1877 (Acton.org/research/history-freedom-antiquity).

9 In José Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution: National Identities in English Canada, 1945-71* (UBC Press, 2006), p.220.

10 OCOL, “Canada’s linguistic duality at the heart of inclusiveness and diversity,” December 2017 (www.clo-ocol.gc.ca/en/newsletter/2017/canadas-linguistic-duality-heart-inclusiveness-diversity).

THE PRIME MINISTER OF A BILINGUAL COUNTRY MUST BE BILINGUAL

JEAN-PHILIPPE WARREN

Jean-Philippe Warren is a Professor of Sociology and Anthropology
at Concordia University.

Several linguistic principles can guide the choice of leaders of federal political parties: whether one thinks of dual leadership, the alternation between Francophone and Anglophone leaders or a “double majority” system.¹ But in the 20th century, the rule of bilingualism prevailed. The 1960s enshrined the view that a person who aspired to become Prime Minister of Canada had to speak both official languages adequately.

FRENCH AS AN ELECTORAL STRATEGY

Until the 1950s, it was self-evident that candidates

for the office of Prime Minister of Canada had to speak English. The ability to speak French was only an asset. For a long time, few English-speaking leaders, with the exception of Sir Robert Borden² (1901-1920) and R. B. B. Bennett (1927-1938), concerned themselves with speaking French in public.

But in a context where half of Canadians of French origin did not speak English, everyone guessed that indifference to the French fact affected the chances of winning an electoral majority in Quebec. The progress of radio and then television only

1 As an example of dual leadership, let us think, for United Canada, of the tandem of LaFontaine-Baldwin or MacDonald-Cartier. The “double majority” system, i. e. a majority among Francophones and a majority among Anglophones, has been theorized for United Canada, but not applied. The alternation rule was followed for Montreal City Hall until the beginning of the 20th century. Since the 1950s, it has been applied, more or less methodically, in a series of federal areas, including the positions of Governor General, Speaker of the House of Commons and Senate, head of the Armed Forces and head of a few major Crown corporations. Frédéric Lévesque, “L’alternance au poste de gouverneur général et la dualité canadienne: règle de politesse ou convention constitutionnelle?”, *Revue générale de droit*, vol. 37, No. 2, 2007, pp. 301-343.

2 Sir Robert Borden learned French when he was in his fifties, around 1905. In 1912, he was said to speak a very correct French.

reinforced this conviction.

Also, in the post-war period, the Conservative Party of Canada (PC) made efforts to reach the French-speaking electorate. George Drew (1948-1956) gave a few speeches in French during the 1949 election campaign.³ This precedent did not go unnoticed. In 1951, Louis Saint-Laurent (1948-1958) predicted “that before long” the main members of each of the federal parties would speak French. “Six years ago,” he added, “I outraged many people with a similar statement. This time, the same statement does not seem to have frightened many people.”⁴

“LIP SERVICE”

As soon as he was elected leader of the Progressive Conservatives, John G. Diefenbaker (1956-1967) wanted to correct his heavy Anglo-German accent by taking language courses. However, he was never able to speak French well enough to give speeches in that language without notes. It is said that, having wanted to thank French-speaking Quebecers for their support during the campaign that had pro-

pelled him to the position of Prime Minister, he concluded his New Year's Eve radio address with the following sentence: “In closing, my dear friends of French Canada, I hope that my wishes will be appreciated.” The listeners heard instead: “En teuminant, my cheur zomies dou Canada Fwranssè, ch'espère que mes veaux seront après chier”.⁵

Elected leader of the Liberal Party of Canada (LPC), Lester B. Pearson (1958-1968) swore that he would work quickly to speak Canada's second official language. Nevertheless, he remained very far from his objectives.⁶ It is said that in 1965, he was giving a speech in English in Montreal when he was interrupted by screams: “In French! In French!” So he tried to continue in French, but the crowd, who understood nothing of his “gibberish”, kept shouting: “In French! In French!”⁷ Knowing that this ignorance of French was unacceptable, Pearson challenged his successors: “In the future, Liberal leaders will have to speak French as well as English... as I would like to be able to do”.⁸

THE PROMISE TO BECOME BILINGUAL

From the mid-1960s, at a time when Quebec

3 It must be said that he had to make amends for inflammatory statements made at the time when he was leading the destiny of the Ontario Conservative Party. In a 1936 by-election, he said that Canada's French Canadians “are a defeated race, and that their rights are rights only because of the tolerance by the English element who, with all respect to the minority, must be regarded as the dominant race.” *The Toronto Star*, November 27, 1936, quoted by Peter Meehan, “The East Hastings By-Election of 1936 and the Ontario Separate School Tax Question,” CCHA Historical Studies, vol. 68, 2002, p. 117.

4 Louis Saint-Laurent, quoted in “The Great Advantages of Bilingualism in Canada”, Canada, August 20, 1951, p. 4.

5 Jean-François Lisée, “35 citations: Ce qu'ils n'auraient pas dû dire!”, *L'Actualité*, 14 avril 2011, version Web: <https://lactualite.com/politique/35-citations-ce-qu'ils-n'auraient-pas-du-dire/>

6 “My difficulties in using French, when I was in Quebec, meant that I never got rid of a certain sense of humiliation for not being able to speak fluently in their language, to French-speaking audiences or to my Quebec friends whom I met in social gatherings.” Lester B. Pearson, *Words and Occasions: An Anthology of Speeches & Articles Selected from His Papers (1924–1968) by the Right Hon. L. B. Pearson*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1970, p. 35.

7 Michael Bliss, *Right Honourable Men: The Descent of Canadian Politics from Macdonald to Mulroney*, Toronto, Harper Collins, 1994, p. 228.

8 Lester B. Pearson, quoted by Jean-V. Dufresne, “L'unité vitale (Pearson)”, *La Presse*, 18 novembre 1963, p. 2.

nationalism was on the rise, the ability to say a few words in French was no longer enough. We wanted leaders who were truly bilingual. In 1967, during the LPC leadership race, Davie Fulton stated that the unilingualism of Conservative leaders had greatly damaged the party's cause in the past. "After a century of history," he argued, "it is absolutely essential that the head of cabinet be bilingual."⁹ In 1968, during the LPC leadership race, Jean Marchand made a similar statement: "We are tired of federal government leaders who do not know how to express themselves properly in both of the country's official languages."¹⁰

The LPC turned to Pierre-Elliott Trudeau (1968-1984), a perfectly bilingual politician. The New Democratic Party (NDP) chose David Lewis (1971-1975), a man who could converse in French. The PC chose Robert L. Stanfield (1967-1976), who promised to take language courses, but was never comfortable in French. Joe Clark (1976-1983) was happier in his efforts, although his accent was regularly mocked in Quebec.

THE "LITMUS TEST"

It was really at the turn of the 1980s that mastery of the French language became a kind of "litmus test" for aspiring party leaders, as it was already the

case for mastering the English language.¹¹ Since all English-speaking MPs, regardless of party, were increasingly comfortable speaking Molière's language, it came to be believed that it was unacceptable to be led by someone who was not perfectly bilingual. In 1983, Michel Doyon, a member of the PC Policy Committee, stated: "We can never go back on this. A unilingual English-speaking Conservative leader is absolutely unacceptable in Quebec, just as a unilingual French-speaking leader would be rejected by English speakers."¹² Brian Mulroney's (1983-1993) victory over unilingual English-speaking John Crosbie was a turning point in this regard.¹³

In 1989, NDP leader Ed Broadbent (1975-1990) was adamant that the leader of a national party in Canada had to be bilingual. "I think it is very important to have a leader who speaks both of the country's official languages."¹⁴ Thus, once elected leader of the NDP, Alexa McDonough (1997-2003), for example, spent some of her holidays in Jonquière to perfect a French that she had hardly had the opportunity to practice since her high school years.

After his election as Prime Minister of Canada in 2006, Stephen Harper (2004-2015) surprised many Anglophones by beginning his speeches and press statements in French. Harper explained him-

9 Davie Fulton, quoted in "Il faut un premier ministre bilingue", *Le Soleil*, 26 juin 1967, p. 3.

10 Jean Marchand, quoted in "Nous demandons l'égalité pour tous à travers le Canada", *Le Nouvelliste*, 15 juin 1968, p. 3.

11 No leader of a federal party could claim power without good English. Many Francophones who could have been candidates for the succession of their party refused to run in the leadership race for this reason.

12 Quoted by Richard Daignault, "À Ottawa", *Le Soleil*, 20 janvier 1983, p. D-12.

13 Crosbie claimed that it was no more useful for him to speak French to get along with French Canadians than to speak Chinese or German to do business with China or Germany. Graham Fraser, *Sorry, I Don't Speak French: Confronting the Canadian Crisis that won't go Away* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2006), p. 258.

14 Ed Broadbent, quoted by Pierre-Paul Noreau, "Intérêt soutenu au leadership NPD", *Le Soleil*, 17 janvier 1989, p. A-7.

THE PRIME MINISTER OF A BILINGUAL COUNTRY MUST BE BILINGUAL - JEAN-PHILIPPE WARREN

PRIME MINISTER	ENGLISH	FRENCH	GAELIC	GERMAN	LATIN	GREEK
John A. Macdonald	●	×	●		×	
Wilfrid Laurier	○	●				
Robert Borden	●	×		×	×	×
Mackenzie King	●			×		
Louis St. Laurent	●	●				
John Diefenbaker	●					
Lester B. Pearson	●	×				
Pierre Elliott Trudeau	●	●				
Joe Clark	●	○				
John Turner	●	×				
Brian Mulroney	●	●				
Kim Campbell	●	×				
Jean Chrétien	○	●				
Paul Martin	●	○				
Stephen Harper	●	○				
Justin Trudeau	●	●				

● Spoken natively ○ Fluency in writing or speaking × Conversational or partial mastery

SOURCE: https://ipfs.io/ipfs/QmXoyvizjW3WknFiJnKLwHCnL72vedxjQkDDP1mXWo6uco/wiki/List_of_Prime_Ministers_of_Canada_by_languages_spoken.html#cite_note-7

self. First, he said, “French is Canada's first national language.”¹⁵ Then he confided that he expressed himself “in French, because it helped him to structure his thoughts. It is a good practice, especially for an English-speaking person.”¹⁶ Finally, Harper mentioned his love of Molière's language. “I like French. Speaking French is a desire that goes back to my youth. I am more and more comfortable when I speak French today. I would of course like to speak it better, that's why I practice it all the time.”¹⁷

CONCLUSION

Historically, with a few exceptions,¹⁸ Francophone leaders of federal parties have been known for their exemplary command of English. Many of them, from Louis Saint-Laurent to Justin Trudeau, shared the characteristic of having been raised in bilingual homes. The ability to express oneself fluently in French is much less evident among English-speaking leaders. However, since Pearson, the English-speaking Prime Ministers who won an election (Joe Clark, Paul Martin and Stephen Harper) have all been able to conduct a conversation in Canada's second official language. This reflects the now generally accepted view that the Prime Minister of a bilingual country must be bilingual.

15 Stephen Harper, cité par Jean-Denis Bellavance et Gilles Toupin, “ ‘C'est la langue fondatrice du Canada'. Le français aide Harper à structurer sa pensée”, *La Presse*, 12 septembre 2007, p. A-7.

16 *Idem*.

17 *Idem*.

18 Certain Social Credit and Bloc leaders come to mind, as well as Stéphane Dion.

50 YEARS AFTER FIRST OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT, STATUS OF FRENCH IN CANADA IS RECEDING

JEAN JOHNSON

Jean Johnson is president of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada, the national voice of Francophone minority communities in nine provinces and three territories.

Fifty years ago, French became one of our country's two official languages. The *Official Languages Act* which came into effect on September 7, 1969 – and the one which replaced it in 1988 – aimed at achieving equality of status for French in English, primarily within government, but also before the courts and in Canadian society. Half a century later, has French achieved this equality with English? The answer is self-evident.

In 2019, the place of French in public and commercial spaces is receding, even in Quebec. The legitimacy of French as an official language of Canada is being questioned anew in various regions of the country. Arguments on the cost of bilingualism are once more arising.

All of this comes at the tail end of decades marked by lack of progression in the implementation of the *Official Languages Act*. From issues related to

the presence of French at the Vancouver Olympics in 2010 to the lack of French-language services Francophone travellers continually experience at airport security or customs, to poor-quality translations still frequent on federal websites, the impression is that French remains a language of accommodation rather than an official language.

Francophone minority communities are well-acquainted with this reality. Despite the *Act* requiring the government to support the development of these communities and enhance their vitality, federal institutions too often have a blind spot regarding these minorities. Francophone minority communities rarely benefit from federal fund transfers to the provinces and territories in areas such as infrastructure or job training.

The two successive incarnations of the *Official Languages Act* have undeniably generated positive

impacts for Canada's Francophone and Acadian communities. The 1969 *Act* provided Francophone associations – including the Fédération des francophones hors Québec, later renamed the FCFA – with levers to lobby for and obtain support for the development of French-speaking minority communities. It also paved the way for the inclusion, in the *Canadian Charter of Rights of Freedoms*, of rights that proved pivotal for our communities, such as the right to education in French.

But the history of these two incarnations of the *Act* is also the story of five decades of poorly applied or poorly understood obligations, and sometimes the downright lack of political will to see to it that the equality of our two official languages is truly respected. Reports by successive official languages commissioners are particularly eloquent in this regard. From Keith Spicer in 1970 to Raymond Thériège in 2019, the same findings of stagnation, of lack of coherence, of inefficiency in the implementation of the *Act* appear as regularly as Canada geese in springtime.

In his latest report, Commissioner Thériège voiced his concern about the blows inflicted on French in political decisions in some provinces, not to mention the election in New Brunswick of three MLAs from a party that wants to roll back the rights and gains of Acadians.

One could make the case that there is a link between the lack of seriousness in the implementation of the *Official Languages Act* by the federal government and the lack of seriousness with which some governments perceive the status of French as an official language of this country.

However, after five decades of the same findings, every year, on the implementation of *Official Languages Act*, the obvious conclusion, beyond any doubt, is that the issue is with the *Act* itself. Ensuring that the *Act* is fully respected, once and for all, requires thoroughly modernizing it. It requires designating an institution with the power to demand results from all government departments and agencies. It requires creating an administrative tribunal with the mandate to hear complaints on violations of the *Act* and the power to issue sanctions. It requires demanding that all Supreme Court judges be bilingual and that all federal fund transfers to provinces and territories systematically include language clauses with some muscle.

Modernizing the *Official Languages Act* does not simply mean updating a piece of legislation that hasn't been overhauled in 30 years. It also means sending a strong and urgently needed message on the status and legitimacy of French as an official language of Canada, and its place in the country's future.

IDENTITY AND DIVERSITY UNDER CANADA'S OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT

DIANE GÉRIN-LAJOIE

Diane Gérin-Lajoie is a Professor in the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Department of OISE/University of Toronto. She teaches about racial, ethnic and linguistic minority education and qualitative research. As a researcher, she is particularly interested in the role of the school in the production and reproduction of identity and teaching in a minority setting.

INTRODUCTION

In the following pages, I will discuss the issue of identity and ethnic and racial diversity in the context of the Francophone minority living outside Quebec, particularly in Ontario. In Canada, these Francophones represent one of the two official language minorities recognized by the Canadian federal government in the *Official Languages Act*, a law that was introduced in 1969, following the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism in Canada (known as the Laurendeau-Dunton Commission).

It should be noted at the outset that Francophones belonging to the official language minority are confronted, on a daily basis, with the reality of a living environment where English predominates in the public sphere and, often, in the private sphere as well. The situation of the Francophone minor-

ity has gradually changed over the years. From a homogeneous group, it has become increasingly heterogeneous in terms first of language, but also in terms of ethnicity and race. My brief exposé will therefore focus on a changing Francophonie that is much more ethnically, racially and linguistically diverse than it was in the 1970s and 1980s. We are now in the presence of diverse Francophone communities with plural identities, where the French language is often the only common denominator.

The continued arrival of immigrants since the mid-1990s and an increased rate of exogamous families, where one parent is not a Francophone, have forever changed the composition of the Francophone minority. This new reality influences how members of this group perceive their relationship to identity and their sense of belonging (Gérin-Lajoie, 2013). In this context, I conceive the relationship to identity as a changing phenomenon, rather than some-

thing that was acquired at birth for life (Hall, 2006; Gérin-Lajoie, 2003). The relationship to identity is changing: it can go beyond a single identity and take various forms – bilingual, trilingual, even multilingual – thus moving us away from an essentialist perspective (Hall 2006).

But before talking more about the relationship to identity in a context of ethnic and racial diversity within the Francophone minority in Canada, taking Ontario as an example, let us briefly return to Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*, which deals specifically with official language minorities in Canada.

PART VII OF THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT

Part VII of this *Official Languages Act* recognizes the presence and importance of the French-speaking (outside Quebec) and English-speaking (in Quebec) minorities, as evidenced in the first paragraph of the following section:

41 (1) The federal government is committed to enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and supporting their development, as well as to fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society. (Canadian Federal Government, 1985.)

In its implementation, there are two points (my italics) that specifically concern official language minorities (although several others also concern them, but indirectly):

43 (1) The Minister of Canadian Heritage shall take such measures as he or she considers appro-

priate to advance the equality of status and use of English and French in Canadian society, including any measures:

a. *that will enhance the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and support their development;*

b. to encourage and support the learning of English and French;

c. to encourage the public to better accept and appreciate English and French;

d. *to encourage and assist provincial governments to foster the development of English and French linguistic minority communities, including the provision of provincial and municipal services in both English and French and the provision of education in their own language;*

e. to encourage and assist these governments to provide opportunities for all to learn English and French;

f. to encourage and cooperate with businesses, employers' and labour organizations, voluntary and other organizations to provide their services in English and French and to foster the recognition and use of these two languages;

g. to encourage and assist organizations, associations or other bodies to reflect and promote, in Canada and abroad, the bilingual character of Canada;

h. subject to the approval of the Governor in Council, to enter into agreements or arrange-

ments with foreign governments that recognize and strengthen Canada's bilingual identity.

(Canadian Federal Government, 1985)

When we read the statements presented above, we may be surprised not to see any reference to the diversity found within the current Francophonie. Let us look briefly at the case of Ontario.

FRANCOPHONES IN ONTARIO, DIVERSITY AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO IDENTITY

For Francophone communities outside Quebec, immigration has become an important issue. To this end, Francophone communities outside Quebec have adopted a Strategic Framework developed in 2013 by Citizenship and Immigration Canada to promote the recruitment, welcoming and retention of immigrants. In the 2017–2018 Annual Report of the Office of the Commissioner of French Language Services of Ontario (2018), the following is noted:

Ontario's Francophone community faces several demographic challenges. Immigration then appears to be a major issue for the vitality and dynamism of the Franco-Ontarian community, whose face is set to continue to diversify. Currently, there are 92,385 Francophone immigrants, representing 15% of Ontario's Francophone population (622,41,519 Francophones or 4.7% of the Ontario population). Of these, 16,045 (17.4%) are recent immigrants. For all Francophone immigrants, 63.5% are from a visible minority and this

figure rises to 78.2% for immigration. (p. 24)

There is no denying the changing nature of Ontario's Francophone population. The same applies to the relationship to identity and the sense of belonging to the group. The presence of newcomers has led Ontario's Francophone community to redefine itself for the sake of inclusion. In schools, for example, policies and guidelines promoting student inclusion have been developed and implemented in the context of French-language schools.¹

I believe it is very important to consider the new realities experienced by the official language minority Francophone community. The various levels of government must recognize this in their respective areas of intervention in order to better meet the needs of all.

TO CONCLUDE

In order to enhance the vitality of the French-speaking minority in Canada in the context of the demographic changes of recent years, it is necessary to give greater recognition to diversity within the Francophonie, which is not explicitly provided for in the current *Official Languages Act*. At the time of the Laurendeau-Dunton Commission's recommendations, it will be recalled that the federal government had chosen two distinct paths: following the *Official Languages Act*, in 1971, it created its Multiculturalism Policy (which became law in 1988), the purpose of which was to recognize the individual rights of newcomers in the host society. Leaving

1 Among others, *l'Équité et éducation inclusive dans les écoles de l'Ontario* (2014). *L'admission, l'accueil et l'accompagnement des élèves dans les écoles de langue française de l'Ontario* (2009) and *une approche culturelle de l'enseignement pour l'appropriation de la culture dans les écoles de langue française de l'Ontario* (2009).

the *Official Languages Act* to deal exclusively with “linguistic duality”. While it is important to recognize this linguistic duality, the primary reason for the development and implementation of the *Official Languages Act*, it is still important to give greater consideration to the increasingly heterogeneous nature of the Francophone minority in Canada. In this context, we can only hope that this *Act* will be amended to take greater account of the changing nature of this linguistic group and the challenges it faces in this social context.

REFERENCES

Commissariat aux services en français de l'Ontario (2018). *Rapport annuel 2017-2018*, Toronto.

Gérin-Lajoie, D. (2013). “Le rapport à l'identité chez les jeunes des minorités de langue officielle dans la région de Montréal et en Ontario” in N. Gallant & Pilote, A. (eds.) *La construction identitaire des jeunes*. Québec, Presses de l'Université Laval, p. 53-67.

Gérin-Lajoie, Diane (2003), *Parcours identitaires de jeunes francophones en milieu minoritaire*, Sudbury, Les Éditions Prise de parole.

Gouvernement du Canada (1985). *Loi sur les langues officielles (L.R.C. [1985])*. Website for the Law (Justice), Website, 9 September 2019.

Hall, Stuart (2006). “The future of Identity”, in Sean Hier and Singh Bolaria (eds.), *Identity and Belonging: Rethinking Race and Ethnicity in Canadian Society*, Toronto, Canadian Scholars' Press, pp. 249–269.

SHOULD ENGLISH-SPEAKING QUEBECERS CARE ABOUT THE *OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT*?

GEOFFREY CHAMBERS

Geoffrey Chambers is president of the Quebec Community Groups Network, which brings together English-language community organizations across Quebec.

The English and French languages have been at the core of the Canadian experience for centuries. But only with the adoption of the *Official Languages Act* in 1969 did Canada establish its first national level policy respecting and promoting two official languages. Parliament acted at the urging of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, after it concluded our nation was going through its “greatest crisis in history.” The *Act* has since been strengthened to better protect and promote the two languages and create an obligation for the federal government to enhance the vitality of our English and French linguistic minority communities.

Whenever language legislation is discussed in Quebec, however, people immediately turn their thoughts to the province’s *Charter of the French Language*, also known as Bill 101. The federal *Official Languages Act* easily escapes attention. With the *Act* having turned 50 this year, should Eng-

lish-speaking Quebecers care?

Most emphatically, yes. The *Act* sets out quasi-constitutional rights for English-speaking Quebecers. It confers our right to access federal services in English; ensures representation of English-speakers in the federal public service; and provides the right to work in English within the federal public service. It supports the development of English and French linguistic minority communities. It advances the equal status and use of English and French. At its core, it endorses the principle of equality for both official languages. To quote from the Royal Commission, this principle implies “respect for the idea of minority status, both in the country as a whole and in each of its regions.”

It is often forgotten that our nation’s largest linguistic minority lives in Quebec. More than 1.1 million English-speaking Quebecers make our homes in

communities across our province. From all types of backgrounds, we constitute a remarkable spectrum, a community of communities. Since the beginning, diversity has been one of our defining characteristics. The English language is the element that unifies our community and provides common ground for peoples of diverse religions and races. It has served as a unifier for our community including the many generations of immigrants who sought and achieved inclusion and were able to make Quebec their home. Our community's contribution has and continues to have positive impacts on every aspect of our society.

English-speaking Quebecers faced a major upheaval since the Quiet Revolution, most notably with the adoption of stricter and stricter provincial language laws. Many English-speakers chose to leave our province. Others chose to stay – because Quebec is very much our home. One result: our community has grown more bilingual and more appreciative of the French culture than most other Canadians. Nonetheless, a series of dramatic challenges over the past five decades has given rise to insecurity about our place in our home province as well as our future here. The *Charter of the French Language* dramatically narrowed access to English schools, forcing a steady and worrisome decline in enrollment, which led to a number of school closures and, more recently, provincial edicts transferred some of our schools to the French sector. Our language-based school boards are now threatened with elimination.

In the face of this turmoil, the federal support embodied by the *Official Languages Act* has proven decisive for the English-speaking community across Quebec. It bears repetition that one of the *Act*'s fundamental objectives is to promote English

and French in Canadian society, by enhancing the development and vitality of English and French minority communities and by fostering the full recognition and use of both official languages. Federal institutions are duty-bound to take positive measures to implement these commitments. Despite Quebec legislation and policies that have impaired Quebec's English-speaking community, the federal legislative framework has provided an essential backstop and, indeed, a bulwark.

Quebec's English-speaking community has been able to survive – if not thrive – in the face of so many setbacks on the provincial level largely because of the specific policy requirement under the *Act* of “enhancing the vitality” of official language minority communities. This has been accomplished via successive federal strategies, Action Plans and Roadmaps. For example, the Official Languages Support Program through Canadian Heritage channels essential funding to linguistic minority communities to develop and build support networks, enabling the survival and development of vital community sector organizations all around Quebec.

Canada's linguistic minority communities benefit from such support in areas including health, education, access to justice and economic development. Without the *Act*, the underpinnings of federal support to our community would collapse. This all serves to underscore why the modernization and future of the *Act* is so important to our community's future – even though many appear underappreciative of the *Act*, seem detached from the federal language framework and show apparent indifference to its further development.

The role and importance of the *Act* is rarely understood or fully acknowledged. Let us celebrate that it has entrenched linguistic duality and bilingualism as identifiable Canadian values. This crucial life-line has also assured English-speaking Quebecers of federal and community services in our language and ensures we can take pride in our first official language.

English-speaking Quebecers are in a unique situation: We are a linguistic minority – living within a linguistic minority that is also a majority. We viscerally understand the struggles that our francophone counterparts outside Quebec must endure daily to receive service in their first language. Similarly, we understand the strong desire of the francophone majority in Quebec to protect, preserve and promote their first language.

The challenges faced by our linguistic minority are no less significant. We face a perpetual struggle to maintain management and control of our institutions. Our overall socioeconomic standing is below that of francophones in Quebec, contrary to a deeply entrenched myth. Our access to both provincial and federal civil service jobs in Quebec remains dismally below our proportion of the population. Our ability to access justice in Quebec is hindered by a system of law simply incapable of fairly or fully operating in both languages. And we often find ourselves left out of the national conversation concerning official languages.

The goal of the *Official Languages Act* was, as former Commissioner of Official Languages Graham Fraser once aptly framed it, “to make the government capable of serving unilingual Canadians, not to transform Canadians into bilingual sophisti-

cates.” Put simply, bilingualism was adopted at the national level so ordinary citizens would feel comfortable when engaging with their federal government in the official language of their choosing. This has made Canada a much more bilingual country; more of our youth than ever are learning English or French as a second language.

While our minority community has clearly benefitted from generous treatment at least by the federal government, still more can and should be done. Many reports over the past decade have outlined the unique challenges we face – and also pinpointed additional resources needed to improve our community vitality. As a community, we also need to come together and recognize the contribution of this federal legislation toward our well-being. We also must acknowledge that past indifference toward the *Act* has hindered our involvement in the improvement of official languages policies and programs. While our community has been subjected to a bumpy ride over the years, we have and must continue to benefit from the federal legislation that specifically recognizes and promotes our existence.

Clearly, a better understanding of the *Official Languages Act* would help increase our community’s capacity and motivation to more effectively advocate for our needs. It is time for our community to celebrate this federal policy to take a much more active interest in its modernization so that English-speaking Quebec can flourish in the future.

OFFICIAL BILINGUALISM IN CANADA AND THE PLANNED DECLINE OF THE ENGLISH-SCHOOL SYSTEM IN QUEBEC

RICHARD Y. BOURHIS

Richard Bourhis is Professor Emeritus at the Université du Québec à Montréal. He publishes in English and French on acculturation and immigrant/host community relations, cross-cultural communication, discrimination, intergroup relations and language planning.

It is time that the institutions of the English-speaking community universities and schools, hospitals and other agencies - be accorded an assured future; that they be recognized as two-language institutions with a noble record of contributing to Quebec society. It is time that Anglophones of all origins be admissible to English-language schools; their small additional numbers will be significant for those schools and a negligible deprivation for the much larger French-speaking system. It is time that the French-speaking majority, concerned about their demographics, recognizes that English-speaking Quebecers are equally concerned about theirs. It is time for fairness.

Victor Goldbloom, 2015, pg. 189; Minister of the Quebec National Assembly, 1970-1979; Commissioner of Official Languages, 1991-1999.

Canada's *Official Languages Act* of 1969 played an important role in promoting the status of French-English bilingualism especially for Francophone minorities in the rest of Canada (ROC) and for the Anglophone minority within Quebec. Of special interest in this essay is the role of Quebec language planning within an officially bilingual Canada. Adopted in 1977, the *Charter of the French language* (Bill 101) was instrumental in enshrining the status and use of French relative to English in Quebec (Bourhis & Sioufi, 2017). Today, as many as 95% of the Quebec population command a knowledge of French sufficient to carry a conversation. Bill 101 also helped maintain French mother tongue speakers at 80% of the Quebec population: 4.8 million speakers in 1971 and 6.2 million speakers by the 2016 census. However, pro-French laws and other factors contributed to the decline of the English

mother tongue minority from 13% of the population in 1971 (789k) to 7.5% in 2016 (601k). Increased immigration to Quebec had a role in increasing the proportion of speakers who have neither French nor English as a mother tongue, known as Allophones. Their proportion increased from 6.3% of the population in 1971 (390k) to 13.3% of the population in 2016 (over 1 million). Individual bilingualism is on the rise in Quebec. French mother tongue bilinguals increased from 25.6% in 1971 to 38.6% in 2016. In 1971, only 37% of English-mother tongue Anglophones were French-English bilinguals; by 2016, as many as 69% of Anglophones were bilingual. Amongst Allophones, French-English bilingualism increased from 33% in 1971 to 50% in 2016. These Quebec bilingual trends do contribute to the French-English bilingual status of Canada.

The preamble of Bill 101 asserted that its pro-French legislation would be conducted in fairness while being respectful of the institutions of the English-speaking community of Quebec, whose valuable contributions to the development of Quebec was recognized. Despite such assurances, Bill 101 had the intended effect of decreasing the institutional vitality of the English-speaking communities of Québec (ESCQ) in health and social services, in primary and secondary education, municipalities, the economy and linguistic landscape (Bourhis, 2012, 2017, 2019; Oakes & Warren, 2007; Vaillancourt, 2018).

A pillar of Bill 101 was the provision that forced Francophones and international immigrants settled in Quebec to send their children only to French schools (Paillé, 2019). Quebec Government laws including Bill 22, Bill 101, Bill 104 and Bill 115 successfully restricted immigrant, Allophone and

Francophone access to English schools, while only Quebec Anglophone “rights holders” were allowed to attend English schools (Bourhis & Foucher, 2012). Bill 101 stipulated that Anglophone pupils could attend English schools as “rights holders” only if one parent had spent most of his or her primary schooling in English within Quebec. Following court challenges to broaden access to English schools, the Canadian Supreme court ruled that access to English school was possible for “rights holders” if one parent had spent most of his or her primary schooling in English anywhere in Canada.

What impact did language laws restricting access to English schools have on the size of the English school system in Quebec? In 1971 before the adoption of Bill 101, there were 255,205 pupils enrolled in English primary and secondary schools in the combined public and private systems of Quebec, our 100% enrollment baseline for the purpose of this analysis. By 2018, Ministry of education data showed there were only 96,235 pupils left in the English school system representing only 37.5% of the original 1971 baseline, a drop of 158,970 pupils. Such a decline, due to a low birthrate among Quebec Anglophones, outmigration and restricted access to English schools, forced English school boards to make cuts in school budgets, while having to rule on painful school mergers and closures (Lamarre, 2012). Elected English school board commissioners were tasked with adopting unpopular decisions forcing distraught pupils who lost their schools to travel further afield to attend merged English schools. By 2017, there were 273 English schools within nine English school boards in Quebec, some covering regions of provincial territory the size of Belgium, thus making access to remote English schools difficult for their pupils (ABEE, 2018).

As might be expected, the decline of the French school system was less pronounced, given that Québec Francophone, Allophone and immigrant pupils must attend French schools, thus partly compensating for the declining birthrate of the Francophone majority. In 1971, Ministry of Education data showed that 1,378,788 pupils were enrolled in the French primary and secondary schools in the combined public/private systems, our 100% baseline. However by 2018, there were 943,381 pupils in the French school system, a drop of 435,400 pupils amounting to 68.4% of the original 1971 baseline enrollment. Thanks to its critical mass of pupils, 63 French School boards oversee a network of 2,023 French schools across Quebec, offering a complete range of programs and services for its pupils. However the French school system suffers from a lack of qualified teachers to replace those who retire or leave the profession due to burnout and low pay. The influx of immigrants in French schools contributes to overcrowding in many Montreal inner-city schools. In 2019, the current Education minister forced the transfer of Montreal English schools to French school boards, while blaming English school boards for “hanging on” to their historical schools now underused because of the government’s own laws restricting access to English schools.

Ministry of Education data showed that the number of English mother tongue pupils studying in the English school system dropped from 171,175 in 1971 to only 52,500 in 2018, a loss of 118,675 Anglophone pupils amounting to only 30.6% of their original enrollment in 1971. This drop in Anglophone pupils was felt most dramatically in schools across outlying regions of the province which do not benefit from the larger Anglophone

student base found in the west-island and inner-city Montreal.

In 2018, only 73.1% of all Anglophones pupils in the province were attending English schools. Ministry of Education data shows that an increasing proportion of Anglophone pupils are attending French primary and secondary schools. While in 1971 only 9.5% of all Anglophones pupils in the province attended French schools (17,924), results in 2018 showed that 26.9% (19,387) did so. Many Anglophone parents choose to send their children to French schools to improve their mastery of the local Québécois French accent and culture hoping that their bilingual children will eventually find jobs and settle in the province rather than move to the ROC. Some Anglophone parents also send their children to French schools because these are often closer to home than faraway English schools on long bus rides.

Education ministry data also shows that as planned by Bill 101, the number of Allophones studying in the English school system dropped from 56,376 in 1971 to only 12,144 in 2018, amounting to 21% of the original 1971 baseline enrollment. Results also show that of all Allophones enrolled in the Quebec school system, as many as 85.4% attended English schools in 1971, while that proportion dropped to only 13.4% by 2018. Conversely, Ministry of Education data shows that while only 14.6% of Allophone pupils in the Quebec school system attended French schools in 1971 (9,652) before Bill 101, as many as 91.4% of all Allophone pupils in the province were attending French schools by 2018 (128,361). These figures attest to the efficiency of Bill 101 in shifting Allophones and international immigrants from the English to the French school

system in Quebec.

Education Ministry data showed there were 28,700 Francophones enrolled in the English school system across the Province in 1971, while this number fluctuated across the decades and dropped to 17,591 by 2018. While only 2.1% of all Francophones enrolled in the Quebec School system attended English schools in 1971, this percentage remained steady at 2.5% by 2018, attesting to the efficiency of Bill 101 in limiting Francophone access to English schools. Francophone enrollments in English schools reflect French-English mixed marriages in the province. Many mixed French/English language couples do exert their “rights holders” option by sending their children to English schools. Such choices reflect the widespread desire of many Francophone and Allophone parents to send their children to English schools to become bilingual. A Quebec-wide representative poll showed that 61% of Francophones and 67% of Allophones wished to obtain better access to the English school system for their children (*La Presse*, May 12, 2010).

English schools in Quebec provide quality French teaching for their pupils through ever-popular French immersion programs. In 2006, 66% of pupils in English schools were enrolled in French immersion classes, a trend increasing to 83% by 2011 (ABEE, 2018). At the secondary school level, 35% of pupils in English schools were enrolled in French immersion classes in 2006, a proportion increasing to 65% by 2011. English schools provide English-French medium teaching that succeeds in training the most bilingual pupils across the Quebec school system. This is reflected in Ministry of Education final provincial exams showing that pupils in the secondary English school system of

the two largest inner-city Montreal English school boards obtained scores in French that were slightly higher (93% & 92%) than those obtained on the same exams by pupils in the two largest French school boards of inner-city Montreal (84% & 88%; Jennings, 2015). Clearly, English Schools do contribute to the strength and quality of the French language by training highly competent bilingual Anglophone pupils. Education Ministry data also showed that six of the nine English school boards of Quebec were amongst the top ten performing boards on academic performance, while 4 of the 63 French school boards were in this top 10 leagues across the province. Ministry of Education figures also showed that while high school graduation rates were at 75% in French school boards across the province, graduation rates in English school boards were at 85%, attesting to the strong performance of English schools despite decades of institutional attrition (Jennings, 2015).

Bill 101 was successful in keeping 97.5% of all Francophone pupils in the province within French schools in 2018, a percentage virtually unchanged since 1971 (97.9%). However we have seen that the number of Francophone pupils enrolled in the French school system did drop during this period. In effect, legislating Francophones, Allophones and immigrants to access only French schools could not offset the low birth rate of the Francophone majority (birth rate: 1.4-1.6), resulting in the gradual decline in absolute number of pupils enrolled in the French school system.

These results show that Bill 101 and related laws have achieved their goal of restricting access to English schools regardless of the success of such schools in fostering the academic and French

proficiency of their pupils. Such restrictive laws contributed to the erosion of the English school system, which remains mostly funded by the Canadian Federal government through general transfer payments to the Quebec Government with little accountability. With a net outmigration to the ROC of over 310,000 Anglophones from 1971 to 2016, the English school system cannot count on English-speaking “rights holders” from the ROC to improve enrollments in Quebec English schools, while international immigrants remain banned from English schools. Over decades, the steady drop in the absolute number of pupils enrolled in the English school system had the intended effect of forcing the closure of English schools, thus reducing the number of teachers, administrators and staff employed in such institutions, further contributing to the overall net out-migration of Anglophones and Allophones to the ROC that endures in Canadian census data (Bourhis, 2019).

Despite pleas by Anglophone community leaders to allow immigrants from English-speaking countries such as the US, the UK and India to access English schools (ABEE, 2018; Goldbloom, 2015), Quebec Governments have remained adamant in excluding Anglophone or Allophone immigrants from attending the English school system. For many Francophones and elected members of the Quebec government, the planned decline of the English school system is seen as a justifiable measure, given the imperative of sustaining enrollment in its own French majority school system and ensuring the linguistic assimilation of immigrants and Allophones to the Francophone rather than to the Anglophone host communities in the province.

During the 2018 provincial election campaign,

the Quebec Liberal Party promised it would not abolish the nine English school boards, following representations by Anglophone advocacy groups that such school boards represent one of the last domains of governance fully controlled by and for the ESCQ. As it turns out, it is the nationalist party Coalition Avenir Quebec (CAQ) that won the Quebec elections, receiving 37% of the popular vote from mostly Francophone regions of the province, thus gaining a comfortable majority in the National Assembly. As proposed in its electoral platform, the CAQ Minister of Education is proposing the abolition of French and English school boards in the autumn of 2019. School boards are to be replaced by local school-based service centres across the province subjected to direct centralized control by the Ministry of Education based in Quebec City. As an official language minority of Canada, English-speaking advocacy groups such as the QCGN invoked article 23 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and Canadian Supreme court rulings (e.g., *Mahe v. Alberta*) to plead that “minority language communities have the right to control and manage the educational facilities in which their children are taught both to ensure and enable our language and culture to flourish... They (the boards) are vital to the very survival and identity of our English-speaking community.” (*Montreal Gazette*, December 14, 2018).

Faced with the power of the French majority government to legislate within its education jurisdiction, it is no wonder that the English-speaking communities of Quebec feel they must rely on the protection of Article 23 of the *Charter of Rights* and the spirit of Canada’s *Official Languages Act* to limit the planned decline of their historical school system including their English school boards.

REFERENCES

- ABEE (2018). *Plus ça change, plus c'est pareil. Revisiting the 1992 Task Force Report on English Education in Quebec*. Annual Report submitted to the Minister of Education, June 2018. Québec, QC: Gouvernement du Québec. www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/organismes-relevant-du-ministre/abee/publications/
- Bourhis, R. Y. (2012) (Ed.). *Decline and prospects of the English-speaking Communities of Quebec*. Ottawa: Canadian Heritage.
- Bourhis, R. Y. (2017). Bilingual Health care in Quebec: Public policy, Vitality, and Acculturation Issues. In: M. Drolet, P. Bouchard, & J. Savard (Eds.). *Accessibility and Active Offer: Health care and Social Services in Linguistic Minority Communities*. (pp. 349–396). Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.
- Bourhis, R. Y. (2019). Evaluating the impact of Bill 101 on the English-speaking communities of Quebec. *Language Problems and Language Planning*, 43, 198–229.
- Bourhis, R. Y. & Foucher, P. (2012). *Decline of the English School System in Quebec*. Moncton: Institut canadien de recherche sur les minorités linguistiques (ICRML), www.icrml.ca
- Bourhis, R. Y. & Sioufi, R. (2017). Assessing forty years of language planning on the vitality of the Francophone and Anglophone communities of Quebec. *Multilingua*, 36, 627–661
- Goldbloom, V. (2015). *Building Bridges*. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Jennings, M. (2015). English School boards Election Systems Study Panel Report. Montreal, QC.
- Lamarre, P. (2012). English Education in Quebec: Issues and Challenges. In R. Y. Bourhis (Ed.), *Decline and Prospects of the English-speaking Communities of Quebec* (pp. 175–214). Ottawa, ON: Canadian Heritage.
- La Presse. (2010, May 12). Lacoursière, A. Les Anglophones craignent pour la survie de leurs écoles. www.lapresse.ca/actualites/education/201005/12/01-4279554
- Montreal Gazette (2018, December 14). Authier, P. English community will fight for school boards despite Legault's warning. <http://montrealgazette.com/news/quebec/english-community>
- Oakes, L. & Warren, J. (2007). *Language, citizenship and identity in Quebec*. Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Paillé, M. (2019). Succès et faiblesses de l'intégration des immigrants par la scolarisation obligatoire en français au Québec. *Language Problems and Language Planning*, 43, 135-158.
- Vaillancourt, F. (2018). *Analyse économique des politiques linguistiques au Québec: 40 ans de loi 101*. Montréal: Cîrano: Cahiers scientifiques, 2018S-16.

THE EVOLUTION OF FRENCH-ENGLISH BILINGUALISM IN CANADA OVER THE PAST 50 YEARS: A REFLECTION OF THE EVOLUTION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN FRENCH AND ENGLISH-SPEAKING CANADIANS?

JEAN-PIERRE CORBEIL

Jean-Pierre Corbeil is Deputy Director of the Diversity and Socio-Cultural Statistics Division and Chief Specialist at the Centre for Ethnocultural, Language and Immigration Statistics at Statistics Canada.

During the work of the Laurendeau-Dunton Commission, one of the major outcomes of which was the adoption in 1969 of the first *Official Languages Act*, the Commissioners recognized that the affirmation of Canada's bilingual character did not necessarily require individual bilingualism among the population. On the other hand, French-English institutional bilingualism had to be one of the fundamental expressions of Canada's linguistic duality. The objective was to ensure that “the main institutions, both public and private, can provide their services in both languages to citizens who may well, in the vast majority, be unilingual”.¹ But since the existence of this institutional bilingualism requires a sufficient number of bilingual people to “ensure relations between the two linguistic groups”, the

Commission was also mandated to “make recommendations on how to enable Canadians to become bilingual”.

In 1968, in his statement in the House of Commons on the resolution preceding the introduction of the *Official Languages Act*, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau pointed out that “the most important example of [the] diversity of the country] is undoubtedly the existence of the two main linguistic groups, both of which are large enough and rich enough in material and intellectual resources to resist the forces of assimilation. In the past, he pointed out, our public institutions have not adequately reflected this reality, which is the foundation of our country”. He went on to say that “We

1 Rapport de la Commission royale d'enquête sur le bilinguisme et le biculturalisme, Livre! Les langues officielles, Ottawa, Imprimeur de la Reine et contrôleur de la papeterie, 229 p.

believe in two official languages and a pluralistic society, not only as a political necessity, but as an enrichment”².

Since the adoption of the first *Official Languages Act* in 1969, the number of people reporting that they can conduct a conversation in both official languages at the time of the census has increased from 2,900,000 in 1971 to 6,216,000 in 2016. The French-English bilingualism rate thus increased from 13.4% to 17.9% during this period. In addition, it should be noted that in 1971, 57% of the country's bilingual French-English population resided in Quebec. In 2016, this proportion was 62%.

However, this growth in French-English bilingualism has not been constant. As shown in Figure 1, French-English bilingualism grew very significantly between 1961 and 1981 in Canada, and particularly in Canada outside Quebec. In fact, the average annual growth rate of French-English bilingualism during this last period was more than twice that of the entire population. This strong growth reflected a growing interest among many Canadians in learning French as a second language, particularly because of the economic benefits that could be associated with it.

In Quebec, the gap between the average growth rate of the bilingual population and that of the province's total population has been systematically very large, with the exception of the period 2001 to 2011. In Canada outside Quebec, the average annual growth rate of the bilingual population has declined steadily since 1971, but appears to have

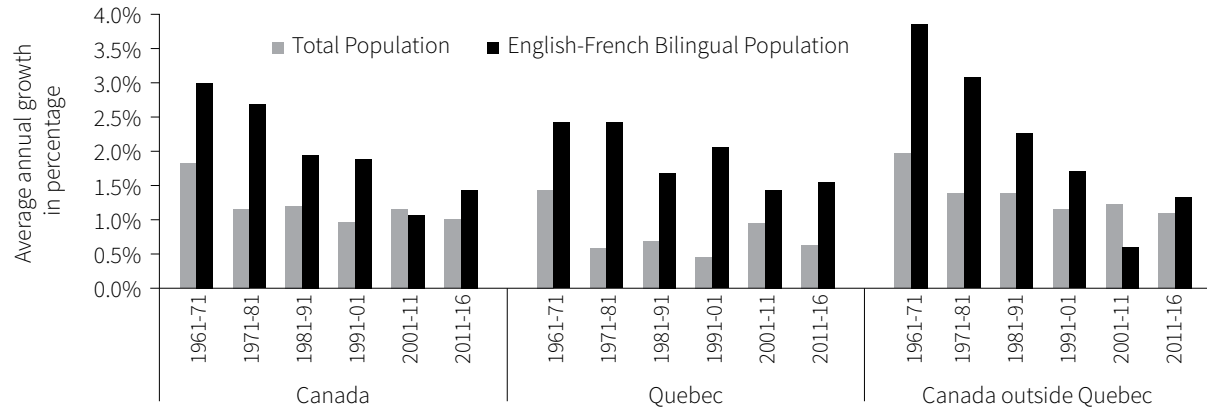
rebounded significantly between 2011 and 2016.

Several factors explain this situation, including the fact that the growth of the total population, mainly driven by international immigration, has been much higher in Canada as a whole outside Quebec than in the latter province. However, immigration is certainly not the only factor that caused the proportion of the population able to conduct a conversation in both official languages to increase from 8.0% to 9.8% between 1971 and 2011 only in Canada outside Quebec, compared with 27.6% to 44.5% in Quebec. In fact, one of the main sources of explanation is the phenomenon of non-retention of second-language skills among young people whose English is the first official language spoken in Canada outside Quebec.

In addition to the regular mandatory French second language programs, which generally result in very little retention of second-language skills in the medium term, it is the enthusiasm for French immersion programs that has resulted in many young people being intensively exposed to learning French as a second language. While in the early 1970s, only a few thousand young people were enrolled in such programs, strong growth began in the early 1980s. At the beginning of the 1981-1982 school year, less than 50,000 young people in Canada outside Quebec were in French immersion. The latest available results (school year 2016-2017) revealed that nearly 450,000 young people were enrolled in such a program. After having been relatively stable between 1995 and 2005, the number of registrations has since increased by more than 35%.

2 Pierre Elliott Trudeau, *Déclaration du premier ministre à la Chambre des communes sur la résolution précédant la présentation du projet de Lois sur les langues officielles*, Ottawa: Cabinet du Premier ministre, 1989. 8 p. Bibliothèque et Archives Canada.

FIGURE 1: AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH RATE OF TOTAL POPULATION AND ENGLISH-FRENCH BILINGUAL POPULATION BETWEEN 1961 AND 2016, CANADA, QUEBEC AND CANADA OUTSIDE QUEBEC



Despite this enthusiasm for French immersion programs in Canada outside Quebec, and despite the fact that those who have attended such a program are much more likely to maintain their French-English bilingualism in the medium term than young people who have attended a regular French-language program,³ there is nevertheless an erosion of prior learning over time.

While the bilingualism rate among English-speaking youth outside Quebec generally reached its highest level when they were 15 to 19 years of age, at the time of high school graduation, since 2006, the highest rate has been observed among youth aged 10 to 14 years. In 2016, the French-English bilingualism rate among this age group was about

15% compared to nearly 13.5% among youth aged 15 to 19. Since more and more parents are enrolling their children in French immersion as early as kindergarten or first grade, it is likely that there will also be an increase in French-English bilingualism among 15- to 19-year-olds in the next census. There also appears to be a significant increase in the number of English-speaking parents who choose to send their child to a French-language school.⁴

However, according to the main scenarios in Statistics Canada's latest language projections⁵, with the exception of Saskatchewan, all provinces west of Quebec are expected to experience a higher rate of growth in their non-bilingual (French-English) population than their bilingual population.

3 See Mary Allen, 2008. "Bilinguisme chez les jeunes au Canada", Questions d'éducation: le point sur l'éducation, l'apprentissage et la formation au Canada, vol. 5, no 4, décembre, no 81-004-X au catalogue de Statistique Canada.

4 See article in *Globe and Mail*, July 2019: www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-ontario-french-school-boards-face-potential-constitutional-challenge/

5 See René Houle et Jean-Pierre Corbeil (2017), *Projections linguistiques pour le Canada 2011-2036*, No 89-657-X2017001 au catalogue, Statistique Canada.

Meanwhile, across the country, Quebec should remain the main driver of growth in French-English bilingualism in the country, which, according to the same projections, would bring bilingualism to around 18.5% by 2036.

The results of these language projections also reveal that the issue of retention of French language skills among the population with English as their first official language spoken in Canada outside Quebec seems much more important than that of the increase in the lack of knowledge of French among immigrants. One would be led to believe that since the majority of immigrants arrive in the country in adulthood, an age when learning a second or even a third language is more difficult, a growth in the immigrant population could constitute a significant barrier to the evolution of French-English bilingualism among the English-speaking population. However, the results of the language projections reveal that even using a theoretical scenario whereby Canada would not receive any immigrants between 2017 and 2036, the French-English bilingualism rate would only increase by one percentage point compared to the result from the reference scenario, which is based on trends over the past 15 years. Moreover, there is no difference between the bilingualism rates of young English-speaking immigrants and those of Canadian-born youth.

It is therefore on the side of non-retention of achievements in the medium or long term that the evolution of French-English bilingualism in Canada, particularly in Canada outside Quebec, is at stake.

According to language projections for the period 2011 to 2036, if young people in Canada outside

Quebec who have already acquired the ability to conduct a conversation in both official languages by the time they finish high school (around 17 years of age) were able to maintain their second language skills, the proportion of those who would still be bilingual by 2036 could increase to 11.5% compared to the 6.7% obtained under the reference scenario (i. e., based on trends observed between 2001 and 2011). Moreover, if the number of these bilingual young people aged 5 to 14 were to be doubled and they maintained their French language skills, this proportion could reach 13.6% by 2036.

What would be the impact of such progress on the rate of bilingualism across the country? By 18.5% (reference scenario), maintaining French language skills after the age of 17 among the English-speaking population outside Quebec could mean that 22.5% of the Canadian population could converse in both of Canada's official languages. And if we doubled the number of bilingual young people aged 5 to 14 years outside Quebec and if they could maintain their French language skills, this proportion could reach 24.4%, or nearly a quarter of the Canadian population.

These scenarios, while theoretical, result in results that challenge us on the factors that can contribute to maintaining or even improving knowledge of both official languages in Canada. Exposure to the learning of both official languages at an early age and its maintenance over time is undoubtedly an undeniable asset and a valuable asset in an individual's personal development. It also establishes bridges and dialogue between speakers of the country's official language communities.

Although the rate of French-English bilingualism

in the country has increased since the adoption of the *Official Languages Act* in 1969 and many Canadians have been exposed to learning both official languages, several challenges remain. The enrichment associated with both official languages, which Pierre-Elliott Trudeau spoke of in 1968, has already been demonstrated and experienced by many Canadians. However, the fact that Quebec is the driving force behind the growth of French-English bilingualism in the country, essentially reading that the French-speaking population is increasingly proficient in English, while the English-speaking population outside that province is seeing its level of knowledge of French stagnate, calls for reflection on promising mechanisms and initiatives that could enable Canadians to take advantage of and benefit from this opportunity for dialogue and openness to others.

BONJOUR, HI AND OLA

JACK JEDWAB

Jack Jedwab is President and Director General of the Association for Canadian Studies and the Canadian Institute for Identities and Migration. He is the publisher of *Canadian Issues* and *Canadian Diversity*.

Given the very uneven geographic distribution of first language English and French speakers in Canada, the dream of some mass, country wide English-French bilingualism inevitably confronts the reality of achieving that goal in parts of the country without a critical mass of French speakers (or a critical mass of English-speakers in certain parts of Quebec). Largely owing to such demographic concentration, over 80% of the country's population is unable to speak both official languages. By consequence, most policy-makers show a marked preference for focusing on the near 20% of the population that is able to speak both English and French. And, they often assign credit to the *Official Languages Act* for the progress in numbers and share of bilingual Canadians that has been attained over the past half century.

If in 2019 Canada proudly describes itself as a bilin-

gual country it is a function of the concentration of English and French-speakers in Quebec, Ontario and New Brunswick and more specifically across what has been referred to as the bilingual belt a line between Sault Ste. Marie and Moncton that has not stretched much over the years.

Rates of bilingualism among the English-mother tongue population in the Quebec part of the bilingual belt are considerably higher than they were in 1961. Based on the 2011 census data, some 85.7% of Canadians with knowledge of both official languages live in the three provinces and in 2016 that percentage climbed to 85.9% (expect it to increase further in the years ahead). In reality Canada is best described as a country that is de jure bilingual-that is to say in law-but not one that is de facto bilingual-that is to say bilingual in fact. Paradoxically it is Quebec that is much closer to being a de facto

bilingual place while not being one in law.

Despite the relatively low rates of bilingualism outside of Quebec, survey of Canadians consistently reveal that a majority of Canadians value bilingualism and they believe it is important to know both official languages. While most also agree it's an important part of our identity/or being Canadian, as observed below, there are some important regional variations in such views.

TABLE 1: “THE FACT THAT THERE ARE TWO OFFICIAL LANGUAGES (ENGLISH/FRENCH) IN CANADA IS, FOR YOU, AN IMPORTANT PART OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CANADIAN.”

The following summarizes those who strongly agree with the above statement (rate 7-10 on a 10-pt scale):

Among Anglophones (by province/region)

Nova Scotia: 70%

Central Ontario: 58%

British Columbia: 48%

Manitoba: 47%

Alberta: 36%

New Brunswick: 34%

Among Anglophones (by city)

Montreal: 85%

Toronto: 71%

Among Francophones (Across Canada)

61%

SOURCE: CANADIAN HERITAGE, 2018

Survey findings reveal that sustaining/retaining a second language is closely tied to the opportunities to use it. This is also a key determinant in reducing insecurity and anxiety individuals may encounter when using a second language. Hence it is in those institutional settings where such opportunity most frequently arises that levels of comfort are higher (social networks and the workplace). Correspondingly, where such interaction is less frequent (e.g. school), comfort levels are lowest.

Clearly, the capacity to use one's official language in the workplace is at the heart of supporting both bilingualism and official language minorities. Success stories around students that go through French immersion programs or receive basic French second language instruction do not sufficiently research the degree to which the acquired language is retained in areas where there are few opportunities to make use of the second language. It is critical to examine the transition between school and the workplace as regards the acquisition and retention of a second language. Census data reveals that significant numbers will lose the second language acquired in less than ten years, as they enter unilingual work environments. There remains a key challenge for the federal government in encouraging and/or requiring those companies and organizations with which it does business to ensure that they can meet a high standard for operating in both official languages.

TECHNOLOGIES: CANADA'S ROBOTS MUST BE BILINGUAL

There have been unimaginable advances in technologies since the OLA was introduced. The idea of a universal translation device that was once the

dream of many a fan of Star Trek now seems like its introduction is around the proverbial corner. On-line services are increasingly available in both official languages and voice/assistance using artificial intelligence (AI) can operate in the languages of Shakespeare and Molière (and replicate their voices) and replace humans in the communication of selected information. Use of the Internet and new tools to communicate and interact with the public along with unparalleled opportunities for machine translation create potentially enormous opportunities to expand service for citizens in the two official languages across all geographies and many sectors.

Automated language translation services are on the rise globally and with Canada's experience and commitment to service delivery in both languages, it can demonstrate considerable leadership in providing a model for best and inclusive practices in language delivery. Organizations and companies are increasingly using AI to do translation. Such platforms as Google Translate, Microsoft Translator, and Amazon Translate have made great strides in improving accuracy and along with other AI enabled automated translators are used daily by individuals and businesses. The CEO of one of the world's largest translation companies, Ofer Shoshan, predicts that in the near future machine translation will carry out more than 50 percent of the work handled by the global translation market. There is currently insufficient research around the impact of AI on translation and on if and how people's interaction with a second language will evolve.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE: MIGRATION, IMMIGRATION, DUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Since the adoption of the OLA, Canada has under-

gone a demographic revolution owing in large measure to the diverse composition of newcomers. The composition of the population is very different from what it was when in 1969 Canada introduced the *Official Languages Act* (hereafter OLA). The sixties impulse of promoting bilingualism and biculturalism gave way to policy and discourse that promoted multiculturalism within what was described in 1971 as a bilingual framework. The discourse changed yet again in the 1980s as diversity was described as operating in conjunction with the country's linguistic duality and/or two official languages. For some analysts, duality and diversity were inevitably in competition while others saw areas of convergence and/or intersectionality.

In reality, the dichotomy of duality and diversity played out quite differently across Canada. Concerns around the degree to which newcomers would diminish the French character of Canada were partially allayed with the 1991 federal transfer to Quebec of much of the authority for immigrant selection. Outside of Quebec, until the year 2000, there was little attention directed at how immigration might diminish the weight of minority francophones. Since that time, the federal government has substantially increased funding to help minority official language francophones attract French-speaking migrants to their communities in support of their vitality, so that newcomers could be seen as a potential source of growth for demographically vulnerable communities.

Overall, however, in the rest of Canada the percentage of established and recent immigrants over the age of 15 that report knowledge of both English and French is less than the overall share of persons that know both official languages. As observed in

TABLE 2: PERCENTAGE OVER THE AGE OF 15 WITH KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH AND FRENCH IN CANADA, QUEBEC AND THE REST OF CANADA FOR NON-IMMIGRANT, IMMIGRANT AND BY TIME OF ARRIVAL

Percentage English and French Bilingual (census 2016)	Canada	Quebec	Rest of Canada
Total	18.9	49.5	9.7
Non-immigrants	21.4	49.1	11.5
Immigrants	11.9	51.6	5.3
Before 1981	11.5	52.7	5.8
1981 to 1990	11.7	52.5	5.1
1991 to 2000	11.0	53.0	5.0
2001 to 2010	13.4	53.1	5.9
2001 to 2005	13.4	55.1	6.1
2006 to 2010	13.3	51.4	5.6
2011 to 2014	12.1	46.9	4.6

SOURCE: CENSUS OF CANADA, 2016

table 2, that is not the case in Quebec where with the exception of the most recent cohort (arriving between 2011 and 2014), the percentage reporting knowledge of English and French is greater than that of the overall population of the province.

CONCLUSION: THE BRAVE NEW WORLD OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Public messaging around advancing bilingualism and supporting Canada's official language minorities has been too timid. Our laws and public discourse tend to encourage second language acqui-

sition and remind citizens of the need to support official language minorities. But many Canadians seem unaware that linguistic duality is foundational and fundamental to a variety of other programs and policies (i.e. Canadian multiculturalism). Support for official language minorities is more than just a need – it is a responsibility on the part of Canadians. It is necessary to expand knowledge amongst Canadians about the *Official Languages Act* and remind the population that the country has a constitutional responsibility to support its/our official language minorities. Without a constant reminder we risk allowing politicians and others to

undercut the importance of French in Canada.

I am proud and privileged to belong to the community of bilinguals along with my wife and four children, a community that continues to add new members to its ranks. Despite the challenges to expanding the numbers of Canada's community of bilinguals (we form a sort of community), doing so must remain a key goal of the government of Canada and positive/impactful measures need to be pursued in this regard.

THE EVOLUTION OF FRENCH LANGUAGE TERMINOLOGY IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION FROM CONFEDERATION THROUGH TO THE PRESENT

RICHARD SLEVINSKY

Richard Slevinsky is currently serving Canadian Parents for French (CPF) as Director on the National Board. He was instrumental in implementing Francophone governance in Southern Alberta.

The purpose of this paper is to provide the reader with an initial understanding of the evolution over time of French language terminology in the field of education. This essay traces the origins of the understandings of terms used in education; an area of responsibility that has largely been under provincial responsibility.

Let us begin by acknowledging the fact that before Europeans came to this country, First Nations and Inuit were present and enjoyed rich complex societies each with its own language and culture. The contact between these two existing worlds initially occurred in what we know today as Eastern Canada where the two main European settler communities were of French and British origin. After many conflicts and resulting changes in governance and legislation, these two colonial peoples came together in the *Act of Union* in 1841. The purpose of the legislation was to unite these two groups into

one economy and to quell the unrest between the French and the British/English. It should be noted that, at the time, most French speakers were Roman Catholic while the English were overwhelmingly Protestant. The *Union Act* effectively left education to the responsibility of the two separate entities that made up the new united Canada. Anticipating the challenges ahead, however, the English Protestants obtained the right to establish their own Separate Schools in Lower Canada – Quebec, and this privilege was also extended to the French-speaking Roman Catholics of Upper Canada – Ontario. The interesting take away here is that French and English language education in Canada really began on confessional not linguistic grounds.

The notion of Separate Schools introduced in the *Act of Union* of 1841 remained in place and became part of the British North America (BNA) *Act* of 1867; specifically s. 93. The two dominant religious

groups were very involved in the respective education systems and as a result, the right to be educated in a Roman Catholic or Protestant school became part of the Canadians' rights vernacular. This went relatively unquestioned until the Manitoba Schools Question (1890). The demographic shift that occurred in Manitoba's population due to an influx of immigration saw Francophone numbers diminish in proportion to the overall population and, as a result, lose political power. The result was the overall secularization of the publicly funded school system and the emergence of clandestine French language schools. These French language schools continued to operate and eventually went on to be the basis for the establishment of the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine. In Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan, however, confessional Separate Schools continue to exist and operate today even though we have seen the establishment of French minority language (Francophone) school authorities.

Quebec society, for its part, continued to evolve under the influence of the Roman Catholic clergy. The foundational values of Quebec society were anchored in religion, family and agriculture and this continued under what is referred to today as the Duplessis Years – from 1936 through to 1959. During this time, Quebec's industrial economy was dominated by Anglophones, but the Roman Catholic clergy maintained a powerful influence over the province's population. In the 1950s, Quebec had among the highest fecundity rates in the world; eight children per fertile woman and by 1967, Quebec had approximately one third of the Canadian population.

With the passing of Maurice Duplessis in 1959,

Quebec politics saw a change. Jean Lesage, a Liberal premier, led the province through a major shift, away from the predominance of the Roman Catholic Church towards a society where the French language and culture took centre stage. It was also a time when society began questioning the traditional values of having a large family, the role of women, the role of the Church, the dominance of the economy by the Anglophone minority, etc. This is the period referred to as the Quiet Revolution (*la Révolution tranquille*). During this period, we also see the beginnings and rise of Quebec separatism. On the national scene, we prepared for Expo '67 and saw the work of the Bilingualism and Biculturalism (B&B) Commission, also referred to as the Laurendeau-Dunton Commission. This commission was charged with three main areas of inquiry: the extent of bilingualism in the federal government, the role of public and private organizations in promoting better cultural relations, and the opportunities for Canadians to become bilingual: French and English. The Commission's guiding principle was that both French and English could be used as languages of communication in the federal institutions affecting the lives of members of the respective communities.

One piece of the B&B Commission's work intrigued a group of parents at Margaret Pendlebury Elementary School in St-Lambert, Quebec. In 1965-66, these parents worked with the school authority to start a French immersion program. This program, which proved to be very successful, provided students with a French language bath. Researchers, educators and parents quickly realized that this program made it possible for Canadians to become bilingual. The Federal government was very interested in this program as well and wanted to con-

tribute some funds as an incentive to promote the program's growth.

Canada also saw the adoption of the *Official Languages Act* in February of 1969 and the establishment of what we have come to know as the Official Language in Education Programs (OLEP), which steadily grew in breadth and scope. Because these Federal programs targeted basic education programs under provincial/territorial jurisdiction, funds were funnelled through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). One of the roles of the CMEC is to protect the provincial/territorial jurisdiction of education from federal interference; however, French and English Second Language Programs were seen as vital means for Canadians to becoming bilingual.

As might have been expected, not all school jurisdictions in Canada were ready to embrace the new phenomenon of enhanced French second language programs; French immersion, Bilingual programs, Extended French programs, etc. In light of this, Keith Spicer, then Commissioner of Official Languages, united a group of like-minded parents who were experiencing difficulties with their local school jurisdictions in their desire to provide a French immersion program for their children. These parents quickly organized, and in March of 1977, Canadian Parents for French (CPF) was created. This organization flourished and today represents a network of over 25,000 volunteers working at the National, Branch and Chapter levels to further bilingualism by promoting and creating opportunities for youth to learn and use French.

In Quebec, the attitudes evolved quickly and in one generation saw the sovereigntist movement bring to

the provincial electorate in May of 1980 the referendum for sovereignty-association. The "No" side won this referendum by a slim majority. Two years later, in 1982, Canada brought in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. This was effectively an amendment to the Constitution and included s. 23 Minority Language Rights. It is interesting to note here that while Francophone parents were extremely pleased with the advances in French-language programming throughout the country, they began to see that these programs, including French immersion, were not meeting the needs of their children. A case that began in Alberta saw a group of parents work to establish a Francophone school. This case eventually made its way to the Supreme Court and is known as the Mahé Decision or Dickson Judgment of March 1990. This judgment granted the linguistic minorities (French and English) the right to governance, among other gains. As a result, the provinces had to establish governance structures in their education systems. British Columbia, Manitoba, Newfoundland and others created separate Francophone school authorities in each of their territories. An example of this was the establishment of la Division scolaire franco-manitobaine (DSFM). In Alberta and Ontario for example, where Separate School Authorities still existed, the Mahé Decision saw the creation of the Quadripartite School System; an English public, an English separate, a Francophone public and a Francophone separate school jurisdiction.

The establishment of minority language schools saw the bifurcation of French-language programming bringing some clarity to the distinction between French first language and French second-language programming. These programs were and continue to be instrumental in constructing students' iden-

tities with respect to language. An example of the difference shows up in the choice of pronouns. In a French first language program, students are exposed to the first-person pronouns I and we, my and our, etc. For example, “I am Francophone and my hero is Jacques Villeneuve.” Or, “we are Francophone and our artists are...”. In a French second language program, we would see “they are Francophones and their artists are...”. The point here is that the program builds a sense of belonging to a group; the French first language program reinforces belonging to that sociolinguistic group whereas a French second language program maintains the students’ belonging to their socio-linguistic group of origin. French immersion and other French second language programs do not make Francophones of their students.

It has been 50 years since we officially became a bilingual country with the passing of the *Official Languages Act*. Much has been gained over these past 50 years in terms of language rights, services in French and English, opportunities for Canadians to learn and use both French and English across Canada; we are even seeing a “rapprochement” – where graduates of French second language programs and graduates of Francophone programs are sharing the same spaces, same events, etc. We are celebrating these achievements in 2019 and look forward to seeing further developments over the next 50 years as we continue to implement the *Official Languages Act* – a crucial piece of legislation for Canada.

CAUGHT IN A TIME LOOP: FIFTY YEARS OF REPEATED CHALLENGES FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES IN EDUCATION

MATTHEW HAYDAY

Matthew Hayday is a Professor in the department of History at the University of Guelph and is co-editor of the *Canadian Historical Review*.

As a historian of Canadian language policy, I might have expected that the year 2019 would offer the opportunity to reflect on the dramatic changes that have occurred in the education sector in the decades since the passage of the *Official Languages Act* in 1969. In some major ways, the changes have been profound and dramatic. Across Canada, French second language learning offerings expanded rapidly. French immersion became a wildly popular option for Anglophone parents who wanted their children to become fluently bilingual. A combination of federal funding programs and then the advent of *Charter* rights dramatically transformed access to minority official language education, particularly for francophone communities. In Quebec, bilingualism has grown significantly among both francophone and anglophone youth. Yet I am more struck by how much remains the same, and how the challenges and battles of past decades are constantly resurfacing and needing to be re-fought. Is

Canada, as a society, actually learning from past experience with official languages in education?

The challenges of the 2020s should not be the same as those of the 1970s and 1980s. The fact that this is the case suggests that there are significant, ongoing, and structural problems with how Canada is facing the challenges of second official language learning and minority official language education. I focus here on the sectors I know best from my own research – federal-provincial arrangements around official languages education, and efforts to promote bilingualism – but it is evident that the general theme of “plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose” is prevalent throughout the sector.

In late-June 2019, the federal minister responsible for Official Languages, Mélanie Joly, announced an increase of \$15M per year to support official language minority education. This sum, which was in

addition to funds already announced as part of the 2018 Action Plan for Official Languages, is to be subject to conditions requiring increased provincial transparency as to how these monies are used. The proposed conditions are a response to allegations that federal funding for official languages in education was being spent on programs other than what it is earmarked for.¹ For those familiar with the long history of these programs, the sense of déjà vu was overwhelming, but so too was the realization of how this dossier has failed to live up to the hopes of the 1970s.

Joly's announcement was the latest development in a saga that goes back to the signing of the first federal-provincial agreement on bilingualism in education in 1970. That agreement resulted from the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism's recommendation that the federal government help defray the additional costs of education for the official language minority communities. Subsequent negotiations expanded this to second language instruction, which would, among other things, help meet a federal goal of expanding Canada's bilingual workforce in the future. The agreement for federal support of provincial language education programs has been renewed and adapted many times over the past five decades.

It is striking that provincial accountability for the use of federal funds remains such a bugbear. 'Twas ever thus. In the 1970s, similar allegations swirled that federal funds were being used to pay for 'bilingual basketballs,' or that funds intended for franco-

phone minorities were being diverted into FSL programming for anglophone children. Then, as now, the provinces fervently defended their constitutional jurisdiction over education, resisting the extension of federal oversight over how they spent these funds. The federal government continues to try to use its modest contribution of funds to encourage the provinces to create and expand programs in the official languages – which, to their credit, they have done to varying degrees – but with little say over the modalities of how this is done.

The bigger story here is the fact that this program still exists. It is dismaying that it is still necessary. When the first agreement was reached in 1970, federal officials thought that their support for second language instruction would be needed for about five years, and for about ten-to-fifteen years for minority first-language education, after which point the provinces would fully assume responsibility for these sectors.² Had these timelines held, the federal government's role would have ended in 1985! Clearly, the provincial governments continue to see official languages in education as an 'extra' that Ottawa should pay for. The vitality of these programs continues to hinge on the federal government's willingness to be generous with its funding – generosity that has gone through rounds of waxing and waning since the late-1970s – and with cutbacks made by governments both Liberal and Conservative.

The situation in second language instruction, particularly around French immersion, is even more

1 <https://onfr.tfo.org/le-federal-promet-plus-dargent-pour-les-ecoles-francophones-minoritaires/>

2 Matthew Hayday, *Bilingual Today, United Tomorrow: Official Languages in Education and Canadian Federalism* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 57.

caught in a time loop. One could easily create a series of Beaverton-style satirical fill-in-the-blank editorials and news articles to replace the annual round of standard pieces that run in major Canadian media outlets every year about the pedagogical merits of immersion. Debates that go back to the 1970s and 1980s – most of which have been long settled in the academic literature – are replayed annually in the public sphere.

French immersion has proven to be wildly popular since the first experimental programs in Ontario and Quebec in the 1960s. Hundreds of thousands of Canadian children are enrolled in programs across the country. And yet, French immersion continues to be unavailable in many jurisdictions. Where it is offered, it is frequently subject to program caps, and demand far exceeding capacity. Tales of registration line-ups and lotteries – which were common in newspapers across the country in the early 1980s – continue to appear today.³ This lack of capacity in turn fuels the never-ending chorus of erroneous allegations that the program itself is elitist, because not all Canadian children can access these programs. But in truth it's a situation created by governments and school boards who refuse to fund these programs to meet parental demand.

Expectations for immersion are another long-running problem. Although it's been clear since the 1980s that the average French immersion student will graduate with French skills and fluency far above that of the regular French-as-a-second-language learner, they won't generally attain native-level proficiency. Advocates of the program have

tried to dampen this expectation, pointing out that immersion will provide a solid basis for post-secondary education in French that can provide this final polishing. But the program continues to be subject to calls for its abolition on the basis that it has 'failed' to produce Pierre Trudeau-levels of fluency in all of its graduates and perfect grammar skills – language skills, which, it should be noted, are not being achieved in most of our students' *mother tongue* by the end of high school.

The elitism theme is picked up in a different vein due to an anecdotally widespread practice of children with learning difficulties being transferred out of French immersion and into the English stream. This occurs despite decades of research showing that for most learning challenges, children can do just as well in French immersion if they're provided with the same supports. The real problem is that many provinces don't provide these supports to immersion students. To be fair, the entire education system in most provinces is underfunded and under-resourced – a situation that is getting worse, not better, in many cases. This does, however, contribute to an approach to education cutbacks where French immersion – and language programs more broadly—appear to be the low-hanging fruit most ripe for being cut. While polling data suggests Canadians remain committed – in principle – to bilingualism, this support is precarious, and highly vulnerable when economic pressures emerge.

Canada is even experiencing a revival of anti-bilingualism activist groups. While not representing large elements of the population, these are succes-

3 On struggles around French immersion and FSL, see Matthew Hayday, *So They Want Us to Learn French: Promoting and Opposing Bilingualism in English-speaking Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015).

sors to the Single Canada League, the Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada, or the Confederation of Regions Party. While usually being careful to claim that they have “nothing against” the French language or French speakers, per se, they are mobilizing the same anti-bilingualism arguments of a generation ago: that Canada can’t “afford” the costs of bilingualism; that official bilingualism disadvantages those with English as their mother tongue; that English is the global language that everyone needs to learn; that French immersion is private school for a middle-class elite on the public dime. It all flies in the face of evidence that bi- and multilingualism are assets for global competitiveness that employers prize language skills among their workforce, and indeed that the number of Francophones in this country continues to grow and that most of them are not bilingual. Even though they represent a small fringe element, the anti-bilingualism groups attract a disproportionate share of media attention, and by extension, of the energies of those who are trying to defend the hard-won gains of the past half-century.

Can Canada break out of these patterns? Will Canadians reach the stage where official languages programs are considered a core part of the education system, rather than a frill for a small minority of the population? If not, the very real gains that have been achieved over the past fifty years may prove to be vulnerable indeed.

EXPLORING CANADA'S BILINGUAL LANDSCAPE¹

FRED GENESEE

Fred Genesee is a Professor of Psychology at McGill University. He specializes in second language acquisition and bilingualism research.

Internationally speaking, the mention of Canada often invokes associations with extreme weather and expansive landscapes. But Canada could equally be defined in terms of its languages. It is a country blessed with multiple languages... the languages of indigenous peoples, the languages of immigrants and refugees and, of course, the official languages... English and French. Along with its Policy on Multiculturalism, Canada's recognition of French and English as official languages created spaces where Canada's other languages and language groups can be appreciated and prosper. The prominence of language in the national landscape is further evident in the scientific community. Arguably, no other country in the world has shown such enthusiasm for research on language and, in particular, bilingualism. Early views in the last century in both the scientific and broader community

often depicted individual and societal bilingualism as a liability – intellectually, socially, educationally, and personally. This view is no longer tenable due in large part to the work of Canadian researchers whose work during the previous 50 years has led to a more positive attitude toward bilingualism... an attitude that views bi- and multilingualism as normal, natural, and desirable and, like all human phenomena, complex and begging to be explored and understood. This paradigm shift has had ripple effects around the world. It is impossible in such a short essay to give credit to all Canadian researchers who have played a part in this shift, but here are some selected highlights.

The beginning of this shift can be linked to the research of graduate student Elizabeth Peal and her mentor Wallace Lambert of McGill University

1 I would like to thank Naomi Holobow for insightful and useful comments on an earlier draft of this essay.

in 1962. Their study followed decades of research claiming that bilinguals did not measure up to their monolingual peers on tests of intelligence, academic ability, and cognitive flexibility.

The research of Peal and Lambert corrected flaws in the early research – bilingual participants in these studies were often from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and were tested in their second language even though they had not fully mastered that language yet. Controlling for these weaknesses, Peal and Lambert showed that teenage French-English bilinguals from Montreal actually performed better than their monolingual peers on a variety of “verbal and non-verbal intelligence tests”. Careful statistical analyses of the groups’ results indicated that, compared to their monolingual peers, the bilinguals had a more diversified set of mental abilities and that they were able to deploy them in more flexible ways during problem solving. This study set new standards on how research on bilinguals was to be carried out, highlighting the importance of controlling for the myriad factors that differentiate bilinguals from one another and from monolinguals.

Building on this research, Jim Cummins (University of Toronto) and Ellen Bialystok (York University) explored the cognitive dimensions of bilingualism in new directions. Their research confirmed Peal and Lambert’s positive outcomes and, at the same time, provided a more nuanced view of the consequences of bilingualism. Cummins’ work was important because it highlighted that not all bilinguals are the same and that the cognitive consequences of being bilingual probably depend on one’s level of proficiency in both languages. He argued, and subsequent research supports this, that

to benefit from any cognitive advantages, bilinguals must be highly proficient... having just beginning proficiency in an additional language is probably not enough.

Bialystok’s work extended our understanding of the neuro-cognitive mechanisms that explain “the bilingual advantage” reported by others. Bialystok argued that acquiring and using two languages requires extended use of the executive functions of the brain and this enhances the brain’s cognitive resources. Executive functions are innate cognitive functions that are responsible for focusing, shifting and inhibiting attention during problem solving and other cognitive tasks. Extended use of these cognitive skills when learning or using two languages enhances executive functioning in general so that “the bilingual advantage” is evident when individuals are engaged in a variety of cognitive activities, not just language-related activities. There is even some evidence of a cognitive advantage in later life that buffers older bilinguals from the effects of cognitive decline that sets in as one ages.

Another notable early contribution to bilingualism research in Canada occurred in the field of education, once again led by Wallace Lambert along with his colleague Richard (Dick) Tucker (now at Carnegie Mellon University). In the mid-1960s, Canada was in the throes of debate about bilingualism and national unity. Closer to home, the community of St Lambert, outside Montreal, was exploring how best to educate anglophone children so they could integrate into French-speaking Quebec. In consultation with community members, Lambert along with colleague Wilder Penfield from McGill’s Montreal Neurological Institute launched the St Lambert early total French Immersion Program. In

this revolutionary approach to promoting bilingualism in school, significant parts of the curriculum were taught exclusively in French to anglophone students.

This was followed by years of research by Lambert and Tucker to evaluate the effectiveness of this program. Research on immersion was continued by the author (Fred Genesee, McGill University) in Montreal as well as by researchers at the University of Toronto (Merrill Swain, Sharon Lipkin, Birgit Harley), Simon Fraser University in Vancouver (Stan Shapson, Elaine Day) and College St Jean in Edmonton (Steve Carey), and others. These researchers' evaluations indicated consistently that using a second language to teach the school curriculum to speakers of a majority language was not only as effective as regular monolingual education in promoting academic and first language development, but it yielded significantly superior second language skills. Publicization of these findings in the scientific and popular media led to a worldwide interest in the "Canadian model of bilingual education" that continues to this day.

Research on immersion and second language teaching and learning more broadly is ongoing. For example, the research of Roy Lyster and Susan Ballinger at McGill University in immersion classrooms along with the extensive research of colleagues Nina Spada (University of Toronto) and Patsy Lightbown (Concordia) in second language classrooms refined the way teachers design and implement instruction for young learners in immersion and traditional second language classrooms. This work has taken on international significance as parents, educators and policymakers around the world seek educational alternatives that will pre-

pare students to live and work in an increasingly interconnected and globalized world where language and cultural diversity are the new norm.

Researchers have most recently shown interest in the youngest language learners – children from birth to 5 years of age. Once again, Canadian researchers have been on the forefront in understanding bilingual preschoolers. My own research at McGill University was among the first to explore in depth how children who grow up in families where they are exposed to two languages accomplish the challenging task of learning two languages at the same time. Surprisingly, although many children around the world grow up bi- or multilingually, these learners were largely overlooked by the research community until recently. Previously, it was widely feared that bilingual acquisition during the preschool years exceeds the normal neuro-cognitive capacities of the young developing child. Parents were discouraged from raising their children bilingually under the presumption that this would stunt their linguistic development, especially if they were speakers of a minority language.

However, findings from my own research along with that of my graduate students (Elena Nicoladis, now at University of Edmonton; Johanne Paradis, now at University of Edmonton; and Liane Comeau) and colleagues elsewhere in Canada (such as Janet Werker, University of British Columbia; Linda Polka and Elin Thordardottir, McGill University), and around the world, has shown that learning two languages from birth is as natural as learning one. Given adequate learning environments, simultaneous bilinguals can acquire proficiency in two languages equal to that of monolinguals. But, as was so aptly stated by François Grosjean, "Bilin-

guals are not two monolingual individuals in one.” Researchers in Canada are discovering intriguing differences between bilingual and monolingual learners that reveal the remarkable neuro-cognitive flexibility that neonates and infants bring to learning two languages.

All of these findings, and more, are part of the shift to viewing bilingualism as normal and typical as monolingualism – each with its own characteristics, outcomes and challenges. So, the next time someone broaches the topic of the vast Canadian landscape, with its sweeping vistas and extreme weather patterns, you might want to include linguistic diversity in your discussion.

LANGUAGE MIXING CAUSES A STIR: CONFRONTING SCIENCE AND PUBLIC OPINION

SHANA POPLACK, NATHALIE DION, SUZANNE ROBILLARD AND BASILE ROUSSEL

Shana Poplack is Distinguished University Professor and Canada Research Chair in Linguistics at the University of Ottawa, and founding director of the Sociolinguistics Laboratory there. Her work applies theoretical and methodological insights gained from the scientific study of everyday speech to a variety of languages and phenomena involved in language contact, language change and linguistic ideology.

Nathalie Dion is Research Coordinator of the University of Ottawa Sociolinguistics Lab and collaborator on a number of projects investigating various aspects of linguistic variation and change, especially in bilingual and minority language contexts.

Suzanne Robillard is a PhD candidate and researcher at the Sociolinguistics Lab at the University of Ottawa. She specializes in the study of language contact phenomena and minority French in British Columbia and elsewhere in Canada. She regularly leads workshops addressing issues of linguistic insecurity and language confidence in minority francophone communities.

Basile Roussel is a PhD candidate in the uOttawa Linguistics Department and an active member of the Sociolinguistics Lab there. His research focuses on language variation and change in Acadian French, bilingualism and language contact, and language ideologies.

INTRODUCTION

The *Official Languages Act* of Canada granted equal status to French and English at the federal level. But the way these languages are distributed on the ground is anything but equal, be it in terms of numbers of speakers, situations felt to be appropriate for their use, or most of all, relative prestige.

In the court of public opinion, the French spoken here is often judged inferior to some imagined standard variety, even by its own native speakers. It is also thought to be receding, to the point where many feel that it is endangered. For francophones, a major aggressor is English, and its poster child

is lexical borrowing, as in (1) and (2). This gives rise to the dreaded *anglicismes*, commonly held to lead to the deterioration, if not death, of the borrowing language. Minority anglophones fear the same fate from the *gallicisms* they feel are invading their English, as in (3). Rather than celebrate the cultural and cognitive advantages that bilingualism offers, many Canadians worry that contact between our official languages will impact the “quality” and even survival of both.

1. *On lavait les planchers à la main, tu sais, puis après ça on polishait avec notre fessier.* (OH.041.1598)¹ ‘We’d wash the floors by hand, you know, and after that we’d polish with our butt.’

2. *À côté, il y a un autre gros building highrise.* (OH.029.153) ‘Next door, there’s another big high-rise building.’

3. And he washed windows and he drove *calèches* ‘carriages’. (QEC.006.169)

As sociolinguists, our mandate is to study language the way it is actually used in social context, so our research is often inspired by society’s take on linguistic matters. This is why a major focus at the uOttawa Sociolinguistics Laboratory (www.sociolinguistics.uottawa.ca/thelab.html) has been to test the effects of bilingualism on the languages in contact. We have amassed huge datasets of spontaneous speech and developed cutting-edge methods to study them scientifically. Over the years, our team has analyzed more than five million words of French spoken by 323 minority and majority

francophones born between 1846–1994, 2.5 million words from Quebec anglophones who acquired English before and after the passage of Bill 101, and countless more from bilinguals in over a dozen other language pairs like Wolof/French, Tamil/English, and Arabic/French, among others. In total, we have investigated more than 40,000 instances of language mixing. These efforts did in fact yield answers to our questions, but they weren’t the ones anyone was expecting.

For example, systematic inspection of our corpus of French spoken in the National Capital Region turned up over 20,000 English words, a seemingly massive number. But when we contextualized them with respect to the words that had *not* been borrowed, we found that they were incredibly rare (representing no more than .008% of the total discourse)! What’s more, historical analysis showed that most spur-of-the-moment borrowings are *ephemeral*, disappearing after their first mention. As such, they simply don’t persist long enough to alter the structure of French. On the contrary, they *adopt* that structure, giving rise to locutions like *polishait* (appropriately conjugated in the French 3rd p. imperfect indicative) in (1) or *un gros building high-rise* (following French adjective placement rules) in (2). We replicated these analyses on other language pairs, like Ukrainian/English in (4), and found the same result.

4. *Vzhe v serednij shkol-i ja xodyla v misti.* [UKR.09.A.347] ‘I was already in the city for high school.’

This research, detailed in many publications and a

1 Codes in parentheses refer to corpus, speaker and line number of the utterance. Examples are reproduced verbatim from audio recordings.

volume entitled *Borrowing: Loanwords in the Speech Community and in the Grammar* (Oxford University Press 2018), is what led to the discovery that there is nothing random, need-based, or even particularly Canadian about language “mixing”; it stems from rule-governed communicative discourse processes, it is favoured by the most proficient bilinguals in the community, and its conventions appear to be universal.

SPREADING THE WORD

The University of Ottawa Media Relations Office issued a press release, in both French and English, in the form of a text, an infographic and a YouTube video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtcyPTH-pSm0). These summarized the research results that they considered most newsworthy: borrowed words are rare, transient, and integrated into the grammar of the borrowing language. Accordingly, contact with a “donor” language (in this case, English) does not affect the structure of the recipient (here, French). Language mixing does not arise from laziness or limited proficiency; on the contrary, it is highly structured, requires a certain degree of bilingual proficiency, and is the *norm* in bilingual communities worldwide. It goes without saying that these findings run counter to received wisdom, which advocates the opposing position on each of the above – in the notable absence of any empirical proof. The press release therefore made a point of emphasizing the scientific, empirical, and quantitative nature of our research.

MEDIA COVERAGE

The reaction of the media was immediate and substantial, leading to dozens of radio interviews

and print articles in major venues (including CBC News, BBC World, RCI español, the front page of the *Globe & Mail*). Beyond the frequent introduction of the provocative – and polarizing – term *franglais* in many headlines, the core conclusions of the research were accurately reported, and their scientific basis was clearly conveyed.

PUBLIC RESPONSE

Public response was even more profuse: the YouTube video has been viewed over 3000 times, and the official share count for the CBC News piece alone is even higher. Half of the articles were republished (an average of six times each) by other outlets. This amount of stakeholder interest is unusual for academic sociolinguistic research, and confirms the intense interest that bilingualism and its effects still hold for Canadians.

To get a sense of *who* actually saw these articles and what they were saying about them, we searched Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, and Google. Access to complementary social networks enabled us to retrieve nearly 900 shares, and analyze about one-third, which themselves generated more than 800 comments and over 3000 reactions.

WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

Content analysis revealed that stakeholder reactions were very strong. Remarkably, public affect towards the message is divided right down the middle: 52% positive (“*Oh, sweet validation!*”), 48% negative (“*Je call bullshit*”). The media presented scientific evidence that should have alleviated fears of bilingualism. For some it did. Why then did others remain recalcitrant? A few took issue with

the study itself: in their view, either the sample was flawed or the scope too limited. Some rejected the scientific basis of the work (“*‘hard science’? You loons are hilarious, at times.*”), while others suspected some kind of bias, political or otherwise (“*Une étude commandée par les fédés, j’imagine*”). One poster went so far as to claim that the work is a ploy to eliminate French. In any case, most of the opinions expressed appeared unrelated to the actual research. Some argued that “outsiders” shouldn’t be studying the situation because they just don’t get it (“*Anglophone gonna angloplaining*”). Many rejected the findings because they didn’t correspond to their own stance (“*Oui ça nuit au français malgré tous vos diplômes qui essaient de dire le contraire*”), while others countered with anecdotes (“*My little girl is only 10. [...] she says.. ‘Mommy, that’s not real words, that’s mixed up words.*”). By the same token, an entire cohort embraced the research simply because that’s what they thought all along (“*Je pense que je suis d’accord avec cette affirmation, sans avoir lu le texte*”), or it jibed with their personal feelings towards mixing (*Franglais* is “*useful,*” “*creative,*” “*enriching,*” “*normal,*” “*inevitable*”). The debate wasn’t so much about the science; it was about the message.

LINGUISTIC DIVIDE

Who is adopting these diametrically opposed positions? When we examine the relationship between stance and language of reaction, we learn that responses written in English are twice as likely to be positive (76%) as those written in French (35%). Nearly two thirds of the latter reject the results, insisting instead that words borrowed *from English* (importantly, *not* from Italian or First Nations languages or Spanish, but specifically from English) are harmful to the quality and survival of French

in Canada. Many who posted in English think lexical borrowing is enriching, or fun (“*I see ‘franglais’ as a pathway to a richer bilingualism in this country, and a more enjoyable one*”), or just don’t care (“*Are they seriously throwing money at this ridiculous non-issue?*”). Of course, these results closely mirror the sociopolitical divide between francophones and anglophones that characterizes Canada today. Perhaps most unfortunate, the empowering message suggested by the research and explicitly conveyed by the media—that language mixing is a natural outcome of language contact that does not affect the grammatical structure of the recipient, let alone lead to its demise—is emphatically rejected by a majority of francophone commentators (“*Cette chercheuse est en train de nous dire que le ciel, c’est vert et le gazon, c’est bleu...*”), and the evidence that underpins that message is discounted.

DISCUSSION

Why did this particular research cause such a stir? We think it’s because its results are so completely at odds with the expectation that borrowed words wreak havoc on the borrowing language. It is unclear where this particular conviction came from or how such enormous consensus on it developed. Nonetheless, in Canada at least, language mixing – the universal linguistic product of bilingualism – has become emblematic of a stance that extends well beyond the purview of linguistics. A rough characterization of that stance is that incorporation of words from a numerically or politically dominant language into another is the thin edge of the wedge leading to adoption of that language, then of its culture, and eventually to loss of the first language and culture, followed by assimilation of its speakers to the dominant counterparts. Sadly, history is

replete with cases of individuals or groups of differing ethnic, religious, or linguistic heritage that have suffered just such a fate. Fears in that regard are therefore not without merit. The question is what the contribution of *bilingualism and language mixing* is to such an outcome. Is there any correlation between borrowing words and the eventual assimilation or demise of the bilinguals who engage in this process? The results of technical linguistic research demonstrate that they are independent.

These facts go a long way towards explaining not only the great interest with which the story was greeted, but also the resistance of many to the results. That bilingualism is a major societal concern in Canada was actually the original impetus for undertaking this empirical work in the first place, and the motivation for investing such prodigious resources in it. As linguists, we wanted to ensure that we could speak to the issues from the vantage point of science. Still, the message remains one that many Canadians cannot accept. We know that this has more to do with the sociopolitical situation than with our particular sociolinguistic research, but it is worth considering how the latter can be brought to bear on the situation. This may not alleviate fears or change opinions, but it could help channel our energies to more practical avenues, such as increasing efforts to make choosing either – or both! – of our official languages appropriate and apolitical in many more contexts, and minimizing normative sanctions that result in linguistic insecurity, rather than investing so heavily in the futile task of trying to eliminate words of one language from the discourse of another.