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Learning Materials

Official Languages ... A Matter of

Service



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Official Languages ...

A Matter of

Service

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INTRODUCTION

The video *Official Languages ... A Matter of Service* is based on the actual experiences of nineteen organizations subject to the *Official Languages Act*. You will benefit from a wide range of best practices on service to the public in English and French by watching the video and using these learning materials.

The learning materials consist of four modules:

Module 1. Active Offer of Quality Service

Module 2. New Partnerships, New Technology

Module 3. Bilingual Offices

Module 4. *The Official Languages Act and Regulations*

Each module consists of brief introductory readings and several hands-on activities that explore the topic or relate it to the learner's own work environment.

The activities have been designed in such a way that the learner may use them alone, in small self-directed groups, or in a course under the supervision of a teacher or expert. For each activity, a rough estimate of the time required to carry it out is provided. Learners should feel free to select the activities that may benefit them the most. In any case, the activities should be spread out over several days.

We hope that you find the video and modules useful and enjoyable in learning more about service to the public in both official languages and in learning how to better provide service "with a smile" in your own workplace.

The Official Languages Branch Web site can be found at the following addresses:

Internet – <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ollo>

Public Service Intranet – <http://publiservice.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ollo>

Please note: The instructions for moving around the Web site were accurate at the time of publication.



Module 1

Active Offer of Quality Service

Your Clients' Language Rights

The official language rights of members of the public are embedded in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The obligations of public service institutions to provide services in English and French flow directly from these Charter rights, and are therefore among the most fundamental legal requirements that govern the Public Service.

The *Official Languages Act* and its *Regulations* specify in detail where services must be provided in English and French — we will expand on this topic in Module 4. Let's assume for now that your office has to provide services in both official languages. The Act also specifies that the services must be provided with an "active offer."

What is an "Active Offer"?

Section 28 of the *Official Languages Act* is very clear on active offer. At offices and facilities that provide services in both languages, the institution concerned must take appropriate measures "to make it known to members of the public that those services are available in either official language at the choice of any member of the public." These measures include "the provision of signs, notices and other information on services and the initiation of communications with the public."

In other words, we must do whatever we can to give our clients a real choice of language. Two key elements are signage and greetings.



● Signage

The blue and white official languages symbol is available in many formats for departments, and signs with a similar message have been developed by other organizations. Remember to be careful with temporary signs, especially when they direct clients to use another door, for example, or watch out for the slippery floor! These messages must be written properly in both official languages.



● Greetings

There are various ways to make a verbal active offer of service in both official languages. You are encouraged to make your active offer of service in a welcoming manner. When service is provided promptly and cheerfully, the service is likely to be more effective and clients are likely to be more satisfied. We call this “service with a smile.”

ACTIVITY 1

Why Make an Active Offer?

(25–45 minutes)

Watch *Official Languages ... A Matter of Service* and list as many reasons as you can why making an active offer of service in both official languages is so important. As well, watch for examples of techniques of making an active offer of service that you find particularly useful. Where was service offered and provided in an especially friendly manner? Make notes of your observations. If you come up with something that might improve active offer in your work unit, discuss it with your colleagues and your supervisor.



ACTIVITY 2

Using the Two Reference Sheets — *Reminder: Active Offer of Services in Both Official Languages and On the Telephone*

(25–45 minutes)

Step 1. You can use the two reference sheets in Appendix A and Appendix B to help you in your own work. The sheet *Reminder: Active Offer of Services in Both Official Languages* provides a checklist of techniques. The sheet *On the Telephone* provides useful expressions for making an active offer in both official languages. Read both sheets now.

Step 2. On the *Active Offer* sheet, note the techniques that apply to your own workplace, and prepare the material you need to make an active offer. For example, make a contact list of bilingual employees in your office. See if you can add to the list of suggested techniques for making an active offer.

Step 3. Use the *On the Telephone* sheet to make a list of expressions that you can use in answering and transferring telephone calls.

Step 4. Discuss the techniques used in making an active offer in your office with your colleagues or those in other work units.

Quality Service for Your Official Language Minority Clientele

Quality service involves courtesy, promptness, accurate information, understanding and respect for your clients' needs, including their choice of language. Quality service in both official languages includes such elements as:

- knowing your official language minority clientele, its needs and its expectations;
- publicizing your services; and
- creating good communications and feedback mechanisms on your services.



Keeping in Touch With Your Official Language Minority Clientele

In all Canadian provinces and territories, official language minority communities are represented by recognized associations or federations. The representatives of these organizations are excellent resources to help you identify the specific needs and expectations of their communities.

It is in our best interest to establish good relations with these communities and their associations. The regional offices of Canadian Heritage or the Official Languages Branch of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat can assist you in establishing contact with minority language associations. Associations can also be found on the Official Languages Branch Web site under "Links–Communities" at <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ollo> or <http://publiservice.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ollo>.

ACTIVITY 3

Learning More About Minority Language Associations

(25–45 minutes)

Step 1. Go to the Web site of the Official Languages Branch mentioned above and get acquainted with the headings used on the site. Follow some links that look interesting to you in order to get an idea of what the site contains. Print out some pages that might be helpful.

Step 2. Using the Official Languages Branch Web site, make a list of minority language associations and federations in your region.

Step 3. Make a list of questions that could be used when contacting the associations about the services provided by your office. Think about likely answers. Here are some possible questions:

- Does the community know about my offices and services?
- Are members of the community in touch with my office?



- What types of services are they interested in from my office?
- Are members of the community satisfied with the services my office provides?
- Are members of the community satisfied that they can obtain these services in the language of their choice?

Step 4. Discuss your suggested questions and the likely answers with your colleagues and your supervisor. Perhaps contact those responsible for official languages in your institution to find out what information has already been collected, and whether or not a direct approach to the minority associations would be useful at this time.

ACTIVITY 4

How Satisfactory Are Your Services?

(20–30 minutes)

The Commissioner of Official Languages is the ombudsman and critic of the official languages program. In the Commissioner's annual report, there is information on the performance of your institution, and the satisfaction of official language minority communities with it.

Step 1. Go to the Commissioner's Web site at <http://www.ocolclo.gc.ca> and get acquainted with the headings used. Follow some links that look interesting to you in order to get an idea of what the site contains.

Step 2. Look up the most recent annual report, found under "Information Material — Reports and Special Studies," and see what it says about your institution. Would the information there help your work unit to improve service to the public in its preferred official language? Make a list of your suggestions and discuss them with your colleagues and your supervisor.



Future Directions: The Importance of Quality Service in Both Official Languages is Increasing!

The government launched a major initiative in the Year 2000 to improve citizen access to quality service and to focus directly on client satisfaction. Service in both official languages is clearly central to this initiative. See, for example, the section on “Citizen-Centred Service Delivery” in *Results for Canadians*, a Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat report available on the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Web site at <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca> or <http://publiservice.tbs-sct.gc.ca>.



Module 2

New Partnerships, New Technologies

The Public Service is exploring innovative ways to deliver quality service to the public in the language of its choice. Two important tools are new partnering arrangements and new technologies.

New Partnerships

The Canadian public has come to expect more streamlined services from its governments. To deliver on this expectation, the federal government has undertaken a number of initiatives including the creation of partnership or collaborative arrangements between federal institutions, other levels of government, and the private and voluntary sectors.

When services are offered under partnering arrangements, they too must be provided to the public in the official language of its choice in accordance with the *Official Languages Act* and *Regulations* (section 25 of the Act). The rule for services provided by others on behalf of your organization is clear: if your partner cannot provide the service in both official languages, then your organization must provide it.

Please note: Make sure official languages obligations are included in partnering arrangements from the outset because it may be difficult to add them in later on. These obligations may require a specific clause in the agreement.



ACTIVITY 1

Partnering Innovations and Best Practices

(20–35 minutes)

Step 1. The video *Official Languages ... A Matter of Service* mentions the increasing importance of partnering. Find out about some partnership agreements in your organization. What are some advantages of partnering for your institution? How do existing partnering agreements deal with official languages issues?

Step 2. Get a copy of *Official Languages: Words in Deed! Official Languages Best Practices Compendium (1999)* by the Official Languages Branch (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat), or see it under “Publications” on the Official Languages Branch Web site at <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ollo> or <http://www.publiservice.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ollo>. Read about the examples of partnering in Section 2, pages 11–14. Are any suited for application in your own work environment?

New Technologies

Services are delivered to the public in various ways today, and the methods of service delivery are increasing. Let’s begin by looking at examples of older technologies in the video, and then consider the newer technologies that may be of use in your workplace.

ACTIVITY 2

Using Older Technologies

(25–35 minutes)

Go through *Official Languages ... A Matter of Service* again, checking off traditional techniques that you see for delivering services to the public in both official languages.



Older Technologies	Shown in Video
Telephone greetings	
Face-to-face reception greetings	
Recorded messages	
Official languages symbol	
General bilingual signage	
Publications	
Displays	
Posters	
Telephone book listings	
1-800 lines	
Logos	
Stationery	
Advertising	
Automated information systems	
Automated message routing systems and voice mail	
Other examples of older technology	



A Closer Look at New Technologies

We turn now to the new technologies for delivering service to the official language minority clientele. The full list includes such things as the following (you will remember seeing some in the video):

- internal and external Web sites
- alternative electronic publications (such as CD-ROM)
- electronic connections to other offices
- e-mail and e-mail delivery systems
- computer terminals in kiosks
- automated mailing lists
- newsgroups
- hyperlinks to other Web sites
- electronic financial transactions
- electronic information returns
- fax-back systems for frequently asked questions
- miscellaneous audio and video information services

ACTIVITY 3

Learning More About New Technologies

(25–45 minutes)

Step 1. Does your work unit make good use of the old and new technologies listed above? Is the service to the official language minority clientele good in both old and new technologies? Discuss your observations with others in your office or your group.

Step 2. The Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's Web site (<http://www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca/menu-e.html>) has a reputation as a site that is well-structured and easy to get around. Go to the site and see how easy it is to navigate through it and change from one



official language to another. Make notes on your findings. Now go to your institution's Web site and note how easy or difficult it is to get around and to switch from one language to the other. Discuss your findings with others in your office or group.

Step 3. For an in-depth look at new technology and official languages, go to the Web site of the Commissioner of Official Languages and read *The Government of Canada and French on the Internet (1999)* and *Use of the Internet by Federal Institutions (1999)*. Both documents are under "Information Materials — Reports and Special Studies" at <http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca>. Note that the Commissioner criticized some common government practices. How do you think your organization would rate in these areas today?

You can also go to the above Web site to see what the Commissioner said about your organization's service delivery in both official languages using new technologies in the most recent annual report.

You may want to look at the Treasury Board's *Policy on Using the Official Languages on Electronic Networks*, available under "Policies — Policies on Official Languages" on the Official Languages Branch Web site at <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ollo> or <http://publiservice.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ollo>.

Future Directions: When Introducing Innovations in Service Delivery, Paying Attention to the Official Languages is More Important Than Ever!

New technologies and new partnerships are being introduced at every organizational level. In each case, everyone involved must actively support the enhancement of service in both languages as required under the Act. For example, see Chapter 2 of *No Turning Back — Report of the Task Force on Government Transformations and Official Languages*, under "Publications" on the Official Languages Branch Web site mentioned above.



Module 3

Bilingual Offices

The *Official Languages Act* and *Regulations* set out where communications and services must be provided in English and French. There are many legal requirements, some quite complex. Fortunately, there is an on-line list of offices and service points with obligations in both official languages for easy reference.

Determining the Official Languages Status of Your Office

Burolis, the Directory of Offices and Service Points, lists service points of federal institutions and privatized organizations subject to the provisions of the *Official Languages Act* and *Regulations*. Burolis may be accessed through the Official Languages Branch Web site at <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ollo> or <http://publiservice.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ollo>. The list indicates where the service points are located, and whether there is an obligation to communicate with the public in both official languages (B = Bilingual; U = Unilingual).

ACTIVITY 1

Your Office

(5–15 minutes)

Go to Burolis on the Web and look up the status of your own office and those offices you deal with in your work. If you are aware of any changes in your organization that have not been reflected in Burolis yet, speak to the manager concerned so they can be reported to the official languages staff in your organization.



ACTIVITY 2

Bilingual Capacity Check

(15–25 minutes)

In bilingual offices and facilities, there must be sufficient bilingual capacity to meet the legal requirements and to satisfy clients. To check your work unit's capacity, you have to look at three specific areas: reception, follow-up services, and back-up staff.

Step 1. Reception

All staff involved in front-line service to the public at bilingual service points, whether they work face-to-face, on the telephone or via e-mail, must be able to make an active offer in both official languages. Unilingual staff must be able to transfer clients speaking the other official language promptly and cheerfully to a colleague who speaks the client's preferred official language.

Please note: When you have to make a stop-gap arrangement to cover for an unexpected shortage of bilingual staff, the arrangement can be left in place only until proper service in both languages is restored.

Question: Does everyone in your work unit recognize their obligations and carry them out "with a smile"? Would showing the video *Official Languages ... A Matter of Service* to others in your office help them to improve their service to the public?

Step 2. Follow-up services

After the initial greeting, there must be enough bilingual staff to give service of equal quality in both official languages. Providing services in the minority language may be organized in various ways, for example through specific bilingual positions or by an all-bilingual staff.



Question: How is minority language service organized in your work unit? Could the service be improved by having the members of the work unit discuss innovations in delivering quality services in both languages?

Step 3. Back-up staff

Both reception and follow-up services must have back-ups for times when the primary service providers are on break, on leave, on training, transferred, etc. The back-up can be provided by another part of your work unit, a different work unit, a partner or new technology. However, back-up services in both languages must be of equal quality, and they must still be provided promptly and cheerfully. When stop-gap arrangements are required, they must be in place only until proper services in both languages are restored.

Question: Does your work unit have clear plans for effective back-up services in the minority language? Would exploring new service delivery options with members of the work unit help to improve the back-up plans?

ACTIVITY 3

Improving Your Second Language

(15–30 minutes)

Step 1. The video *Official Languages ... A Matter of Service* shows a few examples of ways for individuals to improve their knowledge of the second official language. What other ways can you think of to improve your second language? Note the examples of training initiatives in Section 4 of *Official Languages: Words in Deed! Official Languages Best Practices Compendium (1999)* available under “Publications” on the Official Languages Branch Web site at <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ollo> or <http://publiservice.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ollo>.



Step 2. If any of the ideas you have collected could be of use in your work unit, discuss them with your colleagues. To follow up, you might consult a person responsible for official languages in your organization about new and useful ways for individuals to improve their second language.

ACTIVITY 4

Consulting an Expert

(25–45 minutes or more)

Invite a person responsible for official languages in your organization to come and talk to your work unit on ways to improve your individual and group bilingual capacity. Prepare a list of questions to ask the expert about such things as the following:

- training for those in bilingual positions;
- formal centralized language training courses offered by the Public Service Commission of Canada or the private sector;
- formal courses and tutorials offered in your organization;
- outside courses that are available to you and others in your work unit; and
- informal forms of training.

You may also want to take this opportunity to ask the expert about the following:

- new official languages policies or procedures in your organization;
- the role of the official languages champion in your organization;



- areas in which your organization might improve its service in both official languages — see the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat annual reports available on the Official Languages Branch Web site mentioned above under “Publications — Annual Reports on Official Languages”; see also the most recent annual report of the Commissioner of Official Languages available under “Information Material — Reports and Special Studies” on the Web site of the Commissioner of Official Languages at <http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca>;
- ways to improve signage in both official languages;
- ways to use new technologies to deliver services in both official languages;
- the use of partnering in delivering services in both official languages; and
- future directions.



Module 4

The *Official Languages Act* and *Regulations*

The *Official Languages Act* has four major areas of impact on institutions:

- service to the public (the subject of the video);
- language of work;
- equitable participation; and
- support for official language minority communities.

For information on the last three areas, go to the Official Languages Branch Web site at <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ollo> or <http://publiservice.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ollo> and look under “Policies — Policies on Official Languages.”

The Act gives members of the public the right to receive services in their preferred official language, and puts the obligation on institutions to provide such services under specific conditions.

The *Official Languages Act*, 1988 — Services to the public

Every institution must ensure that members of the public can communicate with and receive services from it in both official languages at offices in the National Capital Region, and from head or central offices, as well as in the following offices or facilities in Canada or elsewhere:

- where there is significant demand;
- when serving the travelling public where there is significant demand; and



- when the nature of the office is such that:
 - i) the service affects the health, safety or security of the public;
 - ii) the location of the office justifies it; or
 - iii) the national or international mandate of the office justifies it.

This obligation applies to the institution and to any third parties providing service on its behalf. There must be an active offer in both official languages for all services set out above (refer to Module 1).

The Official Languages (Communications with and Services to the Public) Regulations, 1991 — Significant Demand and Nature of the Office

The *Regulations* define “significant demand” for English and French in terms of the following:

- the size and proportion of the linguistic minority in the region being served; and
- the proportion of the clientele that requests service in the minority language in situations where the statistics on the linguistic population are of secondary importance (e.g. as with the travelling public).

The *Regulations* define the “nature of the office” in terms of the following:

- its mandate for health, safety and security of the public (e.g. emergency services and signage);
- its national or international mandate (e.g. principal border crossings or embassies); and
- its location (e.g. in a federal park).



Beyond the Letter of the Law

Ultimately, service is provided by one person to another person. Organizations should orient employees in bilingual service points to recognize that it is **everyone's** responsibility to see that requests for service in either official language are met. A positive attitude and courteous behaviour are prerequisites. Providing clients with service in their preferred language and “with a smile” is part of effective service and good client satisfaction. Your challenge is to go beyond the letter of the law and regulations and bring their fundamental values alive in your work.

A good way to spread the word is to watch and discuss *Official Languages ... A Matter of Service*.

Situations Requiring Special Attention

Certain types of service require special attention to make sure that a true active offer of service is in place. One important example is when a member of the public is required to comply with federal laws as requested by an authorized government official. Such situations include the following:

- a customs inspection;
- a federal income tax audit;
- arrest by the RCMP; or
- detention in a federal institution.

Particularly in situations like these, where the government may well appear intimidating, Canadians must be given the opportunity to communicate in their own official language. Other situations requiring special attention are those in public transportation — planes, trains and ferries — as well as those involving emergency services.



ACTIVITY 1

Special Measures

(25–35 minutes)

Step 1. Go through *Official Languages ... A Matter of Service* once more and list as many situations as you can that show:

- emergency-related services;
- services provided to the travelling public;
- situations where Canadians have legal obligations in accordance with certain federal laws; or
- other situations that you feel should get special attention.

Step 2. If you were involved in one of the situations requiring special attention listed above, what special measures would you consider to ensure that an active offer of service and good service in both official languages are in place?

Take, for example, the case of customs officers who must process clients quickly, but where some of these clients may become nervous when asked numerous questions. What special measures would you take to ensure that clients receive better service in the language of their choice?

ACTIVITY 2

A Reasonable Approach

(10–20 minutes)

The *Official Languages Act and Regulations* are designed to provide services in English and French in a way that is fair to official language minority communities, whether small or large. They are designed to reflect the reality of Canada in a balanced, reasonable way.

Some people fear that services in the minority official language from local offices will be reduced, especially in rural areas, because



the minority language groups are declining in size. On the other hand, new electronic services delivered to all Canadians from head and central offices, and from offices with large service areas, will always have to provide equal quality of service in both official languages. These new electronic services will then also be available in rural areas.

Question: How much change do you see happening with respect to the way services are delivered by your organization? How do these changes affect the way services are delivered in each of the official languages by your work unit? What further changes do you see coming in the future? Discuss your observations with others in your office or your group.

ACTIVITY 3

Quiz on the *Official Languages Act*

(10 minutes)

Answer “true” or “false” to the following statements to check your general knowledge of the Act. Then check your answers against the answer key in Appendix C.

- 1.** The primary reason the Act was passed was to ensure service to the public in English and French.
True _____ False _____
- 2.** The Act confers on members of the public the obligation to request service in the official language of their choice.
True _____ False _____
- 3.** The Act obliges institutions to provide service to the public in the two official languages in certain circumstances.
True _____ False _____



4. Individual public servants have linguistic obligations only if they occupy bilingual positions.
True _____ False _____
5. The Act gives members of the public the right to choose the official language in which they wish to be served.
True _____ False _____
6. Under the Act, institutions are obliged to announce that service is available in both official languages.
True _____ False _____
7. The obligation to make an “active offer” of service does not apply to communications with visitors to Canada and federal inmates.
True _____ False _____

ACTIVITY 4

Matching Exercise on a Brief History of Official Languages

(20 minutes)

Match the historical events with the dates on which they took place. Then check your answers against the answer key in Appendix D. In the answer key, you will find many other events listed in order to flesh out the long history of official languages in Canada.

1867 1969 1973 1977 1982 1988 1991 Today

1. The first *Official Languages Act* introduces the equal status of French and English, and service to the public in both languages, which are taken up by the *Charter*. It also establishes the post of Commissioner of Official Languages.
2. The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* enshrines the official language rights of Canadians.



3. The *British North America Act*, passed at Confederation, provides for English and French in the parliaments and laws of Canada and Quebec.
4. Official languages obligations continue to apply to privatized corporations (e.g. Air Canada, local airport authorities).
5. The bilingualism bonus (\$800) is introduced.
6. The new *Official Languages Act* reinforces the *Charter* with specific obligations for public service institutions to deliver services in English and French. It also sets out obligations in other areas, such as language of work and equitable participation.
7. The *Parliamentary Resolution* begins to institutionalize the official languages program in federal institutions by establishing the language requirements of positions and the right for some employees to remain unilingual (Exclusion Order).
8. The *Official Languages Regulations* on services to the public complete the *Official Languages Act* by setting out where service to the public is required in English and French.



Appendix A

Reminder: Active Offer of Services in Both Official Languages

Your public is entitled to receive services in both official languages. You have the obligation to actively offer your services. Your professionalism in this area will be appreciated by your clientele and the benefits will be yours to reap.

On the Telephone

Greeting

- Always answer in both official languages.
- Depending on the province, use the official language of the majority first and that of the official language minority second.
- Continue the conversation in the official language chosen by your client and use the corresponding documentation.

Transfer of Calls

- Keep a list of bilingual employees close at hand.
- Inform your client that you are referring him/her to someone else.
- Give the client the name and the phone number of this person and tell the client this person is bilingual.
- Inform your colleague of the language used by your client.



Feedback

- At the end of a prolonged exchange, summarize the points discussed.
- Ask for comments on the quality of service.
- Leave the door open to other questions.

In Person

Verbal Greeting

- Always greet your client in both official languages.
- Depending on the province, use the official language of the majority first and that of the official language minority second.
- Continue the conversation in the official language chosen by your client and use the corresponding documentation.

Greeting — Visual Aspect

- Make sure the official languages symbol is clearly visible to the public and that it properly directs them to where they can be served in both official languages.
- Make sure documentation, newspapers, magazines, etc., are displayed in both English and French.
- Ask your clients from time to time if the signs and posters in your office properly reflect its bilingual nature.
- Inform your supervisor of your clients' views and tell him/her what is lacking or what could be improved in the visual aspect of your office to make both language groups feel more welcome.



Referral to Another Employee

- Keep a list of bilingual employees close at hand.
- Inform your client that you are going to ask someone else to see him/her.
- Give your client the name of this person and, if necessary, the phone number.
- Tell the client this person is bilingual.
- Inform your colleague of the language of the client.

Feedback

- Assess the interchange.
- Make sure all questions have been dealt with to the satisfaction of the client.
- Ask for comments on the quality of service.

Write down the form of greeting used in your office for easy reference:

For more information on service to the public and the active offer of services in both official languages, see the video Official Languages ... A Matter of Service, available in your institution, and produced in the Year 2000 by the Official Languages Branch of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat in partnership with other organizations.



Appendix B

On the Telephone

English — French Glossary

Area code	<i>Indicatif régional</i>
Call transfer	<i>Transfert d'appel</i>
Hold the line.	<i>Ne quittez pas.</i>
Information	<i>Renseignements</i>
Local, extension number	<i>Poste</i>
Long distance	<i>Interurbain</i>
Switchboard	<i>Standard</i>
Switchboard operator	<i>Standardiste</i>
Telephone directory, book	<i>Annuaire</i>
The line is busy.	<i>La ligne est occupée.</i>
The line is noisy.	<i>La communication est mauvaise.</i>
There is a problem with the line.	<i>La ligne est en dérangement.</i>
To cancel a call	<i>Annuler un appel</i>
To connect	<i>Donner la communication</i>
To dial nine	<i>Faire le neuf</i>
To dial a number	<i>Composer un numéro</i>
To hang up	<i>Raccrocher</i>
To make a call	<i>Faire un appel</i>



To receive a call	<i>Recevoir un appel</i>
To transfer a call	<i>Passer la communication</i>
Weekdays	<i>En semaine</i>
Who is speaking, please?	<i>De la part de qui, S.V.P.?</i>
You are welcome.	<i>De rien. Il n'y a pas de quoi.</i>

Useful Expressions

May I help you?	<i>Puis-je vous être utile?</i>
One moment please.	<i>Un instant S.V.P.</i>
Thank you.	<i>Merci.</i>
I'm sorry.	<i>Je regrette.</i>
He/She is unable to accept your call at the moment.	<i>Il (elle) est occupé(e) présentement.</i>
He/She is away from the office at the moment (today).	<i>Il (elle) est absente de son bureau (aujourd'hui).</i>
You have the wrong number.	<i>Vous vous trompez de numéro.</i>
He/She is expected to return tomorrow (in ten minutes/one hour/two days/three weeks).	<i>Il (elle) sera de retour demain (dans dix minutes, une heure, deux jours, trois semaines).</i>
Do you wish to leave a message?	<i>Désirez-vous laisser un message?</i>
Would you mind repeating your message please?	<i>Pourriez-vous répéter S.V.P.?</i>



Would you care to
speak to someone else?

*Aimeriez-vous parler à
quelqu'un d'autre?*

May I take your name and
telephone number please?

*Puis-je avoir votre nom et
votre numéro de téléphone
S.V.P.?*

May I have him/her return
your call?

*Puis-je lui demander de
vous rappeler?*

Do you wish to make
an appointment?

*Désirez-vous prendre
un rendez-vous?*

I will transfer your call
to Mrs. X / Mr. Y.

*Je vous passe madame X
(monsieur Y).*

Mrs. X / Mr. Y does not
work here anymore.

*Madame X (monsieur Y)
ne travaille plus ici.*

You are welcome. Goodbye.

*De rien, monsieur
(madame), au revoir.*



Appendix C

Answer Key to the Quiz on the *Official Languages Act*

1. The primary reason the Act was passed was to ensure service to the public in English and French. **TRUE.**
2. The Act confers on members of the public the obligation to request service in the official language of their choice. **FALSE.** Members of the public may receive services in their preferred official language. They are not, however, obliged to request service in one official language or the other: the onus is on organizations to make an active offer in both languages.
3. The Act obliges institutions to provide service to the public in the two official languages in certain circumstances. **TRUE.**
4. Individual public servants have linguistic obligations only if they occupy bilingual positions. **FALSE.** In bilingual offices and service points, even employees in unilingual positions must co-operate in making an active offer of services in both official languages.
5. The Act gives members of the public the right to choose the official language in which they wish to be served. **TRUE.**
6. Under the Act, institutions are obliged to announce that service is available in both official languages. **TRUE.**
7. The obligation to make an “active offer” of service does not apply to communications with visitors to Canada and federal inmates. **FALSE.** The obligation to make an active offer applies to communications with any member of the public at bilingual service points.



Appendix D

Answer Key to the Matching Exercise on a Brief History of Official Languages

- 1759** Battle of the Plains of Abraham.
- 1774** *Quebec Act* grants concessions regarding religion and law.
- 1867** The *British North America Act*, passed at Confederation, provides for English and French in the parliaments and laws of Canada and Quebec.
- 1882** The *Civil Service Act* establishes examinations in French, English, or both, at the applicant's option.
- 1888** The *Civil Service Act* provides an annual bonus of \$50 to candidates having the ability to write in the other official language.
- 1927** Postage stamps become bilingual.
- 1934** The Translation Bureau is created.
- 1936** Bank notes become bilingual.
- 1959** Simultaneous interpretation is introduced in the House of Commons.
- 1961** The *Civil Service Act* stipulates that the number of employees qualified in French or English or both shall be sufficient to give effective service to the public.
- 1963** The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism begins hearings.
- 1964** The Language Training Bureau is established.



- 1966** Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson's declaration sets goals for service to the public in the official language of choice; for language of work; and for the protection of the careers of unilingual civil servants.
- 1967** Bilingualism advisors are established in departments and agencies and the *Public Service Employment Act* includes language in the merit principle.
- 1969** The first *Official Languages Act* introduces the equal status of French and English, and service to the public in both languages, which are taken up by the *Charter*. It also establishes the post of Commissioner of Official Languages.
- 1973** The *Parliamentary Resolution* begins to institutionalize the official languages program in federal institutions by establishing the language requirements of positions and the right for some employees to remain unilingual (Exclusion Order).
- 1974** The *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act* comes into force, and there is bilingual air traffic control in Quebec.
- 1977** The bilingualism bonus (\$800) is introduced.
- 1978** *Criminal Code* amendments on official languages in the courts.
- 1980** Creation of Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons on Official Languages.
- 1982** The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* enshrines the official language rights of Canadians.



- 1988** The new *Official Languages Act* reinforces the *Charter* with specific obligations for public service institutions to deliver services in English and French. It also sets out obligations in other areas, such as language of work and equitable participation.
- 1991** The *Official Languages Regulations* on services to the public complete the *Official Languages Act* by setting out where service to the public is required in English and French.
- Today** Official languages obligations continue to apply to privatized corporations (e.g. Air Canada, local airport authorities).