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Francophone Minorities: Assimilation and Community Vitality

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Journal of Language and Social Psychology
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On the first edition of *Francophone Minorities: Assimilation and Community Vitality*

“...provides a fascinating macrosocial perspective on the matter, utilizing the concept of ethnolinguistic vitality as the organizing theme for the study.

...has significant implications for the study of language policy and language planning internationally, and its findings will be of importance and concern for those involved in many similar contexts.

...this is a very well-written and cogent text, and is a very enjoyable read.”

Timothy Reagan
Language Problems and Language Planning
University of Connecticut
Summer 1999

“...this overview on assimilation and the vitality of Francophone minority communities gives us an encouraging portrait of the subject and opens the way to constructive research on and for the minority communities.” (translation)

Sylvie Roy, University of Toronto
Canadian Modern Language Review,
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
1. Defining the Concepts	5
2. The Federal Policy Context	27
3. The Public Debate	33
4. Trends and Analysis	45
5. Youth, Education and Economic Indicators	71
Conclusion: Density is Not Destiny	87
Selected Bibliography	91
Appendix A: Language Rights, The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms	95
Appendix B: Part VII, The Official Languages Act (1988)	99

INTRODUCTION

The question of the vitality of French-speaking communities outside Quebec is both emotionally and politically sensitive. The public debate within Canada about the future of these communities is one that inevitably revolves around the question of assimilation. Often assimilation is referred to as if it were a simple, precise and clearly definable phenomenon. The reality is somewhat more complex and merits a thorough exploration. In fact, though often used, it is a concept that has defied simple statistical definitions.

This publication will attempt to explore the concepts of assimilation and community vitality, as well as the statistical evidence regarding the vitality of the Francophone communities outside Quebec. It will also seek to highlight trends and attempt to clarify certain issues related to the current demographic reality of Francophone communities outside Quebec. The two interrelated concepts of language community vitality and assimilation will both be used. The former is clearly the larger concept and encompasses the purely demographic concept of assimilation, as well as other non-demographic dimensions of community vitality.

The term “community vitality”, when applied to a minority language community, is relatively new. The link between the vitality of a language and the vitality of the community of people speaking that language is both obvious and incontrovertible. The two are at once distinguishable and inseparable. The factors which reinforce the vitality of a language inevitably have an impact on the primary language community. This relationship is implicit in much of this text.

The first chapter of the text will focus on the theory and concepts of community vitality both here in Canada and internationally. The

voluminous literature on the subject illustrates the universal nature of linguistic cohabitation in the 21st century. The issues that modern language planning seeks to address are, however, far from new. Canada has been and continues to be in the forefront of both the theory and the practice of language planning. While blazing the trail has its advantages, the growing body of experience from other countries is both interesting and instructive. The second chapter will give a broad description of the policy context at the federal level.

The third chapter explores the use of the concepts of assimilation and vitality within the public debate in Canada. Policy does not evolve in a vacuum. From the point of view of the policy maker, the use of concepts within the democratic discourse forms part of the environment in which policy evolves and must therefore be taken into account in the formulation of language policy. Clearly, the various subjective assessments reflected in the debate on language policy offer unique insights into different dimensions of the Canadian experience.

The fourth chapter will focus on the demographic data regarding the present health of the Francophone communities outside Quebec. The text attempts to look at the wide variety of data available that cast light on the vitality of these communities. This part of the text provides a comprehensive profile of the demolinguistic data that is relevant to any discussion of the vitality of Francophone communities outside Quebec. Naturally, community vitality is not merely a matter of statistics or demography. The data can however complement the subjective perspective of these communities and provide essential insights and objective points of reference which no doubt enhance our understanding of the subject of Francophone minority community vitality.

The fifth chapter deals with issues of youth, education and economic attainment of Francophones from the point of view of the importance and consequences of access to education in one's first language. This new chapter was added for the second edition and reflects our growing understanding of the crucial shared role which the family and the school settings have in the production and reproduction of language in society.

The final chapter will offer a few concluding remarks on the lessons learned and suggest some points of departure for a future research agenda. Language is still a relatively new field of inquiry, one where much research remains to be undertaken and many of the concepts currently in use will no doubt be refined in the future.

Language planning and policies predate any serious effort to systematically examine their impact within society. The research and concepts that are necessary for successful language planning are relatively recent. In Canada, the research in the area began in earnest in the 1960s with the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. Its research alone would justify it being regarded as one of the most important royal commissions in Canadian history. Even three decades later many of its concepts remain relevant to the debate on languages, though our understanding of language in our society has evolved considerably.

Public policies that focus on the retention or even the revival of languages are a relatively recent phenomenon. In most countries they are essentially post second world war policies. It is perhaps too early in many cases to judge which approaches are most successful and which need to be re-examined in the light of experience. Moreover, there are clearly areas related to community vitality that are not influenced by language policy, such as fertility rates. Canada's official languages policy has existed for some three decades, or one generation. This is a relatively short time to try to influence fundamental social patterns. However, there is growing evidence that these policies are beginning to have an impact and that language planning is an area where public policy can be effective.

DEFINING THE CONCEPTS

What is assimilation? How do we measure vitality? There exists no widely accepted definition of what constitutes assimilation. The various statistics often used in public debate give the impression that there is an official or at least generally accepted definition. This is not the case. The patterns of language use within a minority context are often complex and the coexistence of one or more languages is an intrinsic part of the reality of any minority community.

Twenty years ago the concept of assimilation was generally focused on ethnicity; in recent years this focus has changed and is now primarily linguistic. The comparison between ethnic origin and mother tongue is now rarely seen. The problems associated with the ethnicity data are numerous and well known. They include growing numbers of multiple responses, non-comparability of data from one census to another due to changes in the question used and the large number of “Canadian” responses.¹ It is also a poor tool for linguistic analysis because it tells us neither when nor where the transfer took place—making the data unusable for public policy formulation since it is essential from a policy point of view to be able to distinguish between the current situation and that of previous decades and centuries.

Moreover, as a result of the family name, knowledge of the paternal ethnic origin is more like to be retained, while the maternal language is substantially more likely to be transmitted. This artificially inflates

1. Most Francophones outside Quebec report only a single ethnic origin (68%). The most frequently reported single ethnic origin is French (43%), followed by Canadian (21%), one percent report British origins. All other single ethnic origins represent less than 4% of ethnic origins. A third of persons with French as their mother tongue report multiple origins (31.9%).

the apparent level of non-transmission of a language. As a result of these problems, demographers interested in language issues have almost universally abandoned ethnicity in favour of purely linguistic data. The addition of other questions such as the home language question has no doubt facilitated a shift away from the ethnic focus.

Most of the data on the vitality of language communities within Canadian society comes from Statistics Canada.¹ It is therefore noteworthy that the word assimilation rarely, if ever, appears in Statistics Canada publications and the agency has never proposed or endorsed a statistical definition of assimilation or the rate of assimilation.

Webster's New World Dictionary defines assimilation as "the cultural absorption of a minority group into the main cultural body" whereas the *Petit Robert* speaks of "*absorption*" and "*intégration*." Webster's defines the verb to assimilate as to become like or alike, to be absorbed and incorporated.

In *Vision d'avenir*, Bernard provides a culturally based definition of the concept:

Assimilation...is the complete absorption of a person or group into the culture of another group. The community replaces its original cultural identity with that of the dominant group. Moreover, the integration does not necessarily involve the loss of cultural identity, but signifies rather a smooth insertion into the receiving society. The phenomena of acculturation and assimilation comprise several degrees between the complete adherence of an individual to the schema of his original culture and his total adherence to the schema of another culture.²

1. This publication will focus on minority language community vitality and not ethno-linguistic vitality, nor will it focus on intergroup relations as a significant measure of vitality. Within Quebec, in particular, much of the language debate has tended to focus on the relative strength of languages. This text will instead look at the factors that permit a stable and sustainable minority language community to survive.

2. Roger Bernard, *Le déclin d'une culture : recherche, analyse et bibliographie: Francophonie hors Québec 1980-1989, Vision d'avenir*, livre I (Ottawa : Fédération des jeunes Canadiens Français, 1990), p. 15.

In a linguistic context, there are a number of dimensions that can be looked at, including the language learned in childhood, the ability to speak a language, the actual use of the language, and the identification with a particular language community. Much of the statistical evidence on assimilation is perhaps best looked at as a continuum which includes both the process and its final outcome. Indeed, when people use the word assimilation the distinction between the process of assimilation (patterns of use and language shift) and the result (assimilation as the definitive loss of a language or non-transmission) is often unclear or entirely absent. There is inevitably a grey area or a language frontier where the French language and community come into contact with other languages (essentially English). This language frontier can be looked at not only in geographic terms (the bilingual belt), but also in social units (exogamous families).

Albert Breton provides a clear and useful description of the process of linguistic assimilation:

The first step consists in learning a second language; the second in dropping the original language. Dropping a language means that the language is unused, unlearned, and eventually forgotten. In general, this is not likely to be experienced by individuals in the course of their lifetime as only a few are likely to forget a language in which they were once fluent. It is therefore best to think of the process of linguistic assimilation as taking place over two generations or more.¹

It is possible to look at a number of indicators of the relative strength or weakness of languages in the context of linguistic cohabitation, for instance, in mixed families and other social contexts, as interesting indicators of potential assimilation. Often in the past, analysts have failed to place sufficient emphasis on the social context of the phenomenon—the heart of the issue is people, not numbers.

It is preferable to avoid a rush to judgement as to whether assimilation has taken place when the ability to speak the language remains, and the

1. Albert Breton, "The Cultural Yield on Languages and Linguistic Assimilation" in Albert Breton (ed.), *Exploring the Economics of Language*, New Canadian Perspectives, p. 91.

minority language is used in other contexts (for instance, outside the home) or plays an important, albeit a minority role, within the family setting. The presence of two languages within society inevitably creates points of contact and overlap between languages and language communities. Naturally, the boundaries between the two official language communities are far from water-tight. Where language is concerned, the understandable desire for simplicity must give way to a complex reality, not vice versa.

Two other questions need to be addressed: 1) What is required for a stable minority language community? 2) How do we measure the vitality of linguistic communities? Many of the implicit definitions of assimilation used in the literature would require the minority community to gain ground at the expense of the majority community. For instance, in order for there to be absence of assimilation they require that all the offspring of Francophone parents, even in exogamous families become Francophones. This is clearly unrealistic. Under this logic even English in Canada outside Quebec would have to be said to be subject to assimilation.

It is, however, possible to identify a point of equilibrium between languages when, in terms of transmission of the language from parent to child, a language group neither gains nor loses in relation to other languages. This equilibrium between minority and majority communities is a more realistic target and would theoretically produce sustainable, numerically stable minority language communities. For instance, to produce a stable community, in exogamous families (one Francophone and non-Francophone parent) inter-generational transmission of the minority mother tongue should be 50%, and 100% in endogamous families (two Francophone parents).

Although this publication will mostly focus on the demographic elements of vitality, it is important to note that most of the literature on vitality does not limit the concept to its purely demographic elements, as McConnell notes:

Although absolute and relative numbers play an important part in any measure of vitality (witness the hundreds of mother tongues throughout the world that are acquiring an increasing number of speakers as shown in their vital

statistics), other indices than demographic obviously play an important role.¹

Several authors have proposed models of the factors that influence vitality; for instance Giles, Bourhis and Taylor² look at three factors:

The above authors' attempt to analyze the concept of vitality into its constituent parts or "three-factored view of reality," namely: 1) Status—pertaining to a configuration of prestige variables, (i.e. economic, social, socio-historical, language), 2) Demographic—relating to the numbers of group members and their distribution and 3) Institutional Support—referring to the extent to which a language group receives formal and informal representation in the various institutes of a nation, region or community.³

Status factors have not traditionally had a large place in the Canadian literature. Little research has focused on the status of French within Canadian society and the degree to which federal language policies have altered the status of French. Perhaps this is simply because status is more difficult to measure than demolinguistic variables. Many theorists have, however, pointed to status as an important factor in vitality.

The status variables are those related to a speech community's prestige, its socio-historical status, and prestige of its language and culture not only within the immediate confines of its territory, but internationally as well.⁴

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1. Grant D. McConnell, *The Macro-Sociolinguistic Analysis of Language Vitality, Geolinguistic Profiles and Scenarios of Language Contact in India*, International Center for Research on Language Planning (Sainte-Foy: Presses de l'Univ. Laval 1991), p. 161.
 2. They define ethno-linguistic vitality as "The vitality of an ethno-linguistic group is that which makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in inter-group situations", quoted in H. Giles, ed., *Language Ethnicity and Intergroup Relations* (London : Academic Press, 1977).
 3. Grant D. McConnell, *op.cit.*, p. 158.
 4. Jake Harwood, Howard Giles and Richard Y. Bourhis, "The Genesis of Vitality Theory: Historical Patterns and Discoursal Dimensions," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 108 (1994).

The work of Rodrigue Landry with Allard and Bourhis indicates that the degree of ethnolinguistic vitality of a community is a strong predictor of the propensity to use the first language. In the absence of ethnolinguistic vitality, according to the research, the tendency to assimilate is quite high. Their model identifies those factors that lead to the use of the first language and under what circumstances bilingualism will be either additive or subtractive. That is to say, what impact the acquisition of a second language will have on the use and mastery of the first language. This is an important issue in the case of Francophones outside Quebec, given their high rate of bilingualism. (See *Model of the Determinants of Additive and Subtractive Bilingualism*, p. 11) Their work, which focuses both on language use as well as language knowledge, adds an interesting additional dimension to our understanding of the dynamics of language in minority communities.

The theories regarding the vitality of languages permit the identification of key factors that influence the vitality of language; many of these have direct implications for policy making and language planning efforts.

Key Factors

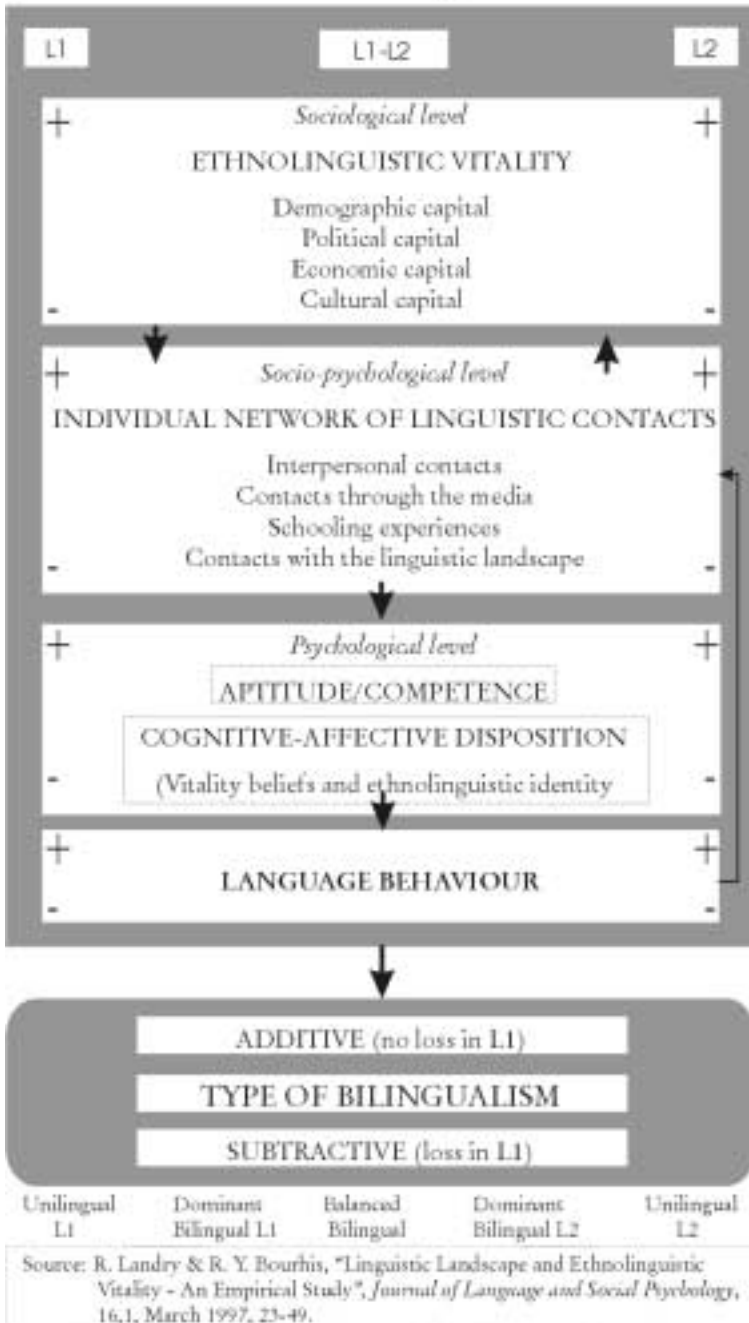
Symbolic—Is the language an official language? Are there official activities that cannot be accomplished in this language? Are there areas where the language is prohibited?

Demographic—What are the numbers, proportion, fertility, etc. of the language community?

Institutional—Are services (governmental and other) available in this language? How complete a range of institutions are available to the language community? Does the linguistic community manage and control its own institutions?

Education—To what extent is access to quality education available in this language?

Model of the Determinants of Additive and Subtractive Bilingualism



Defining the Concepts

Status and Prestige—Is the language one that is viewed as prestigious, for instance, is it used internationally, in key national institutions, does it facilitate travel, open access to cultural materials/products, or is it spoken widely by the elite within a society?

Identity—The sense of community can be an important consideration. What is the value members attach to their identity as members of the linguistic community? How important is language to the personal identity?

Utility—What is the economic and social utility of the language? As utility is not only economic, non-economic motivations should be considered as well. Is access to modern communications media possible in the language? Does the language facilitate travel to desirable destinations and does it widen cultural horizons?

L'espace francophone

Beyond the question of what constitutes vitality, one can also ask what constitutes a community. Is a geographic focus essential? Are objective characteristics such as a common language sufficient to define a community? Clearly, Francophones outside Quebec live in a wide variety of environments. Some communities such as Saint-Boniface or Vanier are the focus for a geographic and historical community. Other Francophones live in contexts where they have no geographic or historical focus, but may have an institutional infrastructure such as schools, community centres, community radio stations and newspapers. The institutional completeness¹ of the community infrastructure has been regarded as a requirement for community vitality.

The concept of community has been the subject of vigorous debate and redefinition in recent years. By challenging the limits of the spatial conception of the community we are required to look beyond the territory or spatial proximity as the defining characteristic and look at interactions and personal networks which may very well be non-spatial.

1. Raymond Breton, "Institutional Completeness of Ethnic Communities and the Personal Relations of Immigrants," *American Journal of Sociology* (July 1964).

This assumption of the coterminality of ethnic communities and place communities has been challenged by the research using aspatial conceptions of community. Advances in transportation and communications technologies have expanded opportunities for maintaining ethnic identification through ties with geographically dispersed co-ethnics.¹

The concept of Francophone spaces is in some respects a substitute for a territorial foundation of a community. It reflects the fact that in a minority environment the use of the minority language is frequently confined to niches such as schools, churches, community organizations, etc. and that members of the minority language appear to actively select to participate in these Francophone spaces. Stebbins' study of Franco-Calgarians seems to confirm this:

Yet pessimistic conclusions may be premature, for parents have many resources at their disposal to combat their own and their children's complete assimilation to Anglophone culture....many have shown remarkable inventiveness in the ways they incorporate French into their own lives and the lives of their offspring...The various activities outside the home organized by certain external agencies can add significantly to this base. In Calgary, these activities although relatively few in number, nevertheless play an important supplementary role in promoting the French language and its associated Francophone culture.²

The focus on Francophone spaces places the family and the language community's infrastructure at the heart of the struggle for survival of the minority language, rather than a territorial base. Interestingly, this concept of *espace francophone*... was also at the heart of the community development strategy, *Dessein 2000*. It identified various vital spaces for the Francophone community:

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1. Sheldon Goldenberg and Valerie A. Haines, "Social networks and institutional completeness: From territory to ties", *The Canadian Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 1992.
 2. Robert A. Stebbins, *The Franco-Calgarians, French Language Leisure, and Linguistic Lifestyle in an Anglophone City* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), pp. 41-42.

It's a matter of creating or acquiring a space in all the spheres of importance to Canada's Francophonie: economics, culture, education, politics, communication, ecology, feminism, etc.... Besides territorial space, a certain number of spaces currently appear very promising.¹

Gilbert also raises the important issue of power and autonomy which must necessarily be associated with the concept of Francophone spaces.

From the perspective of a network defined space, the future of the Franco-Ontarian community rests on two pillars: putting in place institutions founded on the affirmation of their difference and their consolidation by means of partnerships, which take advantage of communications technology. The idea of Francophone spaces implies also the notion of centres of power...and he who speaks of power speaks of empowerment and autonomy.²

Impact of Second-language Speakers

Many analysts have been quick to point to the use of English in Quebec society as a whole, and the linkage to a larger North American society (which is overwhelmingly English) as important factors in explaining the vitality of the English language (measured in terms of language shift or inter-generational transmission of the mother tongue, etc.). Yet analysts looking at the situation of Francophones outside Quebec seem surprisingly reticent to acknowledge that the growing proportion of the population able to speak French as a second-language and the larger Francophone community in Canada (particularly in Quebec) might well play an important role. Clearly, in this light, the territorial community defined solely by mother tongue and amputated of its social context, is a vision that merits re-examination.

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1. Fédération des francophones hors Québec (now the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada), *Dessein 2000 : pour un espace Francophone. Rapport préliminaire* (Ottawa: la Fédération, Juin 1991), pp. iv-v.
 2. Anne Gilbert, *Espaces franco-ontariens, essai*, (Les Éditions du Nordir, 1999), p.81.

Much of the literature in fact places a strong emphasis on the importance of second-language speakers to the vitality of a language.

Language spread must, therefore, be measured not only demographically and geographically, but also in terms of the functions a language fulfills. Thus, an expansion pattern for every language results, indicating by how many primary and secondary speakers it is spoken, in which communication domains, for what purposes, at what level of proficiency, and where it is expanding.¹

Coulmas, in particular, argues that the use of a language as a second-language is significant. Most of the Canadian literature tends to sharply discount the significance of second-language use. Coulmas argues that second-language use is, in fact, a more significant indicator of vitality than the mother tongue population.

That the utility of a language does not depend on the demographic strength of its mother-tongue community is also most forcefully demonstrated by vehicular languages. This is true both of relatively small languages in terms of number of mother tongue speakers such as Swahili, as well as for big ones such as English. For a proper understanding of the dynamic spread of a language, the demographic strength of its primary speech community is less important than its geographic and socioeconomic distribution. ...Even more significant than the growth of the mother-tongue community of a language is its increasing use as a second language. ...Languages by means of which these needs can be fulfilled acquire additional secondary and primary speakers who, in turn, enhance their utility value.²

Nor is Coulmas alone in pointing to the importance of second language acquisition as an indicator of language vitality. Kloss³ also points out that the number of speakers studying and/or speaking it as

1. Florian Coulmas, *Language and Economy* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992), p. 200.

2. Coulmas, *op. cit.*

3. Florian Coulmas refers to a 1974 article by Heinz Kloss entitled *Die den internationalen Rang einer Sprache bestimmenden Faktoren*.

a foreign language is the strongest indicator of the international status of a language. Both strongly suggest that we need to look beyond the size of a speech community and include both primary and secondary proficiency in the language. For instance, in the Canadian context Stebbins notes the importance of Francophiles among Franco-Calgarians.¹

English is a perfect example of the importance of second-language speakers to the vitality of a language. English enjoys its current status as the international lingua franca not solely as a result of the weight of mother-tongue population of English speakers, but in large part due to the fact that it is the most widely spoken second language. One could compare the situation of English to that of Chinese, which is more widely spoken as a first language, but is less widely used as a second language.

The reason economists, in particular, have placed a greater emphasis on second-language acquisition is made clear in Breton's explanation of how language can be conceptualized as a form of capital:

The acquisition of a second language requires time, effort and money. Since these resources are not abundant, they have economic value, or scarcity. The benefits resulting from knowledge of a second language are spread over time. Learning a second language therefore is an investment or the acquisition of an asset. More specifically, it can be said that a second (third or fourth) language is a form of human capital, capable, like all capital, of being increased or depreciating—although, unlike material goods, it does not deteriorate with use—or even of becoming outdated.²

Similarly, Neil B. Ridler and Suzanne Pons-Ridler (1984) have suggested that the choice of language reflects the working of the market. "If languages are an investment they will have a yield, which in turn will determine the language 'purchased'."³

1. Robert A. Stebbins, *The Franco-Calgarians*, p. 8.
2. Albert Breton, *Bilingualism: An Economic Approach* (Montreal: C.D. Howe Research Institute, 1978), pp. 1-2.
3. Neil B. Ridler and Suzanne Pons-Ridler, "Language Economics: A Case Study of French," *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 5,1 (1984): 57-63.

The economic perspective brings an interesting and new dimension to the discussion on language vitality. It also forces us to look at the distinction between the vitality of a language and the vitality of the language community itself. These are clearly interrelated; however, this distinction provides us with important analytical insights into the issue of vitality. For instance, in Quebec, where the vitality of English is not in doubt, the vitality of the minority language community is less certain.

Territoriality and Survival Thresholds

No overview of theories related to language vitality would be complete without mentioning two recurrent themes—territoriality and thresholds. The concepts are related, in that one predicts that the majority language will dominate a given territory, while threshold theories predict the disappearance of minority languages in a given territory when they fall below a given threshold. More sophisticated versions of these theories have emerged as theorists have attempted to explain the variety of social realities. Many theorists have attempted to adjust the theory to explain the persistence of minority languages. Grin, for instance, states:

I propose a model of the same problem in which the relevance of the concept of ‘survival thresholds’ for minority languages, which is often encountered in socio-linguistic literature, is particularly called into question. The model indicates that, while such thresholds can be formally defined, they cannot be reduced to unidimensional indicators such as the percentage of speakers of a minority language at any given time.¹

It could be argued that it is precisely the unidimensional nature of thresholds that have made them appealing within the public debate. Applying thresholds to the Canadian experience presents a number of obvious problems. Threshold theory originates with an analysis of languages that are limited to one region or territory and are essentially spoken only by a mother tongue population. Welsh in Wales is an example of this type of situation. Francophone communities outside

1. François Grin, “European Research on the Economics of Language: Recent Results and Relevance to Canada,” in *Official Languages and the Economy*, New Canadian Perspectives, p. 40.

Quebec do not easily fit this model. While the number of Francophones in a given area may appear limited, the vitality of the language will inevitably be influenced by the presence of large numbers of second-language speakers and contacts with other French language communities in Canada and possibly internationally.

The solidarity implicit in the term “French Canada” has largely given way to a fragmented vision of Canada’s Francophone communities. Yet the extent of links among Francophones and across provincial borders are well documented by Guindon and Poulin in *Francophones in Canada: A Community of Interests*. They note the tendency, since the “quiet revolution” in Quebec, to conceive Francophone communities solely in terms of provincial borders.

For some decades now, attention has been focussed on the islands, that is, on the communities considered individually. Their distinctive features have been highlighted, and the communities themselves seem to have adopted this view by emphasizing their uniqueness, each one striving to consolidate its own identity and guarantee its own particular future.

This was quite understandable within the context of what was called the ‘quiet revolution’, when Quebec, the main component—indeed, the keystone—of the Canadian Francophone community, began a process of development, modernization and many-faceted affirmation of its collective identity.

...While the distinctiveness of the Francophone communities of Canada is recognized, the fact remains that they largely draw from a common fund of linguistic and cultural, and even socio-economic, resources. And, in what is a fair return of the pendulum, there is reason to give more thorough study to this common fund, which is not only a legacy from the past but also a dynamic dimension open to the future. There is reason to take some soundings, in a manner that does not pretend to be definitive or exhaustive, of a possible network of links between all the component parts of Canada’s Francophonie.¹

1. René Guindon and Pierre Poulin, *Francophones in Canada: A Community of Interests*. New Canadian Perspectives (Ottawa: Department of Canadian Heritage, 1996), pp. 1-2.

Moreover, access to modern mass communications is also linked to the presence of a larger French language community. The access that Francophone minorities outside Quebec have to television and radio is often related to the weight of Francophones within Canada, not just the weight of the local community. The links to the larger Francophone community, particularly in Quebec but also in other provinces, are factors that need be re-evaluated in terms of their impact on community vitality.

Even assuming that mother tongue in a given territory was the sole relevant variable, how you frame the territory is crucial. Clearly, the point of reference for the threshold has an important role in influencing the threshold analysis. For instance, one could say that in every province other than New Brunswick, Francophones represent five percent or less of the population—often substantially less. Equally, one could say that 60% of Francophones outside Quebec live in census districts in which they represent 10% or more of the population. Both statements are factually accurate, but lead to very different conclusions.

Moreover, language attrition does not appear to be a rapid process, even where very small communities are involved.

That such groups, in spite of their highly disadvantaged position, have not lost their language long ago, is rather surprising. It reveals in itself the tenacity with which old established language patterns and roles are held, as well as the degree of functional and role differentiation even with relatively small language communities. The process of language attrition is extremely slow,...affecting the many strata of the speech community in a gradual process.¹

Laponce, a Canadian exponent of territorialism, views almost all coexistence of more than one language as unnatural. “Bilingualism is common but abnormal—common because man is a born exchanger of information and because one’s neighbours often do not speak the

1. Grant D. McConnell, *The Macro-sociolinguistic Analysis of Language Vitality*, p. 96.

same language as one does; abnormal because we reject true synonymy and tend naturally towards unilingualism.”¹

Laponce goes on to assert that languages tend to naturally dominate a given territory. In his opinion, government policies that seek to artificially reinforce the position of a dominant language at the expense of minority languages are inevitable: “...languages protect themselves by territoriality that this territoriality is assured first and foremost by the states...”² and “Linguistic strength is basically political strength....The modern state...does not willingly put up with multilingualism.”³

But is the dominance of one language in the traditional nation-state the natural outcome of language contact or the artificial product of state language policy? The answer in countries like France suggests that the role played by state language policy is essential in the creation of the unilingual nation state. The renowned French linguist, Claude Hagège strongly emphasizes the role of the state policy in support of the French language in France, noting:

It is remarkable to note the continuity, in France, of this political commitment to French as the common national language throughout the political regimes, from monarchy to Republic via the Revolution of 1789. In fact, the Toubon Act of 1994 is an extension of that tradition which, in France, makes language an eminently political affair. France is undoubtedly the only country in the world to have legislated so much on behalf of its language.⁴

Traditional territorial theory does not allow for vibrant minority communities in the midst of majorities and, in fact, has no easy explanation of the persistence of Francophone communities. Stebbins’ study of Francophones in Calgary challenges the traditional territorial view head on.

1. Jean A. Laponce, *Languages and their Territories* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), p. 3.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 200.

4. An interview with the linguist Claude Hagège by Anne Rapin: “A certain way of conceiving and describing the world”, *Label France*, No. 26, December 1996.

Evidence from the present study suggests that those in Calgary are not only multiplying numerically to some degree, but even thriving culturally, possibly to an equivalent degree. Yet...its geographic Francophone community died approximately ninety years ago. The question, then, is how do these urban francophones survive and, if Calgary is typical flourish, even though they lack an extended territorial foundation?¹

If Stebbins is right it presents a fundamental challenge to several long-held assumptions. Territorial and threshold theorists have focused on concentration as proxies for the status and utility of languages. Are there more useful ways to conceptualize language vitality? If vitality is to some extent independent of population concentration, it opens several interesting public policy options. Density may not be destiny after all.

Advanced Language Policy—Diversity as an Asset

Territorial unilingualism was certainly the dominant state response to linguistic diversity in the 19th century. The attempt to impose state sponsored unilingualism as part of a strategy of national integration was both common and to some extent successful. This assimilationist policy is sometimes referred to as a “melting pot”, after the title of an influential 1914 Broadway play by Zangwill. This type of approach is evident in Canada in the actions of certain provinces at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, for instance in the banning of teaching in French in Manitoba and Ontario.

Internationally, examples of the working of this type of state policy to reinforce one language are fairly common. However, this fact alone should remind us that the classical nation-state did not happen naturally, but is the product of state intervention. Eugen Weber documents the efforts of the French government to impose French as the common language: “In 1863, according to official figures 8,381 of France’s 37,510 communes spoke no French: about a quarter of the country’s population,... In short, French was a foreign language for a

1. Robert A. Stebbins, *The Franco-Calgarians*, p. 7.

substantial number of Frenchmen...”.¹ He goes on to note that the process of integration is perhaps best understood as a form of colonialism, “The modern view of the nation as a body of people united according to their own will and having certain attributes in common was at best dubiously applicable to the France of 1870.”²

In the late 20th century there is an expectation that language policy will be coherent with ideals of social justice and democratic principles. The unilingual nation-state is now an ideal that is difficult to reconcile with a growing sensitivity to minority rights—the modern state has perhaps given way to the post-modern state.

The best estimates² suggest that there are perhaps 6,500 languages spoken around the world. The status of these languages is at best unequal. Some 52% of these language are spoken by less than ten thousand people and 83% of them are limited to one country. At the other end of the spectrum 10 languages are spoken by over 100 million speakers and are the mother tongue of 49% of the world’s population. As McConnell points out:

Given the size and the density of the world’s population, compounded with the high degree of speech variation, it is not surprising that language contacts are not only universal, but are the rule rather than the exception....As we have noted in the patterns above, when group numbers are disproportionate or language functions are in fluctuation, some assimilation is bound to take place...On the whole then, assimilation is rather a more restricted phenomenon than bilingualism which is present in some degree in most communities that are in contact.⁴

There is now a greater awareness of the potential value of languages. The notion that communications efficiency via a lingua franca should

1. Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), p. 67.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 485.

3. Barbara Grimes, *Ethnologue*, 12th edition, 1992.

4. Grant D. McConnell, *The Macro-sociolinguistic Analysis of Language Vitality*, p. 93.

be pursued at the expense of minority languages is now being openly challenged. The positive role that diversity, both linguistic and cultural, plays in a society is increasingly valued. As Andrew Woodfield notes:

The fact is, no one knows exactly what riches are hidden inside the less studied languages. We have inductive evidence based on past studies of well-known languages that there will be riches, even though we do not know what they will be...The argument for conserving unstudied but endangered plants has a similar logic: strange plants may contain medically valuable ingredients, so there ought to be a presumption in favour of their survival. This seems paradoxical but it's true. By allowing languages to die out, the human race is destroying things it doesn't understand.¹

New policy orientations throughout the world in the area of language are increasingly rejecting the 19th century unilingual nation-state model and embracing diversity as both an asset and a necessity. It is easy to point to a number of recent examples of new language policies that now tend to favour maintaining and recognizing language diversity. For instance, the 55 national minorities of China were recognized in article 4 of the 1982 Constitution which states "the people of all nationalities have freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written languages, and to preserve or reform their own ways and customs."²

Education, which was once the principal instrument for promoting the dominant state language, is now becoming an instrument to preserve lesser-used languages. For instance in Wales the *Charter for Further Education* states "If you want to become a full or part time student you have a right to expect: ...services provided to users of the

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1. Andrew Woodfield, "The Conservation of Endangered Languages," *Seminar on The Conservation of Endangered Languages, at the Centre for Theories of Language and Learning* (University of Bristol, April 21, 1995), p. 8.
 2. David Bradley, "Minority Language Policy and Endangered Languages in China and Southeast Asia," *International Symposium on Endangered Languages* (University of Tokyo, November 1995).

Defining the Concepts

Welsh language and courses which are available through the medium of the Welsh language.”¹

The World Bank has also emphasized the importance of providing minority language education. In the Bank’s opinion education is critical to economic growth. And minority language education contributes to the economic growth because it reflects the linguistic reality of a society and enhances the educational attainment of linguistic minorities.

Linguistic minorities also suffer from relatively lower enrollments because they are often poor and because of language policies. Most countries are multilingual, either officially or in practice. ...Linguistic diversity reflects ethnic diversity and is often associated with high levels of illiteracy.²

There is scarcely a state in Europe that does not have to deal with the issues of minority languages within, outside or across its borders. These intertwined and cross-cutting minorities do not neatly fit into the ideology of the nation-state, yet they are reality. Europe, which can perhaps lay claim to having invented the nation-state, has now begun to recognize its own diversity. As Grin notes:

Portugal is the only country regarded as being officially unilingual by the European Community. All the other countries are at least bilingual or plurilingual—Finland because there is a Swedish minority; Sweden because there is the Sami (Lapp) minority in the northern part of the country, which has certain rights. Greece regards itself as unilingual, but is alone in doing so; no one else agrees on this point.³

Within the European Union some 40 million citizens speak regional or minority languages (for instance 500,000 speak Welsh in the UK) and others speak the majority or official language of a neighbouring state

1. The Welsh Office, *The Charter for Further Education*.

2. The World Bank, *Priorities and Strategies for Education: A World Bank Review*, (Washington DC, 1995), p. 45.

3. François Grin, *Official Languages and the Economy*, p. 215.

(for instance, German speakers in Belgium, Denmark, France, and Italy). In 1992-93, the European Commission decided to take stock of the direction of policy regarding minority languages and the resulting report *Euromosaic* confirms Europe's commitment to linguistic diversity.

The *Euromosaic* report.... highlights the shift in thinking about the value of diversity for economic development and European integration. It argues that language is a central component of diversity, and that if diversity is the cornerstone of innovative development, then attention must be given to sustaining the existing pool of diversity within the European Union.¹

As a result, the European Union has fixed a number of objectives in the area of minority language policy, including:

- safeguarding and promoting regional or minority languages,
- stimulating cooperation among those seeking to preserve and promote these languages, and
- improving the teaching of regional and minority languages in all educational channels from nursery to adult training.

This commitment translates into policy initiatives such as the Multilingual Information Society Programme (MLIS). The MLIS programme, launched in October 1996, has at the heart of its rationale the belief that multilingualism is an essential component of Europe's rich cultural heritage and, as a result, it is essential to create conditions to allow the creation, exchange and access to information across language borders, even in languages that are not widely spoken elsewhere.

As Grin notes, Europe has been actively pursuing these objectives:

At present, a whole series of initiatives is being undertaken in Europe (for example, under the aegis of the European Bureau

1. Summary of the Report published on the European Union's Web page.

of Lesser-Used Languages, whose mission it is to defend and promote traditional minority languages) to reconcile the objectives of business with those of agencies that work to promote minority languages, and indeed to use the resources of the former to promote the latter.¹

UNESCO has also taken an active role in the preservation of endangered languages. A report prepared for UNESCO entitled *Language Policies for the World of the Twenty-First Century* asserts that “Statistics show that, in reality, bi- or multilingualism is the ‘normal’ human condition.”² The report also strongly reinforces the link between language rights and human rights which has been growing within international law.

The movement to safeguard mother tongue speakers of ethnic minorities has recently gathered considerable momentum in recognition of how politically, ideologically or racially induced oppression, whether consciously or unconsciously applied, whether instigated by governments, groups or individuals can take the form of language suppression.³

This brief review of concepts and theory dealing with minority community vitality shows that these are issues that are far from unique to Canada. Naturally, theory has significant implication for public policy. Broadly speaking, language policies in the industrial world are moving away from policies that attempt to impose the dominant state languages and are becoming increasingly sensitive to issues related to minority rights. In this regard, as the next chapter’s review of Canadian language policy will show, Canada is in many respects at the forefront of language policy in the world.

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1. François Grin, “European Research on the Economics of Language,” in *Official Languages and the Economy*, p. 45.
 2. Edward Batley, Michel Candelier, Gisela Hermann-Brennecke et al., *Languages Policies for the World of the Twenty-First Century: Report for UNESCO* (April 1993), p. 1.
 3. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

THE FEDERAL POLICY CONTEXT

Public policy is by no means irrelevant to the discussion of community vitality. Most analysts agree that such policies directly influence the minority communities. This section will deal solely with the federal policy framework.

The spectre of assimilation is one that has haunted Francophone communities within Canada for at least two centuries. These communities have persisted, even in the wake of assimilationist policies advocated by Lord Durham and others and restrictions placed on the use of French in the school system (such as Regulation 17 in Ontario). For much of the Canadian history, where public policy was not actively hostile to the survival of Francophone communities outside Quebec, it can at best be characterized as one of indifference or benign neglect. There is, of course, nothing benign about a neglect which results in higher school drop-out rates and illiteracy with the resulting lower socio-economic attainment.

Canada is by no means unique in this regard. In the 19th and early 20th centuries many governments used the school system to impose a dominant language on minority language populations as part of an explicit or implicit policy of assimilation. In the Canadian context, these policies were, even at the time, highly controversial and created strains within the Canadian federation, a federation which, from its inception, was designed to accommodate the presence of significant English and French populations.

The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism is in many ways the inevitable starting point of any discussion of language policy in Canada. Not only are its recommendations at the heart of Canadian language policy, but its analysis was the first serious attempt to come

to grips with language issues in this country. Thirty years later its analysis is still surprisingly fresh and relevant.

The Commission noted that the danger of language atrophy was real, “even an international language like French, under certain sociological conditions, can wither away...”¹ The Commission concluded that French was in many ways an under-used language within Canada and placed a strong emphasis on the presence of French within Canadian society, noting “We feel it is unacceptable to consider the French language in Canada... as a mere personal or family trait, encountered in church, in some associations, or at best in elementary school, but not elsewhere.”² Ultimately the Commission rejected a territorial solution based on provinces and proposed an alternative model rather than merely “paper over an unsatisfactory situation”.³

The Legislative Framework

The adoption of the 1969 *Official Languages Act* marks a clear watershed in public policy towards Francophone communities throughout Canada. For the first time, the federal government and gradually, the provinces, took an active role in supporting the development and vitality of Francophone communities. However, the broader vision of French and English within Canadian society is more clearly reflected in the text of the 1988 *Official Languages Act*.

Clearly, one of the most important developments from a policy perspective was the adoption of the 1982 *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Not only did it give constitutional status to the declaration of English and French as the official languages of Canada, but it also guaranteed access to minority language schooling and required that provinces put in place the minority school governance structures. Section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* is undoubtedly one of the most crucial policy initiatives in terms of its

1 *Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*, Book 1, p. xxxv.

2 *Ibid.*, p. xxxviii.

3 Hugh R. Innis, *Bilingualism and Biculturalism: An Abridged Version of the Royal Commission Report* (1973), p. 14.

potential impact on minority community vitality. The link between schooling and language vitality is one that is well established in the literature on vitality both within Canada and internationally.

Canadian Jurisprudence

Canadian jurisprudence has also reflected a growing sensitivity to language issues and minority rights. As the Supreme Court of Canada noted in *R. v. Mercure*, “It can hardly be gainsaid that language is profoundly anchored in the human condition. Not surprisingly, language rights are a well-known species of human rights and should be approached accordingly...”¹ Similarly, in *Société des Acadiens v. Association of Parents* the Supreme Court stated:

Linguistic duality has been a longstanding concern in our nation. Canada is a country with both French and English solidly embedded in its history. The constitutional language protections reflect continued and renewed efforts in the direction of bilingualism. In my view, we must take special care to be faithful to the spirit and purpose of the guarantee of language rights enshrined in the Charter.²

Nowhere is the sensitivity of the courts to minority language vitality more crucial than in the interpretation of minority language education rights. The Supreme Court stated, “it is worth noting that minority schools themselves provide community centres where the promotion and preservation of minority language culture can occur.”³ The court noted the link between school governance and community vitality stating:

I think it incontrovertible that the health and survival of the minority language and culture can be affected in subtle but important ways by decisions relating to these issues. To give

1. Judge La Forest, Supreme Court of Canada, *R. v. Mercure*, 1988.

2. Chief Judge Brian Dickson, Supreme Court of Canada, *Société des Acadiens v. Association of Parents*, 1986.

3. Supreme Court of Canada, *Mabé et al. v. Alberta*, p. 14.

but one example, most decisions pertaining to curricula clearly have influence on the language and culture of the minority students.¹

Recently in *R. v. Beaulac*, a case dealing with the right to be tried by judge and jury who speak both official languages in British Columbia, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that language rights, like other rights must be interpreted liberally rather than given a restrictive, cautious interpretation as proposed in *Société des Acadiens*. The majority opinion stated:

Language rights must in all cases be interpreted purposively, in a manner consistent with the preservation and development of official language communities in Canada. To the extent that *Société des Acadiens* stands for a restrictive interpretation of language rights, it is to be rejected. The fear that a liberal interpretation of language rights will make provinces less willing to become involved in the geographical extension of those rights is inconsistent with the requirement that language rights be interpreted as a fundamental tool for the preservation and protection of official language communities where they do apply. Language rights are a particular kind of right, distinct from the principles of fundamental justice. They have a different purpose and a different origin. When s. 530 of the *Criminal Code* was promulgated in British Columbia in 1990, the scope of the language rights of the accused was not meant to be determined restrictively. The amendments were remedial and meant to form part of the unfinished edifice of fundamental language rights.²

Numerous authors have noted the important role played by the federal language policy in enhancing the use and status of French within Canada over the last thirty years.

The federal linguistic policy has had real success, but only partial success. The institutional capacity of the public service to operate in French is clearly better today than it was in the

1. *Ibid.* p. 22

2. Judge Bastarache, Supreme Court of Canada, *R. v. Beaulac*, 1999.

1960s. The prestige and use of French throughout Canada have grown, as demonstrated by the enthusiasm of many Anglophone parents for immersion schools. This result is due at least in part to the *Official Languages Act* and other federal interventions... The recruitment of a greater number of Francophones in the federal public service has benefited mainly Francophones outside Quebec, who are more bilingual than Quebecers, and make up approximately 40% of Francophone federal employees.¹

Canada is, of course, a highly decentralized federation. Many of the government services and policies that impact most directly the vitality of minority language communities are in areas of provincial jurisdiction. The federal government has traditionally supported the expansion of provincial services through the use of the federal spending power. Education is perhaps the clearest example of federal support of minority services.

This text will not attempt to provide an overview of the wide variety of language policies adopted by provinces within Canada. Each has its unique features and there is considerable variation amongst them. In general, the trend has been towards an expansion of French language services, particularly in the area of education, but elsewhere as well.

The availability of provincial services in French varies considerably from one province to another. Generally, the larger communities have access to a wider variety of services and their rights are better defined in law. The Constitution itself provides a certain common denominator of rights in the area of education; however there remains considerable variability in the implementation of minority education rights from province to province.

1. José Woehrling, « Convergences et divergences entre les politiques linguistiques du Québec des autorités fédérales et des provinces anglophones: le noeud gordien des relations entre les Québécois francophones et les minorités franco-phones du Canada », in Conseil de la langue française, *Pour un renforcement de la solidarité entre Francophones au Canada* (Québec: 1995), p. 259.

THE PUBLIC DEBATE

Do Francophones outside Quebec have a future? Has Canada's language policy made a difference? Is Canada's language policy worth the cost? These are some of the recurrent questions that have emerged in the public debate within Canada on language policy. Inevitably, issues such as assimilation have been used by all sides in these debates.

Seen from Quebec

The perception that Quebecers have of the situation of Francophones outside Quebec has been conditioned by the evolving perception of themselves. Increasingly, in the wake of the quiet revolution, that self-perception was as Quebecers, rather than French Canadians.

The issue of Quebec's status within the Canadian federation is intimately linked to this debate. As a result, there has been some ambivalence in the attitudes of Francophones in Quebec toward Francophones outside Quebec. Certain Quebec nationalists seem to feel that viable Francophone communities outside Quebec might constitute a permanent familial link and thus cement a pan-Canadian bond. The strongest proponents of independence in Quebec have therefore preferred to portray the weakness of these minority Francophone communities as an example of the failure of Canadian federalism. René Lévesque's reference to Francophones outside Quebec as "dead ducks"; or Yves Beauchemin's comment that they are "*des cadavres encore chauds*" represent examples of a similar school of thought. This point of view also echoes and is perhaps intended to reinforce a pessimistic assessment of the vitality of the French language in Quebec.

Linda Cardinal suggests that the discourse on Francophones outside Quebec is ultimately very much focused on Quebec issues.

Thus, the representation that Quebec gets from Francophones in a minority environment serves it very well. In fact, insofar as one considers that 'outside Quebec there's no hope for Francophones,' the latter becomes the legitimate representative of *la francophonie*, its stronghold, its territory. The survival of the French fact will undergo a reaffirmation of territory, which will also coincide with the Québécois nation and the State that it takes over politically.¹

However, it should be noted that the dominant opinion in Quebec has always expressed interest and concern for the Francophone minorities. As Gerald Gold suggests:

In Quebec, where the minorities were of little or no importance to the Referendum debate, the Parti Québécois strategy, as it emerged in ministerial statements and in the White Paper on Sovereignty Association, was to represent the minorities as witnesses to the inadequacy of federalism as a means of preserving French language and culture...Without being integral to the internal discussions of the economics of independence, the minorities were seen by Quebec as part of a North American *francophonie* to which a French Quebec, the sole French-speaking 'state' on the continent, is morally responsible.²

The continuing paradox of a Francophone Quebec that increasingly defines its interests from a territorial perspective and yet maintains a real and manifest attachment to the Francophone minorities is well illustrated in an editorial by Lise Bissonnette:

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1. Linda Cardinal, « Identité et dialogue : l'expérience des francophonies canadienne et québécoise », in Conseil de la langue française, *Pour un renforcement de la solidarité entre francophones au Canada* (Québec: le Conseil, 1995), p. 67.
 2. Gerald L. Gold, « La revendication de nos droits: the Quebec Referendum and Francophone minorities in Canada, » *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 7, 1 (January 1984).

The political interests of Quebec and of Francophones outside Quebec will perhaps differ for good. However, at all costs we must avoid a recurrence of those distressing episodes in which Quebec dissociates itself and lets its close relations down without the slightest worry of the consequences.¹

Recently we have seen moves within Quebec to re-emphasize the linkages between Quebec and Francophone communities outside Quebec. The *Conseil de la langue française* has published a report on the relations between the Francophone communities outside Quebec and inside Quebec. This advice was solicited by the then Minister responsible for the *Charter of the French Language*, Claude Ryan. The text produced by the Conseil was well received by Francophone communities outside Quebec. It emphasizes the common interest of Quebec Francophones and Francophones outside Quebec in the vitality of the French language everywhere in Canada. The text recognized the leadership role that the federal government has played with regard to Francophone communities and it avoided the pessimism that has often characterized the *Québécois* analysis of the situation of Francophone communities outside Quebec. This text was the basis of a policy subsequently adopted by the Government of Quebec.

Francophones Minorities—In their own words

Rumours of the demise of minority communities have often been fuelled by the alarmist rhetoric provided by the minorities themselves (e.g. *Le Choc des nombres* published by the *Fédération des jeunes Canadiens français*). Some commentators have attempted to put some of these pessimistic portrayals of the minority situation in the perspective of a more complex reality. As President of the FFHQ (now the FCFA), Guy Matte suggested the minority discourse needs to focus on the overall context, as well as the problems:

1. Lise Bissonnette, « Pour un futur commun », *Le Devoir*, November 26, 1990.

In 20 years, we have made tremendous progress as a Francophone community and we have perhaps not celebrated it enough ...the image that we leave ...is that it is not going well, that there are problems, that we are utterly destitute, that we are being assimilated. We leave messages that are part of the truth.¹

So why does such a dark vision of the future of Francophone communities in Canada dominate the minority discourse notwithstanding the fact that school and community infrastructures that have been put in place during the past 25 years are having a measurable impact? These have enhanced the status of the French language within a minority community context and resulted in the development of a network of minority language community institutions, the extension of language rights across the country and a dramatic rise in bilingualism among young Anglophones. Yet pessimism remains the hallmark of the minority discourse.

As sociologist Linda Cardinal noted in a text published by the *Conseil de la langue française*, “One can really wonder why Francophones have accepted this representation of themselves. Outside Quebec, focusing solely on deficiencies does not serve the cause of protection of minority rights.”²

The realization that the very negativity of the minority discourse could be a barrier to community development is a relatively recent development: Jacqueline Pelletier noted recently that the question of minority survival needs to be framed differently:

...there are undertakers who want to bury us alive. Some of them have been in Parliament, in the universities... I call them statistical vultures, kill-joys, obituary-seekers who scrape the bones of Census data to predict the disappearance of our communities. Who tell our youth that they are dying and then

1. Guy Matte quoted by Sylvie Lépine, « D’énormes progrès comme communauté francophone », in *Le Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse*, November 7, 1990.

2. Linda Cardinal, « Identité et dialogue », in *Pour un renforcement de la solidarité entre francophones au Canada*, p. 69.

wonder why they prefer speaking English...I do not want to deny the reality of assimilation, but I think...that asking the question: will Francophone communities outside Quebec survive, is asking the wrong question.¹

Stebbins in his study of Franco-Calgarians notes:

These signs of new strength at the core of the Calgary's French community contrasts with the pessimism I heard from many respondents about the prospects for the relève and by implication, the prospects for the community itself.²

In their analysis of the discourse of Francophone minority associations, Cardinal et al. note:

Strongly influenced by reports of political, cultural and economic inequality of French-Canadians by the Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, the discourse associated with Francophone minorities was, at the beginning of the contemporary period, strongly tainted with pessimism... The themes of assimilation, economic equality, of the historic refusal by the majority to grant rights and institutions to the minority will serve as a framework to read the Canadian reality from the point of view of national oppression.³

However, they also note a gradual change in the minority discourse:

Canada's Francophone and Acadian communities, for their part, leave behind a victimising notion of minority status to affirm themselves as equal partners with the other majority ...The Francophone and Acadian communities anchor their

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1. Jacqueline Pelletier, « Nos mots, à fleur de pays », *Proceedings of ACREP's 2nd National Congress*, p. 35.
 2. Robert A. Stebbins, *The Franco-Calgarians*, p. 118.
 3. Linda Cardinal, Lise Kimpton, Jean Lapointe, Uli Locher and J. Yvon Thériault, *Development of Official Language Communities from the Standpoint of Community-based Associations* (Ottawa: Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and the Secretary of State, 1992), p. 10.

approach within the changes in the Canadian legal framework; the favourable assessment that they make of the linguistic measures in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982), particularly Section 23, leads them to believe that from now on they have the means to slow down the long-standing population decrease that afflicts them.¹

The change towards a more empowered discourse seems, however, to be limited to the associations. They note that the community at large and the minority language media have retained the pessimistic discourse of the earlier period. Nor is this pessimism entirely absent from the associational discourse.

The negative tone to the minority language discourse is in some ways typical of communities involved in dependency relationships with governments everywhere. Pool has explored the inherent problem associated with subjective assessments in a language regime, "This problem is an instance of the general principle that telling the truth is not always rational if a policy that affects the teller is going to be based on the teller's disclosure."² The tendency to emphasize that the glass is half empty is, in this context, obvious.

In their book *Building Communities from the Inside Out*,³ Kretzman and McKnight look at the same phenomenon in an American context, but its community development focus is equally relevant to minority language community development in Canada. The key to their approach to community development is focusing on strengths rather than weaknesses, assets rather than needs. They argue that communities underestimate their resources and that development must be rooted in the community itself. The negative focus on problems, deficiencies and needs externalizes the solution and breaks

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1. Linda Cardinal, Lise Kimpton, Jean Lapointe, Uli Locher and J. Yvon Thériault, *Development of Official Language Communities from the Standpoint of Community-based Associations* (Ottawa: Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and the Secretary of State, 1992), p. 125.
 2. Jonathan Pool, "The Official Languages Problem," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 85, 2 (June 1991), p. 499.
 3. Kretzman and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out* (The Centre for Urban Affairs and Policy Research/Neighbourhood Innovations Network, Northwestern University, 1995).

down the community's own problem-solving capacity, leaving the communities with the impression that only outside experts/external intervention can help.

The "needs" focus also creates competition between communities to demonstrate the greatest need in order to gain external funds/assistance. This type of discourse takes the emphasis away from development and places it on mere survival. Since the problem must be worse in order to justify renewed or enhanced funding, this deficiency orientation shapes reality and inflates the problem and ends up demobilizing the community. Since government support often also targets needs, it tends to reward and consequently to reinforce the needs discourse within communities.

The solution according to Kretzman and McKnight is to focus on assets and local strengths to create a strategy for realizing the vision of community development. Some of the recent work undertaken by the Department of Canadian Heritage in the context of Canada/community agreements clearly fits nicely in the approach they are suggesting, for instance:

- focusing on community partnerships (harnessing community assets)
- building and rebuilding relationships (relationship-driven development)
- changing the client/recipient role to that of full contributor in community building
- placing the focus of community development back in the community (internally focused)
- solving problems at the community level
- recognizing interdependence within the community

Churchill and Kaprielian-Churchill note the need to have a balanced discourse that both recognizes the real challenge which assimilation represents for Francophones outside Quebec and the desire to

generate a sense of urgency regarding these needs, while at the same time recognizing progress and evidence of the positive evolution of the situation.

Francophones are generally very aware of demographic analyses that seem to predict their disappearance as a language group...It would be unfortunate if, by using negative indicators to support their demands for better services in French, Francophones were to succeed in convincing public opinion (and perhaps themselves) that the political actions taken to raise the status of French have had no results¹.

Anglophones Outside Quebec

Among the Anglophone majority, the subject of the presence and future of Francophones outside Quebec is often invoked as a critique of Canada's official languages policy. That is to say the size of Francophone communities is used to suggest the policy has either failed or is unnecessary. These analyses focus on the proportion Francophones represent in a given population or the declining use of French as the language used most often at home. Typical examples of this type of analysis include the following text by economist John Richards, who writes:

...consider the fate of the Francophone minority outside Quebec over the past two decades. Since 1971 the Canadian census has posed questions about maternal language (the language first used in one's family of origin) and language of use (the language most often used at home). If the number using French is smaller than the number who learned it as their first language, linguistic assimilation is taking place. ...twenty years of official bilingualism have not reversed assimilation...The conclusion is inescapable: outside Quebec and the bilingual belts of Acadia and Eastern Ontario, French is like other minority languages. Among the next generation,

1. Stacy Churchill and Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill, *Facing Pluralism, The Future of Francophone and Acadian Communities in a Pluralistic Society* (Ottawa: Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada, 1991), pp. 46-49.

it cannot compete in the school yards with the advantages of English.¹

Kenneth McRoberts arrives at a similarly bleak assessment of both the official language policy and the likelihood of survival of Francophone minority communities.

In sum, the dream of a truly bilingual Canada, which mobilized a good many English-Canadian intellectuals in the 1960's, has effectively died as Canadian society has continued inexorably its movement toward twinned unilingualism, with Francophone dominance of Quebec and Anglophone dominance of nine other provinces, broken only by a bilingual belt in parts of Ontario and New Brunswick that border on Quebec...To a very real degree, these assimilationist pressures on the Francophone minorities are simply beyond the range of governmental action².

The common thread of pessimism that dominates much, though not all, of the public debate regarding the future of Francophones communities outside Quebec appears rooted in very different sources. The minorities themselves use this discourse as a call to action, as proof that more must be done. In Quebec it appears to be used more as a cautionary tale. Anglophone scholars from outside seem to feel that a simpler country, one characterized by territorial unilingualism, might be easier to govern.

The Rate of Assimilation

In the realm of political debate words are not only words, they are also ideas. As a result, the semantics of the debate need to be scrutinized carefully to ensure that its implicit assumptions are fully understood. One of the more interesting examples of this is the use of the phrase "rate of assimilation". It is one of the more ubiquitous phrases in the language debate.

1. John Richards, "Language Matters - What Anglophone Canadians should learn from the PQ," in *Opinion Canada* (Council for Canadian Unity, 1995), p. 3.

2. Kenneth McRoberts, "The Reading Edge," in *The Globe and Mail*, March 1990.

The phrase “rate of assimilation” is often used without any clear definition or source, though Statistics Canada is also occasionally given as its source, particularly when the “rate of assimilation” is expressed in terms of Census data. Implicit is the idea that assimilation is a simple, precise and clearly definable phenomenon. In fact, Statistics Canada publications avoid the phrase, and the agency has never endorsed an official definition of assimilation.

The patterns of language use within Canadian society are often complex. Moreover, the coexistence of one or more languages is an intrinsic part of the reality of any minority community. As a result, definitions of language communities are not and cannot be expected to be water-tight. For instance, many Canadians give multiple responses to the Census questionnaire. Many Canadians report more than one mother tongue or home language, and this is particularly frequent in exogamous or mixed families.

The data on the percentage of people with a given mother tongue who speak another language most often in the home is often referred to as the rate of assimilation. Statistics Canada, the source of this data, refers to this as *language transfer* or *language shift* or, when looking at those who have the same home language and mother tongue, *language continuity*. This data measures language shift during a lifetime. There are, of course, other ways of looking at this issue; for instance, one can look at intergenerational data.

There are a number of problems associated with this definition of the rate of assimilation. First, the home language/mother tongue ratio is a cumulative indicator, not a time sensitive-rate. The rate of inflation, unemployment or economic growth are all annual rates. At a 36% per year rate the Francophone communities outside Quebec would have long since disappeared. The so-called rate of assimilation reflects the total transfers in the minority population, not the transfer per year or the change between two censuses. However, the use of this data generally leaves the public with the misleading impression that these communities are melting like ice cubes in the sun.

This data also tends to underestimate the use of minority languages because the home language data reflect only the language most often spoken. Two or more languages may well co-exist within a home. In

fact, this is often the case in mixed families. Marmen and Corbeil note, “Language shift is an indicator of the dominance of a language and does not necessarily imply the abandonment of the mother tongue. It is therefore possible that the mother tongue is used in the home, but less often than the other.”¹

Moreover, the language may be present in non-spoken areas (TV, radio, reading). The French phrase “*langue d’usage*” is even less nuanced and reinforces the impression that it is the sole language used when it is merely the language spoken most often in the home. For this reason, many Statistics Canada publications prefer to describe it as “*langue parlée à la maison*”.

Moreover, the fact the data is limited to the use of languages in the home is often not made clear in publications. Home language data can tell us nothing about the fact that French may very well be used outside the home, for instance at work, in the school, with family or friends. In mixed families it is not uncommon for children to be sent to a minority language school in order to reinforce their mastery of the French language. Under these circumstances, schools serve as a counterweight to the home language environment.

Finally, it is worth recalling that the vast majority of these so-called assimilated Francophones are still able to speak French. In fact, 97% of those reporting French as their sole mother tongue in the Census are able to speak French. This figure drops to 96% when multiple responses are considered. While it is not impossible for an individual to lose the ability to speak the language that he or she first learned at home in childhood, it is exceedingly rare. Real assimilation is essentially an intergenerational phenomenon.

1. Louise Marmen and Jean-Pierre Corbeil, *Languages in Canada, 1996 Census*, Canadian Heritage and Statistics Canada, Ottawa, 1999, p. 73

TRENDS AND ANALYSIS

The Census of Canada

The Census of Canada is no doubt the single best source of data on the vitality of the French-speaking communities outside Quebec. The long form of the Census, which is filled out by one in five households, asks three questions on official languages. Various other statistics, such as language continuity, transfer rates and intergenerational transmission are derived from these three questions. The 1996 Census asked the following three language questions:

Figure 1—Census 1996 Language Questions

Can this person speak English or French well enough to conduct a conversation?

Mark one circle only.

- English only
 - French only
 - Both English and French
 - Neither English nor French
-

What language does this person speak **most often** at home?

- English
 - French
 - Other - Specify
-

What is the language that this person **first learned** at home in childhood and **still understands**?

If this person no longer understands the first language learned indicate the second language learned.

- English
- French
- Other - Specify

Basic Data

The number of Francophones outside Quebec increased by 44,000 or 4.7% in the period from 1971 to 1996. There are just under one million Francophones outside Quebec. The use of French as the language used most often within the home has, however, declined by 57,000 in the same twenty-five-year period.

While the number of mother tongue Francophones has increased, this increase has not kept pace with the increase in the non-Francophone population. As a result, the percentage of mother tongue Francophones has declined consistently over the past forty-five years.

The rate of growth in Francophone communities outside Quebec between 1951 and 1996 was 34%. While the overall number of Francophones remained essentially stable between 1991 and 1996, diminishing by only 0.6%, the rate of growth varied considerably from one province to another. For instance, the number of Francophones declined by 14.8% in Newfoundland, however the rate of growth in the Yukon was 29.6%.

Table I Francophones outside Quebec

	Number	Percentage of Total Population
Mother Tongue		
1951	721,820	7.3
1961	853,462	6.6
1971	926,400	6.0
1981	923,605	5.2
1991	976,415	4.8
1996	970,207	4.5
Home Language		
1971	675,925	4.3
1981	666,785	3.8
1991	636,640	3.2
1996	618,522	2.9

Source: Louise Marmen and Jean-Pierre Corbeil, *New Canadian Perspectives: Languages in Canada*, Statistics Canada and Canadian Heritage, 1999.

Table 3 **French Language Profile by Province and Territory, 1996**

Province/Territory	Mother Tongue		Home Language	
Newfoundland	2,433	0.4%	1,018	0.2%
Prince Edward Island	5,715	4.3%	3,045	2.3%
Nova Scotia	36,308	4.0%	20,710	2.3%
New Brunswick	242,408	33.2%	222,454	30.5%
Ontario	499,687	4.7%	306,788	2.9%
Manitoba	49,108	4.5%	23,136	2.1%
Saskatchewan	19,896	2.0%	5,829	0.6%
Alberta	55,293	2.1%	17,817	0.7%
British Columbia	56,755	1.5%	16,582	0.4%
Yukon	1,173	3.8%	543	1.8%
Northwest Territories	1,010	2.6%	357	0.9%
Nunavut	416	1.7%	250	1.0%

Source: Census of Canada, 1996.

For the purpose of this publication, bilingualism will be defined as the ability to conduct a conversation in both English and French. This definition is consistent with the census questionnaire. Some of the literature questions the relevance of this level of second-language ability since it is based on self-assessment.

Language skills should not be thought of as something you have or don't have, but rather as a skill that the individual masters more or less. They are a continuum. The question of how many people are bilingual presupposes that this is a black and white issue. In fact, most of the population probably fall in that grey area between total unilingualism and perfect bilingualism, both extremities being no doubt quite rare.

As the B & B Commission noted:

One of the greatest obstacles to understanding the nature of bilingualism...is the still commonly-held notion that, to be bilingual, a person must have an equal command of two languages. In fact, this phenomenon is so distinct as to have a special name, "equilingualism".¹

Naturally, the impact of higher levels of sophistication of language use must be considered significant, though there is little reliable data in

1. *Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*, Book 1, The Official Languages, p. 6.

this area. There are, no doubt, several indicators of the utility of French. For instance, the acquisition of French as a second language by non-Francophones is a widely recognized indicator of utility, in as much as acquiring a second language generally requires a substantial investment of time and energy. Similarly, the use of a language in the workplace may also be an indicator of utility. The 1986 General Social Survey indicated that some 64% of Francophones outside Quebec used French at work and 36% used French most often.¹

Table 4 Knowledge of French—Profile by Province, Territory, and Canada less Quebec, 1996

Province/Territory	Number	Percent
Newfoundland	21,415	3.9
Prince Edward Island	14,740	11.1
Nova Scotia	85,350	9.5
New Brunswick	311,175	42.6
Ontario	1,281,83	12.0
Manitoba	104,635	9.5
Saskatchewan	51,115	5.2
Alberta	180,120	6.7
British Columbia	250,365	6.8
Yukon	3,260	10.6
Northwest Territories	3,050	7.8
Nunavut	1,025	4.1
Canada less Quebec	2,308,105	10.7

Source: Census of Canada, 1996.

Over the past forty-five years there has been a more than twofold increase in the number of persons able to speak French outside Quebec. The proportion has also steadily increased, though more modestly. Between 1991 and 1996 the number of persons able to speak French increased by 8% or 171,000. While part of this increase is due to the increase in the number of Francophones, the bulk is attributable to the increase in bilingualism among Anglophones. Given the recent increase in the level of bilingualism among young Anglophones, primarily associated with the French immersion phenomenon, this trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

1. General Social Survey (1986), as cited in Brian Harrison and Louise Marmen, *Focus on Canada: Languages in Canada* (Scarborough, Ont.: Statistics Canada and Prentice Hall Canada, 1994).

Table 5 Knowledge of French outside Quebec

Year	French Only	French and English	Total	Percent
1951	207,570	689,317	896,887	9.0
1961	235,016	892,294	1,127,310	8.7
1971	211,240	1,236,365	1,447,605	9.4
1981	160,640	1,616,855	1,777,495	10.0
1991	151,370	1,985,670	2,137,040	10.5
1996	127,370	2,180,720	2,308,090	10.8

Source: Marmen and Corbeil, op. cit.

Some might question the relevance of the level of bilingualism of Anglophones to the vitality of Francophone communities outside Quebec. Réjean Lachapelle was the first to demonstrate, using 1991 Census data that in exogamous families, the bilingualism of the Anglophone parent is a crucial variable, perhaps the crucial variable. In those families with children between the ages of 5 and 14 years old where the mother was French and the father spoke no French, 60% of the children did not speak French and only 40% spoke French. Fully 85% of these children did not have French as a mother tongue.

However, in those exogamous families where the Anglophone father could speak French, 78% spoke French and only 22% of the children were unable to speak French. Moreover, a majority (51%) had French as a mother tongue.¹ Within exogamous families, the bilingualism of the Anglophone parent appears to be a highly significant factor in ensuring or inhibiting knowledge of French and its transmission as a mother tongue. This strongly suggests that the rising bilingualism of Anglophones within Canadian society may play an important role in strengthening minority language community vitality. While some studies suggest that bilingual Anglophones do not use their French often in the home, it would appear that this passive ability has a significant impact in facilitating the use of French within an exogamous family. In other words, the bilingualism of the non-Francophone parent makes it much easier for the minority parent to use French in the home.

1. Réjean Lachapelle, "Exogamy in Francophone Populations in a Minority Situation: Factors, Change and Consequence," *Proceedings of the National Mini-colloquium on Exogamy and Reception Structures for Francophone Immigrants* (Ottawa: Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 1994), pp. 13-14.

Table 6 **Impact of the Bilingualism of the Father on the Degree of Francization of Children (5–14) in Exogamous Families (Canada less Quebec)**

	Child speaks English only	Bilingual child/ not French MT	Bilingual child two mother tongues	Bilingual child/ French mother tongue	Child speaks only French
Father speaks no French	60%	25%	3%	11%	0%
Father speaks Eng. & French	22%	27%	6%	40%	5%

Source: Réjean Lachapelle, "Exogamy in Francophone Populations in a Minority Situation: Factors, Change and Consequence," *Proceedings of the National Mini-colloquium on Exogamy...*, 1994.

The 1996 Census confirms that the bilingualism of the non-Francophone parent is a major factor in the transmission of French as a mother tongue and in the transmission of the ability to speak French. Unlike Lachapelle's analysis which is based on an analysis of families with Francophone mothers, which as we will see is in some respects the best case scenario, Table 7 looks both at those exogamous families where the minority parent is the female and those where the minority parent is the male. The analysis also looks at all non-francophone parents, not just Anglophones. While this analysis is consistent in confirming the dramatic impact of the bilingualism of the non-Francophone parent, it provides a better sense of the overall scope of the phenomenon.

If we look at children from 0 to 18 years of age in exogamous families, we find that French is almost five times more likely to be the language most often spoken in the home when the non-Francophone parent is able to speak French. Moreover, almost three-quarters are able to speak French in families in which the non-Francophone parent speaks French—compared to just a third of the children when the non-Francophone parent speaks no French. And finally transmission of the mother tongue, probably the single most important indicator of assimilation, is almost four times higher in families where the non-

Table 7 **Impact of the Non-Francophone Parent's Knowledge of French on the Inter-generational Transmission of French in Exogamous Families (Canada less Quebec)**

Children Aged 0 to 18	Non-Francophone Parent Speaks No French*	Non-Francophone Parent Speaks French*
French Home Language of Child**	7.8%	36.4%
Child Able to Speak French	34.8	73.3%
French Mother Tongue of Child **	12.8%	47.1%

Source: 1996 Census of Canada.

* Only parents reporting a single mother tongue.

**Includes single and multiple responses.

Francophone parent speaks French. Or put differently, the children in families where the non-Francophone parent speaks French represent less than one-fourth of the 181,115 children in exogamous families, but are the majority (54.5%) among the 38,480 who have French as a mother tongue.

It has long been believed that the key to the intergenerational transmission of French was its use by the minority parent. This data makes clear that the use of French in exogamous homes is not just a question of the commitment and determination of the Francophone parent, but is also related to the linguistic environment created by the other parent's language skills. As Landry and Allard note in their research on children in exogamous families, there are successful strategies which exist to counter the dominance of English:

Exogamy is often considered the scourge of Francophone communities. However, as we have seen, many exogamous families have taken steps to assure the development of an additive bilingualism among their children through the Francophone parent's use of French and the choice of French language schooling. The contact between two languages and

cultures does not necessarily lead to a relationship of dominance of one culture over the other.¹

Language Continuity and Transfers

Language shift and continuity are useful indicators of the relative strength of a language. They measure the degree to which the French mother tongue population continues to use this language most often in the home context during the course of a lifetime. The shift away from the mother tongue generally rises during early adulthood and there is little change after 35 years of age. As a result, the aging of the population can be expected to contribute to language shift.

Language shift is also generally associated with exogamous families. The reason is fairly straightforward. The level of (English/French) bilingualism of Anglophones outside Quebec is 6.9%, while the level of bilingualism among Francophones outside Quebec is 83.8%. In fact, Francophones represent nearly 37% of persons outside Quebec who speak both English and French. Among those living in English-French couples 92% of the Francophones were bilingual compared to 21% of the Anglophones.² Given the disequilibrium in the level of bilingualism, the choice of English as the language used most often would seem inevitable. In 1996, 96% of English-French couples reported English as the language used most often in the home. It should be remembered, however, that the language most often used in the home may very well not be the only language used in the home. In fact, the evidence suggests that French is used regularly in many of these homes, though less often than English.

High levels of language shift are generally associated with lower concentrations of Francophones. New Brunswick, which has the highest concentration of Francophones, has the highest rate of language continuity, while provinces where Francophones represent a smaller proportion of the population have a lower level of language continuity. Essentially, the same correlation is found between the proportion of the population and the rate of exogamy.

1. Rodrigue Landry and Réal Allard, « L'exogamie et le maintien de deux langues et de deux cultures : le rôle de la francité familioscolaire », *Revue des sciences de l'éducation*, XXIII, 3 (1997): 588.

2. Louise Marmen and Jean-Pierre Corbeil, *Languages in Canada: 1996 Census*, p. 75.

Table 8 French Mother Tongue, Exogamy and Language Continuity by Province and Territory, 1996

Province/Territory	Pop. (%)	Exogamy (%)	LCI*
New Brunswick	33.2	15	0.92
Ontario	4.7	45	0.61
Manitoba	4.5	50	0.47
Prince Edward Island	4.3	51	0.53
Nova Scotia	4.0	48	0.57
Yukon	3.8	65	0.46
Northwest Territories**	2.6	78	0.35
Alberta	2.1	64	0.32
Saskatchewan	2.0	60	0.29
Nunavut	1.7	n/a	0.60
British Columbia	1.5	72	0.29
Newfoundland	0.4	67	0.42
Canada Less Quebec	4.5	42	0.64

Source: Census of Canada, 1996

*Language Continuity Index—This represents the relationship between the number of persons speaking French most often at home and the number of persons for whom French is the mother tongue. A continuity index of less than 1 means that French registers more losses than gains in its exchanges with other languages.

**The figure for exogamy includes Nunavut.

Numerous observers have made the point that there exists a strong linkage between exogamy and assimilation.

We can conclude that exogamy is one of the causes of assimilation, but we cannot determine precisely the weight of exogamy among the factors that account for the process of assimilation.¹

Research can identify the effect of rising exogamy on assimilation and point to the fact that exogamy is the crucial factor driving the level of language shift. While there has been a strengthening of the use of French in both exogamous and endogamous families, the large increase in the number of exogamous families tends to drive up the rate of language shift from French to English.

Elsewhere in Canada, the transmission of French has had a tendency to diminish since the end of the 1950s...This

1. Roger Bernard, "Issues in Exogamy," *Proceedings of the National Mini-colloquium on Exogamy and Reception Structure for Francophone Immigrants* (Ottawa: Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 1994), p. 7.

evolution is due to the increase of exogamy, because one observes rather an improvement in the transmission of French when one holds constant the distribution of fathers based on their mother tongue.¹

Language transfer in Francophone communities outside Quebec appears to be very sensitive to life cycle factors. Consequently, it is important to be able to isolate changes that are attributable to the aging population.

Anglicization is a process that begins at infancy, continues during adolescence, takes on magnitude at the start of adult life when men and women enter the work force, leave their original home environment and get married or live as couples.¹

Language continuity and shift are strongly correlated with life cycle changes in the population. Younger age groups have the highest rate of language continuity, 75% or higher. The drop in linguistic continuity is particularly pronounced in the 20 to 24 and the 25 to 29 age groups.

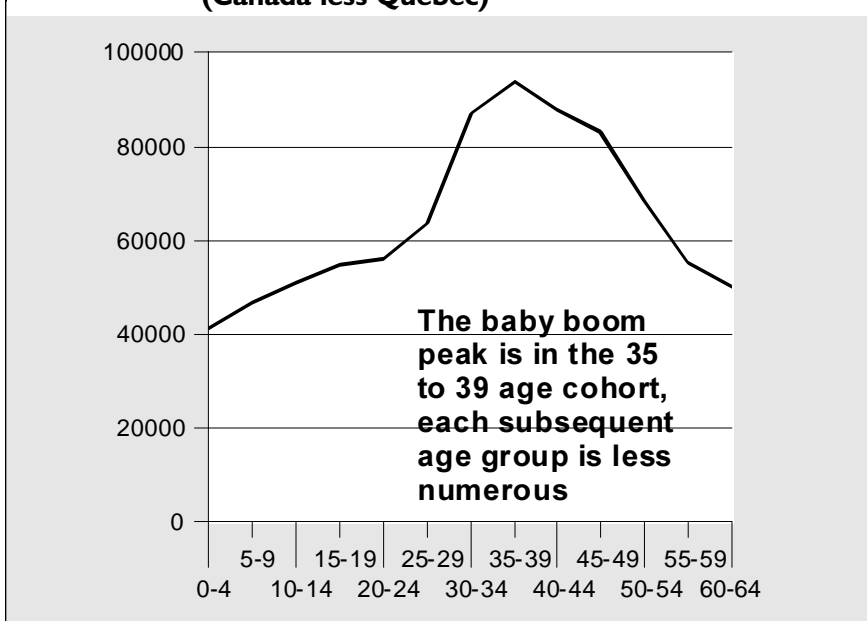
Table 9 Language Continuity Index—French

Province/Territory	1971	1981	1991	1996
Newfoundland	0.63	0.72	0.47	0.42
Prince Edward Island	0.60	0.64	0.53	0.53
Nova Scotia	0.69	0.69	0.59	0.57
New Brunswick	0.92	0.93	0.93	0.92
Ontario	0.73	0.72	0.63	0.61
Manitoba	0.65	0.60	0.49	0.47
Saskatchewan	0.50	0.41	0.33	0.29
Alberta	0.49	0.49	0.36	0.32
British Columbia	0.30	0.35	0.28	0.29
Yukon	0.30	0.45	0.43	0.46
Northwest Territories	0.50	0.51	0.47	0.43
Canada less Quebec	0.73	0.72	0.65	0.64

Source: Censuses of Canada, 1971, 1981, 1991 and 1996.

1. Réjean Lachapelle, "Nouveaux indicateurs de transfert de langue : validation et application," (Mai 1987), p. 15. Unpublished.

Figure 2 **Age Structure—French Mother Tongue
Population
(Canada less Quebec)**



Source: 1996 Census of Canada

This is generally the period in life when people leave the family home, marry and enter the workforce. These life changes contribute significantly to language shift. The decline in language continuity is less pronounced in the 30 to 64 age groups, where it tends to stabilize just under 60%. The language continuity rises again in the 65+ age groups.

Within the 1971 and 1996 populations the pattern of language shift is relatively similar. The most significant change between the two Census periods is the rise in language continuity in the younger age groups. Comparison of the 1971 and 1996 Census data shows that among Francophones in the 0 to 9 age group, the tendency to shift to English (French mother tongue to English home language) has declined over the past twenty-five years (See Table 10). This is notable since the tendency to shift to English has increased overall within the Francophone community and is likely a direct consequence of the

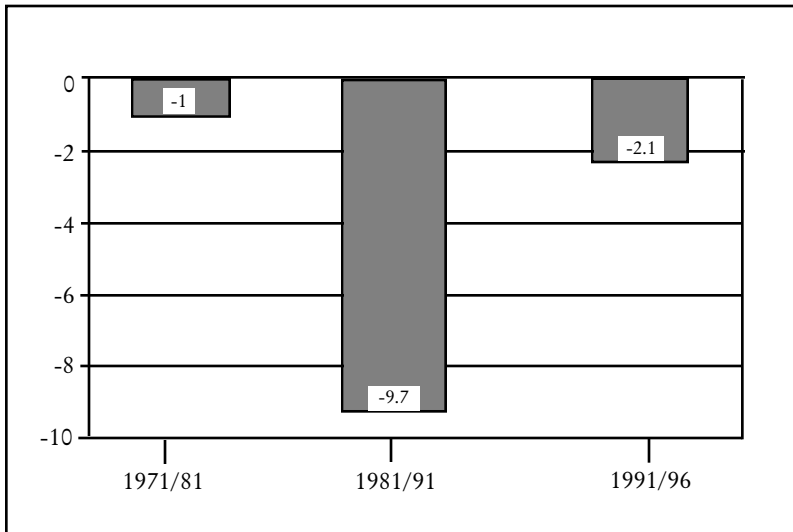
1. Réjean Lachapelle, "La politique des langues officielles et la situation du français hors Québec" (Avril 1991), p. 4. Unpublished.

Table 10 Language Continuity Index — French /Age Groups

Canada Less Quebec	1971	1996	% Change
Total	0.74	0.64	-13.8
Age 0-4	0.90	0.92	+ 1.9
Age 5-9	0.87	0.90	+3.2
Age 10-14	0.84	0.83	-1.5
Age 15-19	0.81	0.77	-4.3
Age 20-24	0.69	0.68	-1.5
Age 25-29	0.64	0.60	-5.6
Age 30-34	0.63	0.59	-6.2
Age 35-39	0.61	0.59	-4.0
Age 40-44	0.62	0.57	-7.6
Age 45-49	0.63	0.55	-12.5
Age 50-54	0.64	0.55	-13.8
Age 55-59	0.67	0.55	-17.4
Age 60-64	0.70	0.56	-19.7
Age 65 +	0.74	0.60	-18.9

Source: Censuses of Canada, 1971 and 1996.

Figure 3 Percentage Change in Language Continuity



Source: 1971 to 1996 Censuses of Canada.

**Table 11 French Mother Tongue Families
(Both Parents) Mother Tongue of Youth**

0-24 Age Group				
	French*	English	Other	Total
1991	92.2%	7.7%	0.1%	100%
1971	90.6%	9.3%	0.1%	100%
0-4 Age Group				
	French*	English	Other	Total
1991	95.3%	4.7%	0.0%	100%
1971	92.7%	7.2%	0.1%	100%

Source: Brian Harrison, *Youth in Official Language Minorities*, Statistic Canada, 1996.

*Including those reporting both English and French.

effort to promote Francophone minority education and increasing bilingualism in the non-Francophone population.

The twenty-five-year comparison also shows remarkable stability in the 10 to 44 age groups. The language continuity rate declined slightly in these age groups. In all cases the rate of decline was well below the decline experienced by the overall Francophone community.

The language continuity decline between 1971 and 1996 is particularly significant in the older age groups. All the age groups over 50 have an above average decline in language continuity. This decline in the language continuity in these age groups is not one that had been previously identified and no doubt merits further exploration. The spread between the earlier age groups and the older age groups seems to have widened in the twenty-five-year period. In terms of language continuity three distinct patterns emerge, rising continuity in youth

Table 12 Mixed Families (Francophone Mother/Non-Francophone Father) Mother Tongue of Youth

0-24 Age Group				
	French*	English	Other	Total
1991	24.0%	74.3%	1.4%	100%
1971	10.6%	86.6%	1.8%	100%
0-4 Age Group				
	French*	English	Other	Total
1991	30.4%	68.0%	0.0%	100%
1971	13.4%	84.3%	2.2%	100%

Source: Harrison, *op. cit.*

*Including those reporting both English and French.

(0 to 9), stability in the 10 to 44 age groups and steep decline in the 45+ age groups.

When looking at this population it is useful to remember that the Francophone population has experienced the impact of the baby boom generation (See Figure 2). In 1971, 45.9% of Francophones outside Quebec were under 25 years of age. In 1996, the proportion under the age of 25 had declined to just 25.7%. Since this aging of the population has a considerable impact on language transfer, it is necessary to understand the age group specific trends as well as the evolution of language continuity in the overall population.

While many commentators are quick to point to the rising transfer rates as indicators of rising assimilation or even as evidence of the failure of federal language programs, much of the change can in fact be attributed to the aging of the baby boom generation. The people who made up this bulge in the Francophone population hit their 20s and 30s in the 1980s and began to leave the family home and marry (often outside their language group). As a result we note a substantial decline (-9.7%) in language continuity in the 1981 to 1991 period (See Figure 3). This decline slowed considerably (-2.1%) in the 1991 to 1996 period and should continue to decline in the 1996 to 2001 period.

Intergenerational Transmission of French as a Mother Tongue

The focus on the language transfer has tended to obscure a significant reinforcement of the French language both in endogamous and even more dramatically in exogamous families. Looking at the transmission of French as a mother tongue in families with children under the age of 25, we can see that its transmission has slightly increased in families where both parents are Francophone. The level of intergenerational transmission was already relatively high in endogamous families in 1971 (See Tables 11 and 12).

Table 13 Intergenerational Transmission in Endogamous and Exogamous Two Parent Families (Canada less Quebec)

Mother Tongue of Parents* (Ages 0 to 18)	Two French Parents Number / %		One Parent French One Non-French Number / %	
Home Language of Child	117,720	100	181,130	100
French	100,170	85.1	19,255	10.6
English and French	1,885	1.6	7,730	4.3
French and Non-official	170	0.1	145	0.1
Eng., Fr. & Non-official	60	0.1	220	0.1
All French Responses	102,285	86.9	27,350	15.1
Knowledge of French	117,720	100	181,125	100
French only	40,800	34.7	3,785	2.1
Both Eng. and Fr.	70,925	60.2	76,375	42.2
Total Speak French	111,725	94.9	80,160	44.3
Mother Tongue of Child	117,720	100	181,135	100
French	108,630	92.3	29,350	16.2
English and French	620	0.5	8,740	4.8
French and Other	295	0.3	235	0.1
Eng., French & Other	25	0.0	165	0.1
All French Responses	109,570	93.1	38,465	21.2

Source: 1996 Census of Canada

* Parents reporting a single mother tongue

More surprising is the increase in intergenerational transmission in mixed families. In 1971, exogamy almost always resulted in the non-transmission of French as a mother tongue. By 1991 we note a marked increase in intergenerational transmission. This is true both with the broader sample of all families with children under twenty-five and within the 0 to 4 age group sample. The 0 to 4 sample can in a sense be used as a leading indicator. Mother tongue is acquired at this age and the 0 to 4 sample confirms the trend of a strengthening of the French language seen in the 1971 to 1991 comparison.

Both the strengthening of the French language as a language of use in the home among Francophones under the age of 10 and the enhanced transmission of French as a mother tongue confirm a general strengthening of the French language within the home. This strengthening is easily obscured by other trends such as the rising levels of exogamy and has therefore gone largely unnoticed.

Table 14 Impact of the Mother Tongue of the Non-Francophone Parent and the Gender of the Francophone Parent on the Transmission of French to Children in Exogamous Families — Canada less Quebec

(0 to 18 years old)	Anglophone Parent	Allophone Parent	French Wife	French Husband
French Home language of the Child*	14.7%	18.3%	20.2%	9.9%
Child Able to Speak French	44.1%	45.6%	50.9%	37.4%
French Mother Tongue of the Child*	20.8%	24.8%	29.4%	13.0%

Source: 1996 Census of Canada

* Includes single and multiple responses.

Intergenerational Transmission: The 1996 Census

The 1996 Census confirms the principal findings of the analyses done by Lachapelle and Harrison with regard to intergenerational transmission. Table 13 shows that transmission is very high in endogamous families (93.1%) and much weaker in exogamous families (21.2%). This data highlights the importance of looking at assimilation as a social phenomenon. Language is generally reproduced in family units and as a result is a significant focus of this analysis.

It is also worth noting (see Table 13, as in subsequent ones dealing with intergenerational transmission), that the level of mother tongue transmission is always higher than the proportion reporting French as the language used most often in the home. Some analysts regard families which do not report French as the language spoken most often in the home as assimilated and argue that French is entirely absent from these homes. This data does not support that conclusion. For instance, in exogamous families 40.6% more children are reporting French as a mother tongue than as a home language. This strongly suggests that though French may not be the language spoken most in these homes, it is certainly not entirely absent and indeed is sufficiently present to assure its transmission as a mother tongue in many cases or, more often, to assure the children acquire an ability to speak French.

Table 15 **Transmission of French Mother Tongue by Age Group and Family Type (Canada less Quebec)**

Age of child	Children in Endogamous Families (Percent)	Children in Exogamous Families (Percent)
0-5	34.4	65.6
6-9	38.4	61.6
10-14	41.2	58.8
15-18	45.2	54.8
Trend	Decrease of 23.9 %	Increase of 19.7 %
Parent to Child Transmission of French as Mother Tongue		
Age of Child	Endogamous Families (Percent)	Exogamous Families (Percent)
0-5	94.0	24.7
6-9	93.1	20.8
10-14	92.6	19.3
15-18	92.6	18.7
Trend	Increase of 1.5 %	Increase of 32.1 %

Source: 1996 Census of Canada

Beyond the important impact of the bilingualism of the non-Francophone parent which was discussed previously we have explored two other issues in relation to the transmission of French in families. Is transmission less likely if the non-Francophone parent is Anglophone compared to when the non-Francophone parent is Allophone? The data confirms that transmission is slightly more likely in exogamous families with an Allophone parent (24.8%), compared to families with an Anglophone parent (20.8%). This is not entirely surprising given the strength of the English language within Canadian society and the greater likelihood of English being the common language (See Table 14).

Secondly, the data confirms the role that gender plays in the transmission of language. As we expected the transmission of French is much more likely in exogamous families when the Francophone parent is a female (29.4%), compared to families where the minority parent is a male (13%). This confirms that women continue to play a much larger role in the raising of children and consequently in the transmission of language within families.

Table 16 Index of Intergenerational Transmission

Language	English	French	Other
Canada	116%	99%	63%
Newfoundland	101%	53%	63%
Prince Edward Island	104%	55%	39%
Nova Scotia	104%	61%	58%
New Brunswick	106%	96%	40%
Quebec	125%	103%	76%
Ontario	120%	77%	61%
Manitoba	124%	60%	47%
Saskatchewan	110%	34%	46%
Alberta	113%	43%	56%
British Columbia	115%	46%	67%
Yukon	110%	66%	41%
Northwest Territories*	133%	40%	77%
Canada less Quebec	116%	74%	61%

Source: 1996 Census of Canada

*Includes Nunavut.

It is also interesting that neither of these factors are as significant a predictor of mother tongue transmission as the ability of the non-Francophone parent to speak French. In addition, the bilingualism of non-Francophones is a factor which can and has been influenced by language policy.

We have already looked at the general level of exogamy among Francophone couples, another way to look at this issue is to focus on the proportion of children in exogamous families. By looking at different age segments of children in two-parent families we can identify a number of trends which are shaping the future of the Francophone communities (See table 15). First, the proportion of children in exogamous families is greater in the younger age cohorts. In the 15 to 18 age cohort only 54.8% of children are in exogamous families, while in the youngest age cohort (0 to 5) this percentage has risen to 65.6%—a 20% increase. The data also shows that the transmission of French as a mother tongue continues to increase. Harrison had demonstrated this phenomenon by comparing 1971 data to 1991 data. This can also be illustrated by comparing the transmission rate with various age cohorts. Table 15 shows a slight increase in the already strong rate of transmission in endogamous families, from 92.6% in the 15 to 18 age groups to 94% in the 0 to 5 group. More impressive is the rise in the rate of transmission in exogamous families, from 18.7% in the 15 to 18 age group to 24.7% in the 0 to 5 age group. This represents an improvement of 32%.

It might be suggested that the strengthening of the French language in exogamous families is attributable to the rising level of bilingualism among non-Francophone parents. The proportion of children speaking French in families where the non-Francophone parent speaks French is in fact rising, from 24.1 in the 15 to 18 age group to 26.5 % in the 0 to 5 age group. However, the rising level of transmission is evident in both types of families. The rate of transmission in exogamous families where the non-Francophone speaks no French rises progressively in each of the younger age groups from 10% in the 15 to 18 age group to 16% in the the 0 to 5 age group. The same pattern is present in families where the non-Francophone parent speaks French. Transmission is lowest in the 15 to 18 group (45.7%) and highest in the 0 to 5 age group (49.2%).

Probably the best single indicator of the strength or weakness of a language is the Index of Intergenerational Transmission (See Table 16). The index looks at transmission of the mother tongue from parent to child. In this index 100 is the point where a given language has an output in the children's generation identical to the input of the parental generation. To reach 100 a language must have been transmitted as a mother tongue to a number of children equal to all the children born in families where both parents are of that language group, plus half the number of children where only one parent is of that language group. One hundred is therefore the point at which a language neither gains nor loses in relation to others.

In short, it is a measure of the intergenerational linguistic assimilation. The index looks only at two parent families where the parents give single responses to the mother tongue question.

Table 16 shows that English makes gains at the expense of other languages in each province and territory. French makes gains in relation to English and other languages only in Quebec. English also makes gains in Quebec as a number of Allophone families transmit English to their children as a mother tongue. Among Francophones outside Quebec French is strongest in New Brunswick (96%), and Ontario (77%). Intergenerational transmission is less than half of what is necessary for stable reproduction in Saskatchewan (34%), the Northwest Territories (40%) and British Columbia(46%). The overall rate of intergenerational transmission for Francophones outside Quebec (74%) reflects the concentration of Francophones in Ontario and New Brunswick.

Does rising exogamy, which impacts negatively on the rate of transmission of French as a mother tongue, cancel out the gains which French is making in intergenerational transmission? One way to answer this question is to look at the Index of Intergenerational Transmission. While Table 16 looks at all children in the 0 to 18 age group, we can also look at subpopulations within this group. The index is highest in the 0 to 5 age group (75.2) up from 73.1 in the 6 to 9 age group. This suggests that in the most recent period there has been a strengthening of the transmission of the French language which is not cancelled out by rising rates of exogamy.

The Impact of Immigration

The importance of immigration as a factor in explaining the relative decline of the proportion of Francophones outside Quebec is easy to demonstrate. Within the Canadian population as a whole in 1996, those born outside the country (immigrants and non-permanent residents) represented 17.4 % of the population, while within the Francophone community outside Quebec they represent less than four percent of the population.

The vast majority of immigrants to Canada, 79.6% of those who immigrated to Canada between 1991 and 1996, have a non-official language as a mother tongue.¹ Both immigration and interprovincial migration have been relatively minor factors in the overall size and growth of the Francophone communities outside Quebec. In the five year period from 1991 to 1996 immigration contributed some 5,600 (0.6%) to the minority Francophone population and overall immigrants represented 37,700 of those with French as a mother tongue outside Quebec or 3.9%.

The largest part of the decline in the proportion of Francophones in the population outside Quebec is accounted for by immigration and the declining fertility rate (a North America wide phenomenon) and consequently tells us little or nothing about the assimilation and vitality of Francophone communities themselves. Moreover, since neither of these factors is intended to be influenced by language policy, the declining proportion of Francophones also tells us little about the effectiveness of language policy.

1. Census of Canada, 1991 and 1996.

The concentration of Francophones may however have implications for the potential status and utility of French within Canadian society. The evidence for a resulting decline in the status and use of French is thus far not very persuasive. It is easy to doubt that the concentration of minority Francophones is the sole factor influencing the use and status of French. Other factors, such as government policy, second language use, institutional control and completeness have traditionally been invoked as important considerations in the literature on this subject.

Interprovincial Migration

If immigration patterns have contributed only slightly to the growth of Francophone communities outside Quebec, the same can be said of interprovincial migration. Over the period from 1966 to 1996 the net migration of Francophones from Quebec to other parts of the country contributed some 42,100 to the Francophone population outside Quebec. However, this pattern reversed itself in the 1986 to 1991 period and the 1991 to 1996 periods, 5,200 more Francophones migrated to Quebec from other parts of the country in the first period and an additional 1,200 in the second. It is too early to tell whether this represents a permanent shift in the pattern of interprovincial migration or to suggest how interprovincial migration is likely to evolve in the future.

Though the net numbers of Francophones coming from Quebec to the rest of the country are relatively small, it is worth noting that there is a significant mobility between Quebec and Francophone communities elsewhere in Canada. Between 1966 and 1996 some 255,400 Francophones moved from Quebec to other provinces and territories and some 213,300 Francophones migrated to Quebec from the rest of the country. Interprovincial migration is, however, a more important factor in Alberta and British Columbia.

The Fertility Rate

An important factor in the decline in the proportion and number of Francophones is the steep four decade decline in the fertility rate. The rate of fertility has dropped from 4.95 children per woman in 1956–61

period to 1.57 in the 1991–96 period. This rate is lower than the 1.70 average for all language groups outside Quebec. Naturally, this raises questions about the long term viability of Francophone communities outside Quebec.

In the 1991 to 1996 period the fertility rate of Francophones outside Quebec was for the first time ever the weakest among all language groups in the country. While this dropping fertility has been reflected in all language communities in the post-war period, the significantly higher rates of fertility historically experienced by Francophones outside Quebec has contributed in no small way to the growth of these communities. In the past high fertility in a sense compensated for assimilation, that is no longer the case.

Since Francophone communities outside Quebec benefit only marginally from immigration, the drop in fertility has had a relatively greater impact on the number of Francophone youth than on the number of non-Francophone youth. Outside Quebec the Francophone youth population declined by 35% in the 1971 to 1991 period, while the non-Francophone youth population declined by only 1%.

Key Demographic Highlights

- A decline in the overall proportion of Francophones outside Quebec due primarily to low fertility rates and immigration.

Table 17 Francophone Interprovincial Migration between Quebec and other Provinces/Territories

Period	From Quebec to other Provinces	To Quebec from other Provinces	Net Migration
1966–1971	46,900	33,400	13,500
1971–1976	41,300	37,200	4,100
1976–1981	49,900	31,900	18,000
1981–1986	45,900	33,000	12,900
1986–1991	37,800	43,000	-5,200
1991–1996	33,600	34,800	-1,200
Total	255,400	213,300	42,100

Source: Census of Canada.

Trends and Analysis

- The number of Francophones outside Quebec has remained essentially stable.
- In the wake of the baby boom, there are fewer Francophone youth.
- A rise in language transfer from French (mother tongue) to English (home language used most often) in the minority community.
- Decline in language transfer among young Francophones (under 10 years old).
- Increase in the proportion of exogamous families.
- An increase in the rate of intergenerational transmission of the minority mother tongue.
- An increase in the number of people speaking French.

Future Trends

If we look at the likely demographic evolution of Francophone minorities outside Quebec two trends become obvious, these communities will be smaller and older in the foreseeable future. For the past twenty years Francophone communities have had a rate of fertility below the rate (2.1) needed to maintain a stable population base. The fertility rate seems to have bottomed out at the current level.

Table 18 Fertility Rate, French Mother Tongue — Canada less Quebec

Period	Fertility Rate
1956–1961	4.95
1961–1966	4.34
1966–1971	2.87
1971–1976	2.12
1976–1981	1.76
1981–1986	1.60
1986–1991	1.56
1991–1996	1.57

Source: Marmen and Corbeil, *op.cit.*

The current age profile of the Francophone population shows a dramatic decline in the number of young Francophones. There are 93,925 persons in the 35 to 39 age group compared to 41,143 in the 0 to 4 age group—a 56% decline. The baby boom echo has slowed but not stopped the downward trend. This decline reflects both the low fertility rate and the non-transmission of the minority mother tongue from parent to child in exogamous families.

If we project forward the current population trends we can anticipate a smaller and older Francophone community. Our projections suggest that by the year 2021 the Francophone community will be 16% smaller and one in four will be 65 years of age or older. The same projections indicate a continued decline of youth as a proportion of the Francophone community. In 1971, those 24 years of age and under represented 45.9% of Francophones. In 1996 they were only 25.7% of this community. We anticipate that this proportion will fall to 15.7% by the year 2021.

The Intergenerational Deficit

This projected decline is due to two factors; low fertility and non-transmission of the mother tongue from parent to child. As Marmen and Corbeil point out, “Demographers consider the ‘replacement level’ fertility to correspond to a total fertility rate of 2.1.”¹ Francophone fertility rates have been below that replacement threshold for two decades.

Francophones outside Quebec, with a fertility rate of 1.57 have an intergenerational deficit due to low fertility of 25.2%. That deficit is compounded by the non-transmission of the mother tongue. The index of intergenerational transmission tells us that French is passed on to 74% of these children. As a result we can establish the size of the intergenerational deficit at 44.7%, with low fertility accounting for 56.5% of the deficit and non-transmission of the mother tongue accounting for 43.5%.

1. Marmen and Corbeil, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

Figure 4 Trend Projection

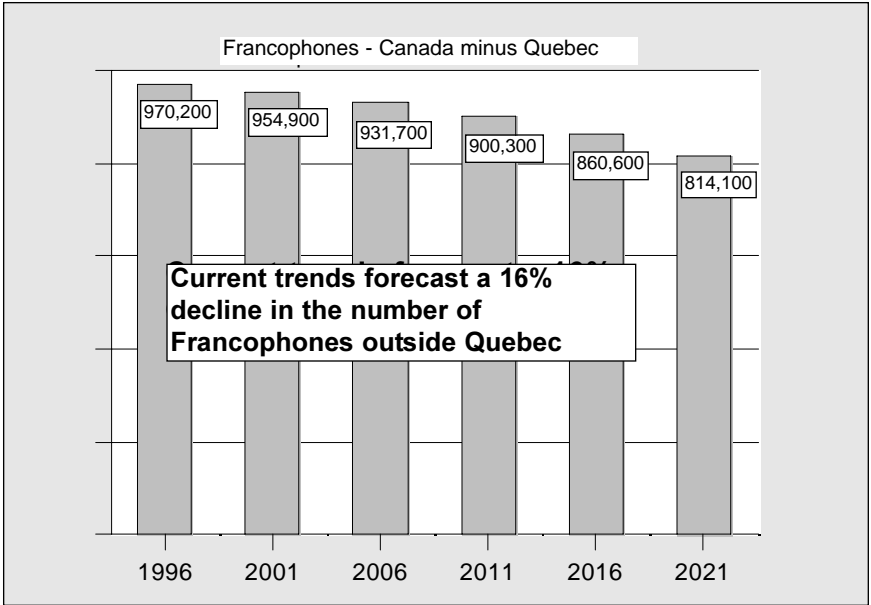
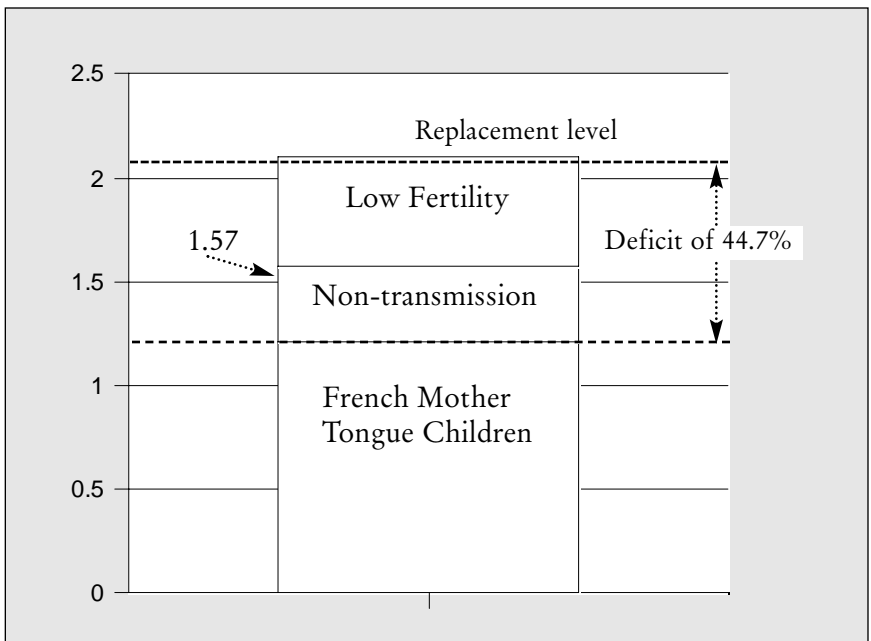


Figure 5 Intergenerational Deficit



YOUTH, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC INDICATORS

The youth cohort is one of the most interesting to look at for several reasons. Not only do its trends foreshadow the future shape of the Francophone communities, but this is also the place where we are most likely to detect the impact of language policies put in place some twenty-five years ago. Harrison's analysis of the minority language youth provides a rich source of data on the current situation of Francophone youth outside Quebec, as well as the evolution of their situation over a twenty-year period from 1971 to 1991.¹ We have already discussed the decline in the rate of language transfer in the 0 to 9 age groups. Another area of significant evolution is that of education. Francophones have traditionally had lower levels of educational attainment. In the younger age groups, the disparity between Francophones and non-Francophones has largely disappeared.

In order to promote the French language and Francophone minority communities, Canada has developed strategies primarily focused on the education system. The keystone of this policy has been the constitutional provisions for publicly funded minority language education (Francophones outside Quebec / Anglophones in Quebec) at the primary and secondary levels, as well as the management of these institutions. The courts have highlighted the remedial nature of this measure, which attempts to limit the erosion of minority communities. This chapter will explore the impact of this education/youth centred policy and the evolution of the educational

1. Brian Harrison, *Youth in Official Language Minorities*, *op.cit.*

attainment of youth. This chapter will also look at certain economic indicators from the perspective of the linkage between education and economic success within Canadian society.

Education Policy

For much of Canadian history provincial education policies were actively hostile to the survival of Francophone communities outside Quebec. For instance, several provinces banned teaching in French and elsewhere French language schools simply did not exist. These policies have had substantial impact in terms of higher school dropout and illiteracy rates for Francophones outside Quebec. They ultimately resulted in lower levels of socio-economic achievement for those Francophones who were deprived of access to education in their mother tongue. In any society access to education is ultimately a question of social equity.

The B&B Commission devoted an entire volume to education issues. The Commission concluded that “These minority language schools should not be considered a concession to the minority language group: for pedagogical reasons they are the most efficient and most effective way of educating the minority.” The subsequent data on the evolution of Francophone educational attainment certainly corroborates that conclusion.

Minority Language Educational Rights

Clearly, one of the most important developments from a policy perspective was the adoption of the 1982 *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Section 23 of the Charter (See Appendix A) gives parents who are Canadian citizens the right to have their children attend primary and secondary schools in the minority official language (English in Quebec, French elsewhere) if:

- 1) the parent’s mother tongue is the minority official language of the province, or
- 2) the parent received his or her primary school instruction in the minority language in Canada, or

Major Events in Minority-Language Education

1960's *Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*—Education is one of the key policy areas identified by the Commission.

1970 *Official Languages in Education Programme (O.L.E.)*—The Government of Canada creates a program of contributions to the provinces aimed at giving official language minorities the opportunity to be educated in their own language and enhancing opportunities for Canadians to learn a second official language.

1977 *St. Andrews Declaration on Minority Language Education*—Nine Premiers agree on a statement of principle on education in English and French wherever numbers warrant. The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) was asked to report on minority language education in each province. The federal government presses for constitutional guarantees.

1982 *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*—guarantees access to minority language schooling and requires that provinces put in place the minority school governance.

1988 *Official Languages Act, Section 43*—Provides a statutory basis for the O.L.E. program. The Minister of Canadian Heritage is mandated to take measures to provide opportunities for members of English or French linguistic minority communities to be educated in their own language.

1990 *Mabé et al. v. Alberta*—The Supreme Court of Canada confirms that Section 23 includes the right to minority school governance.

1993 *Special Federal Initiative*—Support for provincial implementation of French language school governance and post-secondary education (\$112 million over six years).

Table 19 Index of Participation in Minority French Language Education

	Enrollment	Percent	French MT Pop.	Access Index
1970-71	196,087	4.8	6.0%	80%
1981-82	157,734	4.3	5.3%	81%
1986-87	151,063	4.2	5.0%	83%
1991-92	158,296	4.1	4.8%	85%
1995-96	157,811	3.9	4.5%	86%

Source: Pre-1996 data comes from Angéline Martel, *Official Language Minority Education Rights in Canada: From Instruction to Management*, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 1991.

- 3) the parent has another child who received or is receiving his or her primary or secondary school instruction in the minority language in Canada¹.

The right to minority language instruction exists everywhere the number of eligible children of parents having rights under Section 23 warrants the provision of minority language instruction provided out of public funds. This right goes beyond merely instruction, its also includes the right to manage and control minority language educational facilities.

One of the consequences of the generous remedial eligibility which Section 23 provides is that not all children with a right to attend French language schools have an adequate mastery of French. As a result, in primary schools, programs have been developed to facilitate the integration of these children into mainstream classes.

French Language Education in Canada — A Community Focus

In 1998-99, 155,872 students were enrolled in French minority-language education programs in Canada outside of Quebec. In order to illustrate the rising rate of participation of children eligible for French language schools, Table 19 looks at the proportion the minority school system represents of total enrollment compared to the proportion minority Francophones represent in the population.

1. In Quebec only 2) and 3) apply at the present time.

The index indicates a rising rate of participation, though the proportion of minority students is still below the community's weight in the population. Given the number of students in all schools have been dropping due to lower fertility, this index is intended to provide a more meaningful reflection of participation than raw enrollment numbers.

The first objective of any school system is to provide the basic educational experiences necessary to ensure the social, emotional and intellectual development of the student. Minority language schools have an additional objective, the maintenance and in some case the development of French language skills as well as the heritage and culture of this community. Ideally learning is enhanced because it builds on cultural references to family and community which have meaning to the minority language student.

The objectives of the French-language schools include:

- supporting the student's identity and sense of belonging to the Francophone community;
- providing a cultural center for the Francophone community;
- enhancing the student's knowledge of the history and heritage of the Francophone community in Canada.

To achieve these aims, it is vital that the school be integrated into the life of the community and provide opportunities for full parental participation. School/community centres are an example of a model which attempts to achieve these ambitious objectives. The importance of the school to the survival of minority communities cannot be overestimated. As Canada's former Commissioner of Official Languages, Victor Goldbloom has noted:

Few can doubt the importance of minority language schools to the vitality of their communities. Such institutions provide an essential physical and social space within which members can meet and foster their cultural and linguistic heritage. Indeed, without minority language schools, the very

conditions necessary for the preservation of Canada's linguistic duality would be markedly diminished.¹

French minority language education is very distinct from French immersion, but there are also some similarities. Since the right to minority language education is vested in the parent and not the child, often children have only a weak mastery of French—particularly those from mixed families. For these children the French language school is in a sense an enhanced immersion experience. Enhanced because most of the children they are interacting with in the school setting will have a solid grasp of the French language. In this sense schools are not just places where children learn together, but also where they learn from each other.

French immersion is a program for the “majority” child—a child who lives in an environment in which his or her first language is constantly reinforced by the surrounding community. The minority child lives in an environment in which the first language is often not present outside of the home or the school. Minority language education is designed for children whose first language is French, but live in a largely Anglophone environment.

The school is therefore a crucial part of a minority community's response to that environment. Children only spend a small part of their time at school, and the home environment has a considerable influence on language learning. Close links between the school and the community are essential if the community is to profit from the potential synergies between the home and the school. In this relationship the weakness of the minority language in one context can be offset in the other.

When we talk about language we need to keep in mind its multifaceted nature. Language in a minority context is not just a means of communications or a form of human capital. It is also a symbol of identity and a vehicle for transmitting culture and values. A recent study prepared for Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages entitled *Motivations for School Choices by Eligible Parents Outside Quebec* looked at why parents choose the minority French stream for

1. *School Governance: The Implementation of Section 23 of the Charter*, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 1998, p.6.

their children. The study is based on the opinions of 81 parents interviewed in four cities (Vancouver, Calgary, Halifax and Sudbury) in 8 groups.

The Charter defines which parents (« eligible parents ») have the right to have their children attend the minority official language school—not all eligible parents exercise this right. A percentage of eligible parents choose to send their children to English schools (including immersion).¹ The study explores the reasons why eligible parents choose a school system over another.

The study identified the following key factors:

- Distance is the most important factor.
- The study noted a link between the couple's exogamy and the choice of the English school. It identifies a close relationship between the sense of belonging to a French-speaking community and the choice of the French school.
- Parents of higher socio-economic status more readily choose the French school—this is associated with greater self-confidence, stronger cultural identity and a certainty that children will learn English.
- English-speaking parents fear not being able to fully participate in the children's education and that the child will not learn English properly.
- For a minority, limited extracurricular activities at the secondary level was a significant factor.
- All parents agreed "Children must have a complete mastery of English to obtain good jobs and promotions". Parents choosing French schools gave greater weight to the learning of both languages.

1. The 1996 Census shows that of the 230,470 children with minority language education rights outside Quebec, 81,560 come from families where both parents are Francophone, and the remainder from families where only one parent is Francophone. In 1998-99, 155,873 children were enrolled in French first-language schools.

Table 20.1 Motivations for School Choices by Parents

PERCEPTIONS OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY	
Parents choosing the English System	Parents choosing the French System
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No real local French-speaking community. - Some perceive those who identify with the French-speaking community as tending to be fanatics who reject the English language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe a lively and dynamic French-speaking community which encouraged them to transmit their language and culture. - School is the linchpin of the community—it is thanks to the school that members of the community are able to come together. - Even parents strongly committed to the local French-speaking community expressed profound helplessness in dealing with the anglicization of their children and in conveying the value of the French language and culture.
PERCEPTIONS OF THE FRENCH SCHOOL	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not familiar with French schools (to the point of questioning their existence). - Made much of the distance from their home to the French school. - Meet Department of Education standards and offer instruction of equal value. - Smaller schools mean: they provide better supervision; offer fewer extra-curricular activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - French schools are overcrowded and farther away. - Influx of students for whom French is not the language spoken at home. Some very critical of this growth—requires scarce francization resources. - Schools are increasingly mixed linguistically—slow down learning as teachers must devote time to basic linguistic instruction. - Catholic schools are viewed by some as a barrier to access to the French schools; others associate catholic schools with greater rigour/discipline. - Sports, extracurricular activities and technical programs more limited. - Reject idea that French schools would isolate children.

Source: Adapted from *Motivations for School Choices by Eligible Parents Outside Quebec*, A Study prepared for the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages by the Réseau Circum, January 1999.

Table 20.2 Motivations for School Choices by Parents

IDENTITY AND VALUES	
Parents choosing the English System	Parents choosing the French System
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tend to identify themselves as Canadians or French Canadians. - Tend to be uncomfortable with the concept of values common to Francophones. - Identifying with the majority way of doing things was not seen as an important factor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Varied identity profile: Albertan, Quebecer, Acadian, Brayon, Franco-Canadian, Franco-Ontarian and French Canadian. - For many, the French-speaking component was more important than the territorial component. - Unanimous in seeing the French school as a way of consolidating values common to Francophones. - None accepted the idea that it is important to imitate the majority's ways of doing things, except that it is necessary to know their language.
ENGLISH AND MOBILITY	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English is essential to success in the workplace and bilingualism merely useful. - French schools teach French to the detriment of English, while the immersion offers a more appropriate balance. - English schools facilitate mobility, but this was not a factor since few expected to move in the short term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not just English that is essential to success, but bilingualism. French schools better at teaching both languages. - Some critical of immersion programs. - English is essential to mobility, but bilingualism is a better guarantee.
OTHER FACTORS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - French is more difficult to learn than English. - Some had children who were unable to learn French or to cope with two languages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficulty of French was a justification for choosing the French school, since English "is not learned, it is picked up". - In Sudbury, the Collège Boréal is important in convincing children to remain in the French secondary system.

Overall, the quality of instruction did not stand out as a factor influencing their choice. Psychological factors do not seem to be pre-eminent and political factors were of little importance. The concept of prestige associated with a language (English) was foreign to most. Where the number and percentage of Francophones meant that a genuinely Francophone social environment exists, the choice was between the French school and immersion classes—and not between the English and French system. The study noted that a number of parents who send their children to French schools would have serious reservations if increased access to the French school resulted in attracting children who do not have a command of French when they arrive at the school (Tables 20.1 and 20.2 contain more detailed findings from this study).

Educational Attainment among Francophone Youth outside Quebec

The 1996 Census reveals that Francophone educational attainment continues to progress. In 1971, 31.6 percent of the Francophones between the ages of 25 and 34 had less than grade nine level of education.¹ The 25 to 34 age group is used because its members have largely finished their schooling. This number had dropped to 3.3 % in 1996.

This overall portrait masks a high degree of regional variation. As is the case with non-Francophones, educational attainment, is generally weakest in the East and strongest in the West, with the highest level of those with less than grade nine being found in New Brunswick and P.E.I. (rural areas with high unemployment) and the lowest level found in the two territories (an educated population moving north to fill job openings).

The percentage of Francophones living outside Quebec who have received some post-secondary education or have a university degree is also increasing. The percentage of Francophone youth between the ages of 15 and 34 with at least some post-secondary education went

1. Data from 1971 to 1991 quoted come from Brian R. Harrison, *Youth in Official language Minorities: 1971–1991* and from unpublished tabulations.

from 16.7% in 1971 to 39.5% in 1996. Similarly the percentage with a university degree rose from 3.9% in 1971 to 13.5% in 1996.

The regional distribution of Francophone university graduates confirms the pattern observed among those with less than grade nine. The Western provinces and territories have higher levels of university graduates while lower levels are found in the Atlantic provinces.

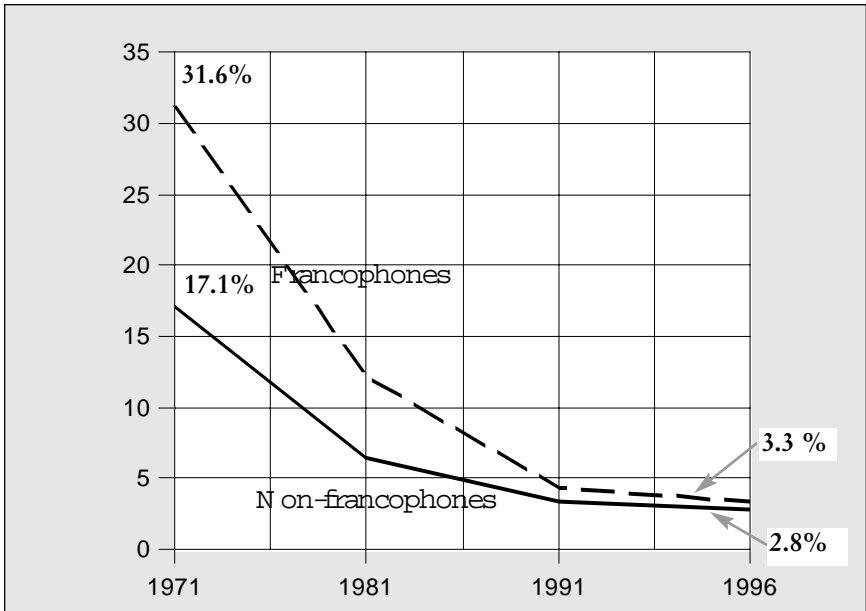
How do Francophone youth living outside Quebec compare with other groups in the population? There are several possible points of comparison—non-Francophone youth outside Quebec, Francophone youth in Quebec and the youth in Canada generally. At 3.3%, the number of Francophones outside Quebec with less than grade 9 in the 25 to 34 age group is slightly higher than in the non-Francophone population (2.8%), but considerably lower than the 4.9% among Francophones in Quebec and very close to the national average of 3.4% for all language groups.

As regards post-secondary education, Francophone youth in the 15 to 34 age groups living outside Quebec do slightly better than non-Francophone youth and the national average, but are slightly behind Francophone youth in Quebec. In terms of university degrees, Francophone youth outside Quebec do better than non-Francophone youth outside Quebec, Francophones in Quebec and the national average. The age breakdown however reveals that younger Francophones in the 20-24 age group are the principal reason for this stellar performance. The older Francophone age group lags behind non-Francophones and is below the national average.

Economic Indicators

One question which this data on increased educational attainment naturally leads to is, has it translated into greater economic opportunities for Francophones? Traditionally the literature portrays Francophones as rural, poorly educated and economically disadvantaged. While this was undoubtedly true in the past, it is an assumption which should be re-examined in the light of present day trends. These trends include greater urbanization of the minority Francophone population and increased educational attainment. While

Figure 6 Less than Grade Nine Schooling in the 25 to 34 Age Group (Canada less Quebec)



Source: B. Harrison, Youth in Official Languages Minorities and 1996 Census of Canada

Table 21 Percentage of Francophones with Less than Grade Nine (25 to 34 Age Group) by Region

1. New Brunswick	8.6
2. Prince Edward Island	7.4
3. Newfoundland	5.1
4. Quebec	4.9
5. Nova Scotia	4.3
6. Francophones outside Quebec	3.3
7. Saskatchewan	2.0
8. Manitoba	1.6
9. Ontario	1.4
10. Alberta	1.1
11. British Columbia	0.9
12. Yukon	0.0
13. Northwest Territories*	0.0

Source: 1996 Census of Canada

*Includes Nunavut

Table 22 Post-Secondary Education of Francophone Youth Living Outside Quebec — 15 to 34 Age Group

Year	Some Post-secondary	University Degree	Total
1971	16.7	3.9	20.6
1981	28.0	7.2	35.2
1991	35.7	10.8	46.5
1996	39.5	13.5	53.0

Source: B. Harrison, Youth in Official Language Minorities and 1996 Census of Canada

Table 23 Youth 25 to 34 Years of Age Living Outside Quebec with a University Degree

Year	Francophones	Non-Francophones	Comparison
	%	%	%
1971	5.8	9.2	63
1981	11.6	15.9	73
1991	14.3	16.3	88
1996	18.8	19.9	94

Source: B. Harrison, Youth in Official Language Minorities and 1996 Census of Canada

Table 24 Percentage of Francophones with a University Degree (25 to 34 Age Group) by Region

1. Yukon	36.7
2. British Columbia	23.9
3. Northwest Territories	23.9
4. Saskatchewan	20.3
5. Ontario	19.9
6. Alberta	19.4
7. Francophones outside Quebec	18.8
8. Manitoba	18.1
9. Quebec	17.9
10. Prince Edward Island	17.3
11. Nova Scotia	16.8
12. Newfoundland	15.4
13. New Brunswick	15.0

Source: 1996 Census of Canada

Table 25 Selected Economic Indicators for Francophones (15 Years of Age and Over)

	Unemployed(%)	Employment-pop. Ratio (%)	Average Income(\$)*
Newfoundland	17.6	48.0	41,893
Prince Edward Island	15.9	52.8	30,544
Nova Scotia	12.9	52.7	34,706
New Brunswick	18.1	49.3	31,649
Quebec	11.1	56.1	34,837
Ontario	9.2	58.3	40,021
Manitoba	5.7	61.6	33,047
Saskatchewan	4.8	60.4	33,526
Alberta	6.4	66.2	37,502
British Columbia	10.3	59.0	39,234
Yukon Territory	10.2	77.7	44,712
Northwest Territories	5.1	83.4	51,842
Canada less Quebec	11.0	56.6	37,574
Canada (All languages)	10.1	58.9	37,556

Source: Census 1996.

*Average Income Worked full year, full time

N.B. The mother tongue category in this table includes all those reporting French as a mother tongue, including multiple respondents, but excludes those reporting both English and French.

this publication will not go into the type of detailed analysis necessary to definitively answer the question a preliminary look at the data suggests that the disparities, to the extent they exist, are far less evident.

The first and most obvious conclusion to be drawn from the data in Table 25 is the existence of wide regional disparities among Francophone communities. These regional differences largely mirror those found in the Canadian population as a whole. In Canada the farther West you go, the higher the income and the lower the unemployment rate you find. The disparities are considerable. For instance, there is a more than \$20,000 difference between the average income for full time, full year work between Prince Edward Island's Francophones and those in the Northwest Territories. The same disparities are found in the level of unemployment—ranging from a low of 4.8% in Saskatchewan to a high of 18.1% in New Brunswick.

If we take Canada (all languages groups) as a benchmark we note that 6 of the 11 Francophone communities outside Quebec earn higher than average incomes, 5 earn less. The average for the 11 matches very

closely the national average. In the case of unemployment 6 of the 11 are above the national average, 5 are below it. The overall average is almost a full point above the national average—the weight of New Brunswick’s Francophone community is no doubt the explanatory factor.

There seems to be little correlation between economic and linguistic vitality. New Brunswick which is the weakest in terms of economic indicators is the strongest in terms of indicators of French language vitality. Quebec, which is even stronger linguistically, falls into the bottom half of the pack. Regional factors, rather than linguistic ones, are clearly the most important in influencing employment and income variables.

CONCLUSION: DENSITY IS NOT DESTINY

Survival is not a goal.

René-Daniel Dubois

The use of language in any society is both complex and subtle. In societies where several languages coexist the patterns of language use can vary considerably. It is therefore not surprising that no general theory of language vitality has emerged. Research in this area is only now beginning to shed light on these complex social phenomena. The data on Francophone minorities outside Quebec suggests many paths that merit further exploration and the need for fine tuning of various theories of community vitality. As always, a review of the data available raises many questions that cannot be answered or can be answered only partially with existing data.

The title of this text is *Francophone Minorities: Assimilation and Community Vitality*. Some might argue the text should read assimilation *or* community vitality. The evidence, however, suggests that both exist and indeed coexist. The challenge that assimilation represents to any minority community is real and probably permanent. Just as we speak of a sustainable rate of development, perhaps we should be asking ourselves what is the rate of assimilation compatible with a sustainable minority community. While community development is necessarily a work in progress, there are unmistakable signs of progress. As Angéline Martel noted in an interview, “When one compares the situation of Francophone and Acadian communities with that of twenty years ago, one finds that enormous progress has been made¹.”

1. Angéline Martel, in *Bulletin du Conseil de la langue Française*, 12, 1 (janvier 1995).

Sociologist Joseph-Yvon Thériault wrote recently:

Despite their fragility, their ambivalent identity and the challenge of assimilation, the Francophone and Acadian communities of Canada have clearly demonstrated, over the past thirty years, a surprising capacity to respond to the challenge of modernity. They have been able to build a network of Francophone institutions in education and, though to a lesser degree, in health care...The multiplication of associations and organizations which gravitate around the language confirms the capacity of these minorities to structure themselves in a more voluntary manner which conforms to the requirements of an increasingly individualistic society and testifies to a vitality which cannot be denied. The Francophone minority has also attained a political visibility which has permitted considerable gains, particularly in the area of legal recognition.¹

Many past analyses of Francophone communities outside Quebec have looked only at the proportion these communities represent in the total population. While this is a good indicator of the impact of immigration on Canadian society in the last quarter century, it is a very poor indicator of assimilation of Francophone communities. In fact, the last Census also showed a decline in the proportion of Anglophones in Canada, yet no one attributes this decline to assimilation. Similarly some analysts look at the intergenerational deficit and attribute it exclusively to assimilation—ignoring the role of fertility. Today there are one million Francophones outside Quebec—an important segment of the Canadian population in anybody's language. Any serious analysis of the vitality of these communities must go beyond the accountant's logic of how many and ask what combination of factors are required for a language community to flourish.

The propensity of mother tongue Francophones to transfer to another language at home has increased over the last twenty-five years. This increase is associated with the aging of the baby-boom bulge in the Francophone population and the increase in exogamy.

1. Joseph-Yvon Thériault, *Francophonies minoritaires au Canada: L'état des lieux* (Éditions d'Acadie), quoted in *Le Devoir* (04/08/99).

Both represent important challenges for the future of these communities. However, this is not the whole picture.

Leading indicators of minority community vitality allow us to present a more complete portrait of the current health and future prospects of these communities. Recent Census data shows a significant increase in the intergenerational transmission of French outside Quebec, significantly, even in mixed (English/French) families. Why is it important to know what is happening to the next generation in these mixed families? Given the rate of exogamy, this is a crucial indicator for the future of Francophone communities.

Moreover, Census results show that among young Francophones the tendency to shift to English declined in the period from 1971 to 1996. Will the strength of the French language shown in the early youth cohort persist into early adulthood? This is a question that only time will allow us to answer.

The data strongly suggests that the schools and community infrastructure that have been put in place during the past 25 years are having a measurable impact. These initiatives have enhanced the status of the French language within a minority community context and within Canadian society as a whole. While the principal language indicators are showing signs of the strengthening of the French language, Francophone communities are for the first time beginning to see the effects of twenty years of below replacement level fertility. Neither governments nor the communities themselves have begun to respond to what may very well be the primary factor shaping the size of these communities in the 21st century.

Lessons Learned

What lesson have we learned from three decades of language policy in Canada?

- 1) Language policies take a long time to have an impact. Altering the use and status of languages in a society is not a short term undertaking. Consequently government interventions in this area must be sustained and permanent in nature.

Conclusion

- 2) There are two crucial things which must take place if minority languages are to survive. First, minority parents must speak the minority language to their children and second, they must educate their children in minority language schools. While the use of language in the home might seem a private matter it can be influenced by policies designed to reinform the status and utility of the language within society. These policies will also influence both the choice of school and the effectiveness of minority language schools.

- 3) The rise in the general level of bilingualism in the non-Francophone population has a positive impact on the use of the minority language in mixed families. Given the recent increase in the level of bilingualism among young Anglophones, primarily associated with the French immersion phenomenon, this trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

The debate about the vitality of these communities cannot and should not be reduced to mere numbers. The vitality of any community is reflected by its spirit, determination and sense of identity, not merely by numbers.

The objective of this text is not to pass a verdict on the future of these communities, but to attempt to bring into focus the real and considerable challenges facing them. Ideally the questions we ask should help policy-makers and minority language communities to develop effective strategies which build language community vitality. The answers to many questions continue to elude us in part. This overview of theory and demographic data, while suggestive, is necessarily incomplete — our understanding of these issues will undoubtedly continue to evolve.

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APPENDIX A: THE CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

Official Languages of Canada

16. (1) English and French are the official languages of Canada and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the Parliament and government of Canada. (2) English and French are the official languages of New Brunswick and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the legislature and government of New Brunswick. (3) Nothing in this Charter limits the authority of Parliament or a legislature to advance the equality of status or use of English and French.
- 16.1 (1) The English linguistic community and the French linguistic community in New Brunswick have equal status and equal rights and privileges, including the right to distinct educational institutions and such distinct cultural institutions as are necessary for the preservation and promotion of those communities. (2) The role of the legislature and government of New Brunswick to preserve and promote the status, rights and privileges referred to in subsection (1) is affirmed.
17. (1) Everyone has the right to use English or French in any debates and other proceedings of Parliament. (2) Everyone has the right to use English or French in any debates and other proceedings of the legislature of New Brunswick.

18. (1) The statutes, records and journals of Parliament shall be printed and published in English and French and both language versions are equally authoritative. (2) The statutes, records and journals of the legislature of New Brunswick shall be printed and published in English and French and both language versions are equally authoritative.
19. (1) Either English or French may be used by any person in, or in any pleading in or process issuing from, any court established by Parliament. (2) Either English or French may be used by any person in, or in any pleading in or process issuing from, any court of New Brunswick.
20. (1) Any member of the public in Canada has the right to communicate with, and to receive available services from, any head or central office of an institution of the Parliament or government of Canada in English or French, and has the same right with respect to any other office of any such institution where a) there is a significant demand for communications with and services from that office in such language; or b) due to the nature of the office, it is reasonable that communications with and services from that office be available in both English and French. (2) Any member of the public in New Brunswick has the right to communicate with, and to receive available services from, any office of an institution of the legislature or government of New Brunswick in English or French.
21. Nothing in sections 16 to 20 abrogates or derogates from any right, privilege or obligation with respect to the English and French languages, or either of them, that exists or is continued by virtue of any other provision of the Constitution of Canada.
22. Nothing in section 16 to 20 abrogates or derogates from any legal or customary right or privilege acquired or enjoyed either before or after the coming into force of this Charter with respect to any language that is not English or French.

Minority Language Educational Rights

23. (1) Citizens of Canada a) whose first language learned and still understood is that of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province in which they reside, or b) who have received their primary school instruction in Canada in English or French and reside in a province where the language in which they received that instruction is the language of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province, have the right to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in that language in that province. (2) Citizens of Canada of whom any child has received or is receiving primary or secondary school instruction in English or French in Canada, have the right to have all their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the same language. (3) The right of citizens of Canada under subsections (1) and (2) to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the language of the English or French linguistic minority population of a province a) applies wherever in the province the number of children of citizens who have such a right is sufficient to warrant the provision to them out of public funds of minority language instruction; and b) includes, where the number of those children so warrants, the right to have them receive that instruction in minority language educational facilities provided out of public funds.

59.* (1) Paragraph 23(1)(a) shall come into force in respect of Quebec on a day to be fixed by proclamation issued by the Queen or the Governor General under the Great Seal of Canada. (2) A proclamation under subsection (1) shall be issued only where authorized by the legislative assembly or government of Quebec. (3) This section may be repealed on the day paragraph 23(1)(a) comes into force in respect of Quebec and this Act amended and renumbered, consequential upon the repeal of this section, by proclamation issued by the Queen or the Governor General under the Great Seal of Canada.

* Section 59 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, is not a part of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. However, it is reproduced here because it is directly related to the subject of minority language education rights.

APPENDIX B: THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT (1988)

Advancement of English and French Part VII, Sections 41-44

41. The Government of Canada is committed to
- (a) enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and supporting and assisting their development; and
 - (b) fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.
42. The Minister of Canadian Heritage, in consultation with other Ministers of the Crown, shall encourage and promote a coordinated approach to the implementation by federal institutions of the commitments set out in section 41.
43. (1) The Minister of Canadian Heritage shall take such measures as he considers appropriate to advance the equality of status and use of English and French in Canadian society, and, without restricting the generality of the foregoing, may take measures to:
- (a) enhance the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and support and assist their development;
 - (b) encourage and support the learning of English and French in Canada;

- (c) foster an acceptance and appreciation of both English and French by members of the public;
 - (d) encourage and assist provincial governments to support the development of English and French linguistic minority communities generally and, in particular, to offer provincial and municipal services in both English and French and to provide opportunities for members of English or French linguistic minority communities to be educated in their own language;
 - (e) encourage and assist provincial governments to provide opportunities for everyone in Canada to learn both English and French;
 - (f) encourage and cooperate with the business community, labour organizations, voluntary organizations and other organizations or institutions to provide services in both English and French and to foster the recognition and use of those languages;
 - (g) encourage and assist organizations and institutions to project the bilingual character of Canada in their activities in Canada or elsewhere; and
 - (h) with the approval of the Governor in Council, enter into agreements or arrangements that recognize and advance the bilingual character of Canada with the governments of foreign states.
- (2) The Minister of Canadian Heritage shall take such measures as he considers appropriate to ensure public consultation in the development of policies and review of programs relating to the advancement of the equality of status and use of English and French in Canada society.
44. The Minister of Canadian Heritage shall, within such time as is reasonably practicable after the termination of each financial year, submit an annual report to Parliament on the matters relating to official languages for which he is responsible.

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Official Languages Support Programs
Department of Canadian Heritage
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0M5
Telephone: (819) 994-2224
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- Francophone Minorities: Assimilation and Community Vitality (bilingual) - 2nd edition
- A Profile of the Providers of Training in English or French as a Second Language
- Literacy, Education and Human Resource Development in Minority Language
- Pathways of Francophone Artists
- Languages in Canada: 1996 Census
- Exploring the Economics of Language
- Economic Approaches to Language and Bilingualism
- Official Languages in Canada: Changing in the Language Landscape
- Annotated Languages of Canada (Constitutional, Federal, Provincial and Territorial)
- The Socio-Economic Vitality of Official Language Communities
- Status Report: Minority-Language Educational Rights
- Francophones in Canada: A Community of Interests