

11 French outside New Brunswick and Quebec

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INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I will examine various measures of the vitality of the francophone minorities living outside Quebec and New Brunswick. These will include information on the availability of French-medium schooling and other kinds of institutional support for French, and statistics on the French mother-tongue population - e.g., retention of French at home, use of French in other domains of society, bilingualism in English, birth rate, rate of linguistic reproduction, etc. This examination will lead to an assessment of the chances of short- and longer-term survival of these francophone communities.

BRIEF HISTORY

The presence of about 750, 000 French-speaking Canadians outside New Brunswick and Quebec can be traced back to two distinct sources. East of New Brunswick, in the provinces of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, the great majority of francophones are of Acadian ancestry. In the province of Newfoundland, francophones who reside on the island are mostly of Acadian ancestry¹, while those in Labrador are chiefly of *Québécois* ancestry or are Quebec-born. Before being deported by Britain in 1755, Acadians had expanded beyond their original colony in Port-Royal, Nova Scotia (a settlement dating from 1605) to various regions of the Atlantic provinces (e.g., eastern New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton). A few decades after deportation, a significant number of Acadians were allowed to come back to the Atlantic provinces, where they joined the few who had escaped deportation, and settled in several regions of these provinces. Nearly all of today's Acadian population located east of New Brunswick is the result of this process of resettlement. West of Quebec, the presence of francophone communities is primarily the result of immigration originating mostly from Quebec, that started as early as the end of the seventeenth century². These migratory waves can be ascribed to three factors:

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a) development of the fur trade (in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries); b) overpopulation in several rural areas of Quebec (emigration due to this factor started in the first half of the nineteenth century); c) lack of employment opportunities in certain sectors of Quebec industry.

Ontario was the first province where Quebecers came to settle, arriving at the turn of the 18th century. In Manitoba, the first settlers from Quebec arrived around 1720, in Saskatchewan around 1760, in Alberta about 1780 and in British Columbia around 1800. Francophones started to arrive in the Northwest Territories and in the Yukon towards the turn of the twentieth century. In historical terms, then, the arrival of francophones, east of New Brunswick and west of Quebec, clearly predates the arrival of the immigrants from continental Europe and even from Britain. Indeed, in the early stages of the history of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, the presence of French-speaking *Métis* (people of French-Canadian and Indian ancestry) was so substantial that the Manitoba Act of 1870 and the Northwest Territories Act of 1891 included sections which accorded an official status to the French language in the legislative assemblies, in the courts of justice and (in Manitoba) in the educational domain. Francophone emigration from Quebec to Ontario and to the western provinces has continued up to the present with varying strength. Therefore, the *Québécois* roots of francophones west of Quebec go back to a more or less remote period of Canadian history.

During the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century, in the area of English Canada under study, francophones were generally able to establish more or less self-contained communities with the help of the Catholic Church. In such communities, they were mostly involved in a limited number of primary-sector economic activities (e.g., agriculture, fishing), they had their own parish schools and churches which were run by members of the French Canadian clergy and, hence, they were in a strong position to reproduce the traditional linguistic and cultural heritages of the Acadians and of the *Québécois*. After this period, however, they lost much of their cultural and economic autonomy - for several main reasons. With the establishment of the Canadian confederation in 1867, education became a provincial responsibility and, during the second half of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century, all the provinces located east and west of Quebec (including New Brunswick) passed educational acts which enshrined the principles of centralized education. These acts banned the use of French as a medium of instruction in the systems of public schools and/or abolished the provision of financial support to Catholic schools.³ Immigrants who did not speak French (initially, mostly anglophones)

arrived in increasing numbers, both east and west of Quebec, and developed sectors of the economy that became increasingly important for the survival of francophones (e.g., commerce and industry). Because they were under anglophone control, these sectors were an additional source of exposure to the Canadian English language and culture. The influx of growing numbers of non-French speaking immigrants also meant that in all of the provinces east of New Brunswick and west of Quebec, francophones became very small minorities (see below). This probably made it easier for provinces such as Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta to pass legislation which put an end to the special or official status formerly accorded to French by their own Legislative Assemblies or by the Northwest Territories Act - or simply to cease to abide by the old legislation. Two other factors contributed to the erosion of the economic, linguistic and cultural autonomy of French Canadians: the growth of the public sector (e.g., government and health) - and hence of key institutions in which French is not used; and expansion of the mass media, another domain which is largely dominated by English.

Another important stage in the history of the French-Canadian minorities needs to be mentioned. Up to the beginning of Quebec's 'Quiet Revolution' in the early 1960s, these minorities, and especially their leaders, had strong ties with each other and most crucially with their *Quebécois* counterparts. French Quebecers and francophones outside Quebec would refer to themselves as French Canadians (*Canadiens français*). This unity proved important during the darkest times. For instance, when Ontario passed its infamous regulation banning the use of French in all of its public schools, in 1912, Franco-Ontarians were able to organize a strong movement of resistance thanks to the help of various Quebec-based religious, cultural and political organizations. During the 1960s and 1970s, however, francophones in Quebec developed a strong sense of national distinctive identity. They no longer referred to themselves as French Canadians but as *Québécois*. They also became less and less concerned about the fate of Canada's francophone minorities and took a series of major steps to (re)gain control of the economy of their province and to ensure the continued survival of French in Quebec. In consequence, the different francophone minorities developed their own distinctive identities and started to refer to themselves by distinctive names (e.g., *Franco-Ontariens*, *Franco-Manitobains*, *Fransasquois*). They also realized that their survival depends less and less on what the federal state can or will do to advance their cause and is increasingly influenced by decisions made by their respective provincial governments. Consequently, over the last twenty-five years, much of their political struggle to (re)gain linguistic

rights has been waged primarily without the help of Quebec and has been oriented to their provincial governments. As the twentieth century draws to a close, the French-Canadian community has entered what seems to be an irrevocable stage of fragmentation as well as one of increased estrangement between Quebec and the French Canadian minorities.⁴

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Institutional support for French

While much of the history of the French-Canadian minorities has been characterized by a significant erosion of their economic, cultural and linguistic autonomy - brought about in part by a series of discriminatory or assimilationist measures taken by various provincial governments - there has been a partial reversal of such measures in relation to French-medium education and to the use of French in public-sector institutions over the last twenty-five years or so. I will deal first with education.

In the late sixties, two provinces took steps which allowed the use of French as a medium of instruction in the public schools - Manitoba, which allowed francophones to be schooled in French for half of the school day from 1967, and for the entire day from 1970; and Ontario, which allowed Franco-Ontarians to be schooled entirely in French in its public schools from 1968. Prior to this, Ontario had tolerated the use of French as a medium of instruction in its Catholic schools. More recently, when Canada repatriated its constitution in 1982, it adopted a new Charter of Rights and Freedoms; this includes two sections on the linguistic rights of Canadians (one on the official languages of Canada and another on the educational rights of Canada's official minorities - francophones outside Quebec and anglophones in Quebec). The Charter section on educational rights states quite clearly that Canadians who live outside Quebec and who claim French as a mother tongue have the right to send their children to French medium 'educational facilities provided out of public funds', provided that there is a sufficient number of children to warrant the establishment of such facilities.⁵ During the 1980- 81 negotiations which led to the drafting of the Charter, and after its adoption, all of the provinces west of Manitoba and east of New Brunswick, and the Northwest Territories and the Yukon, took steps to offer French - medium schooling to their francophone minorities.⁶ It should be noted, however, that in many instances these measures were taken after a series of court actions launched by the francophone minorities and backed financially by the federal government which has committed itself, in its Official Languages Acts (see

below), to providing significant sums of money to help the anglophone provinces to establish French-medium schools.

Several studies (Churchill, Frenette and Quazi, 1985; Martel, 1994; Tymms and Churchill, 1987) show that there is growing support for French medium schools among the francophone minorities. For instance, in Ontario, the great majority of children of French mother tongue are enrolled in elementary French-medium schools. The implementation of the right to French medium schooling in anglophone Canada seems already to have had several positive outcomes. Before the creation of elementary and secondary French-medium schools, French Canadians were lagging considerably behind English Canadians in average level of schooling and, notably, in literacy. Studies carried out in the provinces where French-medium public schools were established in the 1960s (e.g., Ontario) suggest that this gap may narrow because of these schools. For instance, Churchill, Frenette and Quazi (1985) point to the fact that before the establishment of French-medium public schools, Franco-Ontarians had school drop-out rates which were much higher than those of Anglo-Ontarians; in contrast, during the 1970s, Franco-Ontarian drop-out rates have decreased significantly. In a related vein, Porter, Porter and Blishen (1982), in their study of educational inequalities in the Ontario schools, found that Franco-Ontarian students enrolled in French-medium schools have much more positive academic self-concept and higher post-secondary aspirations than counterparts enrolled in English-medium schools. It is also important to point out that French - Canadian students enrolled in minority French-medium schools have been found to have much higher rates of French achievement compared to French- Canadian students who are primarily or entirely schooled in English (see, for instance, Hebert's 1976 study of the school achievement of Franco-Manitoban students).

If considerable progress in the area of French-medium elementary and secondary education has been made during the last twenty-five years, there is still much room for improvement at the post-secondary level, even in those provinces which took early steps to establish French-medium education facilities. For instance, Ontario has yet to establish a full-fledged French-medium university comparable to the English-medium universities of Quebec, and has only very recently started to establish French-medium community colleges on a scale comparable to that of Quebec's English-medium 'CEGEPS' (Colleges d'enseignement general et professionnel). East of New Brunswick and west of Ontario, the availability of French-medium post-secondary schools is even more restricted

than in Ontario. It is reasonable to assume that progress made on this front will also have positive impact on the educational levels of the francophone minorities, and that this in turn may bring about an increase in the proportion of francophones in the occupational categories where they have been underrepresented (e.g., administration, natural sciences and engineering, medicine and health). Progress here would also narrow the differential in average income between francophones and anglophones which still exists in most of the majority anglophone provinces (see Bernard, 1991b)⁷,

Let us now turn to the use of French in public-sector institutions. The federal parliament passed two Official Languages Acts, one in 1969 and another in 1988, which commit it: (a) to provide services in French or in English in the institutions which fall within its jurisdiction (ministries, agencies, national public broadcasting companies) in designated areas; (b) to increase the proportional representation of francophone civil servants outside Quebec and anglophone civil servants in Quebec; (c) to offer (more) opportunities to francophone civil servants outside Quebec to use French at work. As noted earlier, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms also includes a section which declares that French and English are the two official languages of Canada and which confirms that Canadians have the right to receive services in the official language of their choice.

In a recent evaluation of Canada's official languages policies, Fortier (1994), former Commissioner of Official Languages, noted that the objective of proportional representation of francophones in the federal government has been met, but that significant progress still needs to be made in the attainment of the first and third goals. As a user of federal government services in one of the areas that were designated for the implementation of the 1988 Official Languages Act - namely, Toronto - I agree with the Commissioner's assessment, especially regarding the third objective. Still, the implementation of the Official Languages Acts has had a number of positive effects on exposure to French among Canada's French-speaking minorities. Most of the written information produced by federal government institutions for the general public (ads, brochures, forms, signs, etc.) is now available in French; the French CBC radio and television stations are now readily available in most regions of the anglophone provinces where French Canadians are located; and recently the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission passed a regulation which has improved the availability outside Quebec of the French-language programmes offered by the international consortium of French television companies (TV5), and of the new

continuous news television channel run by the French CBC. It should be borne in mind, however, that these French media are vastly out-numbered by a large array of English ones (all the more so now that cable television has become more widely available) which offer a much wider spectrum of programmes (including programmes that are reflective of the local communities).

As concerns the use of French in the institutions which fall under the jurisdiction of the provincial governments, it can be pointed out that only two provinces (Ontario and Manitoba) and the Yukon and Northwest Territories have taken steps somewhat analogous to the federal Official Languages Acts. The 1986 French Languages Services Act passed by the Ontario government deserves a special mention. Although its implementation entails only limited provision of oral French services and is unlikely to have much of an impact on the use of French as language of work, it has had a noticeable impact on the availability of official information written in French (e.g., forms, ministry or crown agency publications, signs, etc.) and of spoken French media. Since 1988, Franco-Ontarians have had access, via cable television, to a full-fledged educational television channel (TFO) supported by provincial funds. Beyond its primary impact, this channel also provides significant assistance to Ontario's network of French-medium elementary and secondary schools.

In contrast to Ontario and Manitoba, the other provinces have either abstained from taking special measures to promote the use of French in the institutions which fall within their jurisdiction or, like Alberta and Saskatchewan, have actually moved to restrict the language rights of their francophone minorities. These restrictive measures were taken when the two provinces were reminded, by rulings of the Supreme Court of Canada, of their obligation to abide by the rules of parliamentary, legislative and judiciary bilingualism formulated in Section 110 of the 1891 Northwest Territories Act.

Except for the 1975 federal regulations which make it mandatory to produce bilingual packages, labels and user manuals for products sold in Canada, language-centered government interventions in the private sector have been minimal. In theory, the regulations on bilingual packaging are important for exposure to French in English Canada. However, the quality of the French version of the bilingual text is often poor and sometimes grossly inaccurate, a strong disincentive to its use by francophones in anglophone Canada (particularly since almost all of them are able to read the English versions; see below). Since there is a lack of precise information on the use of French as a language of work in private-sector institutions in English Canada, and on the services which they offer in French, I cannot report on these matters.⁸

Demographic strength of francophones

According to the last census (1991) there were 732,920 individuals, east of New Brunswick and west of Quebec, who claimed French as a mother tongue. Table 11.1 shows that these individuals make up 3.8 per cent of the total Canadian population and that their proportional representation in each province, and in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, is uniformly small (5 per cent or less). Canadians who claim non-official languages as mother tongues outnumber those who claim French in all but two of the provinces under study (Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia) and in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. West of Quebec, the numerical superiority of non-official language speakers over francophones is quite evident. It is true that the former include many different language groups, but some of these groups are actually comparable or superior in size to francophones - e.g., the speakers of Ukrainian or of German in Manitoba and Alberta, or the speakers of Chinese, of German and of Punjabi in British Columbia. West of Quebec, then, the francophone minorities, in spite of their official status, increasingly run the risk of being seen as marginal (at least in demographic terms) by those in power; they may have to fight even harder to gain linguistic rights or even to retain those already won. Table 11.1 also shows that the numerical preponderance of the English mother-tongue groups is quite evident in all of the provinces under study and in the Yukon - but not in the

Table 11.1 Population claiming French, English and non official languages as mother tongues (1991)

<i>Province</i>	<i>French mother-tongue claimants</i>		<i>English mother-tongue claimants</i>		<i>Non-official language mother-tongue claimants</i>	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	00
Newfoundland	2,860	0.5	555,925	98.5	5,150	1.0
Prince Edward Island	5,750	4.4	120,765	94.3	1,585	1.3
Nova Scotia	37,525	4.2	831,575	93.3	21,850	2.5
Ontario	503,340	5.0	7,443,540	74.6	2,030,170	20.4
Manitoba	50,775	4.7	793,325	73.5	235,295	21.8
Saskatchewan	21,790	2.2	812,595	83.2	141,650	14.6
Alberta	56,735	2.2	2,045,905	81.2	416,545	16.6
British Columbia	51,585	1.5	2,562,245	78.9	633,675	19.6
Yukon	905	3.2	24,550	88.8	2,200	8.0
Northwest Territories	1,455	2.5	31,700	55.2	24,280	42.3
Total	733,920	3.8	15,222,125	78.2	3,512,395	18.0

Source: Statistics Canada, 1991 census, *Mother Tongue*: 20 per cent sample data.

Table 11.2 Population claiming French as a single mother tongue or as one of two or three other mother tongues (1986 and 1991)

<i>Province</i>	<i>Only French</i>		<i>French and English</i>		<i>French and a non-official language</i>		<i>French, English and a non-official language</i>	
	1986	1991	1986	1991	1986	1991	1986	1991
Newfoundland	2,085	2,400	1,065	790	–	20	60	20
Prince Edward Island	5,045	5,415	1,215	850	5	–	45	15
Nova Scotia	30,835	34,005	7,895	5,120	65	120	150	170
Ontario	422,770	464,040	96,910	70,860	3,700	5,695	1,520	6,705
Manitoba	40,050	46,925	9,925	7,330	185	445	820	595
Saskatchewan	21,205	19,695	4,660	4,085	210	270	425	250
Alberta	47,480	51,000	12,940	11,505	630	1,025	1,635	1,130
British Columbia	38,605	45,265	11,495	10,785	785	1,115	290	1,515
Yukon	600	815	80	125	5	5		
Northwest Territories	1,265	1,380	255	135	15	20	40	10
Total	609,940	671,040	146,440	111,585	5,600	8,720	4,925	10,410

Source: Statistics Canada, 1991 census, *Knowledge of Official Languages*: 100 per cent sample data; 1986 census: 20 per cent sample data.

Northwest Territories, where the speakers of non-official languages (almost all aboriginal languages) represent over 40 per cent of the total population.

In 1986 and in 1991, Statistics Canada allowed census respondents to claim more than one mother tongue; previous censuses permitted only one. Consequently, the global mother-tongue statistics presented in table 11.1 hide interesting information about single versus multiple mother-tongue claiming.⁹ In table 11.2 we can examine French mother-tongue population and its breakdown into single, dual and multiple responses. We note that, in the area of English Canada under study, this population includes a sizable core of single mother-tongue claimants, a smaller but non-negligible group of respondents who claim both French and English as mother tongues and two marginal groups of respondents (those who claim French and a non-official language and those who claim French, English and a non-official language). Table 11.2 also shows that there were fewer respondents who claimed French and English as mother tongues in 1991 than in 1986 and, conversely, more respondents who claimed French as a single mother tongue in 1991 than in 1986. Saskatchewan is the only exception. This latter result is in fact a sign that the linguistic assimilation of francophones has accelerated in that province (this trend will be confirmed below). The decline in the number of respondents who claimed both French and English as mother tongues in 1991 is not due to a sudden shift in patterns of first-language learning, but rather to changes in the definition of mother tongue used by Statistics Canada and in the format of the long census questionnaire distributed to 20 per cent of the Canadian population in 1991. The new long questionnaire regrouped all the questions on language under a single rubric, with the result that respondents were more accurate in their answer to the mother-tongue question and reported several mother tongues less often. In 1986, mother tongue was defined as the first language learned in childhood and still understood but, in 1991, it was defined more narrowly as the first language learned at home in childhood and still understood. This more narrow definition may also have reduced the number of respondents who claimed both French and English, since those respondents who learned French at home and English outside it, in their childhood, could claim only French as their mother tongue in 1991.

Knowledge of French and English among francophones

The Canadian census provides data on the respondent's knowledge of the country's two official languages. Such knowledge is defined as the ability to conduct a conversation in those languages. As crude as this self-report measure

may be (i.e., it does not allow us to ascertain levels of proficiency), it does allow us to assess the size of three basic components of the French mother-tongue population: (a) those who can only converse in French (i.e., monolingual or quasi-monolingual individuals); (b) those who can converse in both French and English (i.e., individuals who are at least functionally bilingual); (c) those who can only converse in English (i.e., individuals who have lost active competence in French, or who never acquired such competence - but who, none the less, are included in the French mother-tongue population, since mother-tongue is defined as the first language which is still understood). Note also that there are census respondents who acquired French in early childhood (i.e., as their true mother tongue) and who lost passive competence in this language. Because Statistics Canada ties the concept of mother-tongue to retention of passive language competence, such individuals are forced to claim English or a non-official language as their mother-tongue. Lachapelle (1992) estimates that, if these individuals were included in the French mother-tongue population, the rate of loss of French-language competence outside Quebec would be about 2.5 per cent higher on average.

In table 11.3 we can see that, among the respondents who claim French as a single mother-tongue, there are many who can converse in both French and English and few whose skills are in only French *or* English. It can also be seen that there is not much geographical variation in rates of bilingualism and loss of spoken French competence. The rates of French monolingualism, however, evidence a higher level of geographical variation. The highest rates are found in Ontario and Newfoundland and the lowest (almost ten times lower) are observable in British Columbia and Saskatchewan. Note also that, in general, the rates of loss of spoken French competence are higher than the rates of French monolingualism (the difference is particularly evident in the case of British Columbia and Saskatchewan). The only two exceptions to this pattern are (again) Ontario and Newfoundland. It should also be borne in mind that French monolingualism is overwhelmingly concentrated among the youngest French mother-tongue individuals (see Dallaire and Lachapelle, 1990) and that among adolescents and adults one can observe rates of bilingualism which are even higher than the provincial rates presented in table 11.3. The general picture which emerges, then, for those respondents who claim French as a single mother tongue is one of very widespread bilingualism, and only marginal loss of spoken French competence.

Among respondents who report having learned French along with English at home in their early childhood, the proportion who report being unable to communicate in English is nil or minute; however, the proportion of those who

Table 11.3 Distribution of French mother-tongue population by knowledge of official languages (1991: percentages)

Province	<i>Mother tongue claimed</i>					
	<i>French only</i>			<i>French and English</i>		
	<i>Conversational skills claimed</i>			<i>Conversational skills claimed</i>		
	<i>French only</i>	<i>French and English</i>	<i>English only</i>	<i>French only</i>	<i>French and English</i>	<i>English only</i>
Newfoundland	8.3	85.0	6.6	–	83.3	16.6
Prince Edward Island	4.7	88.5	6.7	–	56.2	43.7
Nova Scotia	4.0	91.6	4.3	0.3	75.3	24.3
Ontario	10.1	86.6	3.2	1.1	81.8	17.0
Manitoba	3.7	90.3	5.9	–	74.8	25.1
Saskatchewan	1.8	89.4	8.7	–	75.4	24.5
Alberta	3.1	89.2	7.6	0.5	69.2	30.2
British Columbia	1.5	88.0	10.4	0.8	71.6	27.5
Yukon	2.8	92.5	4.6	–	75.0	25.0
Northwest Territories	4.7	89.4	5.8	–	76.9	22.9
Total	7.9	87.6	4.4	0.8	76.0	23.1

Source: Statistics Canada, 1991 census, *Knowledge of Official Languages*: 20 per cent sample data.

can converse only in English is not negligible (23.1 per cent on average) and consequently there are proportionally fewer bilinguals among this category of respondents. Inability to converse in French may be ascribed to either loss of spoken French competence later in life or to incomplete learning of French from the outset. Overall, the rates of bilingualism do not vary much along the geographical dimension; however, the rates of loss of spoken French competence, or incomplete learning of French, do so to a greater extent. Once again, the lowest rates are found in Ontario and Newfoundland and the highest rates are found in the western provinces. The exceptionally high rate found for Prince Edward Island may be ascribed in part to random fluctuation due to the very small size of the group of respondents who claim both French and English as mother tongues in that province.

To sum up, the statistics on knowledge of French and English among the two groups of French mother-tongue claimants indicate that - in the area of

English Canada under study - there are many pressures and opportunities to learn English outside the home - since the great majority of single mother-tongue claimants report being able to converse in both French and English, and a small proportion of them even report the loss of spoken French competence (i.e., a radical form of subtractive bilingualism). When French is learned alongside English in early childhood, pressure and opportunities to learn English outside the home take a heavier toll on the attainment or retention of spoken French competence, and subtractive bilingualism becomes a much greater possibility. This lends support to the idea that the individuals who report having learned both French and English at home occupy a more peripheral position in the francophone community.

As noted, the way that Statistics Canada defines knowledge of the official languages (ability to converse in them) makes it impossible to distinguish between levels of bilingualism. However, sociolinguistic surveys carried out in specific francophone communities in English Canada (Beniak and Mougeon, 1985; Landry and Allard, 1987; Mougeon and Beniak, 1991) - where the respondents were asked more detailed questions about their linguistic competence - have shown that French mother-tongue bilinguals include at least three subgroups: (a) French-dominant bilinguals (better speaking skills in French than in English); (b) balanced bilinguals (equal competence in spoken French and spoken English); (c) English-dominant bilinguals (better speaking skills in English than in French). It is therefore reasonable to assume that, in English Canada, the group of bilingual French mother-tongue claimants revealed by the census is also made up of subgroups who display unequal competence in spoken French. Should Statistics Canada decide to refine its definition of knowledge of official languages, such a hypothesis could be verified and - more crucially - one could arrive at a more accurate measurement of attainment and retention of French language skills among French Canadians.

Use of French in different domains of society

In this section, I will examine data on the extent to which, in the area of English Canada under study, francophones use French or the majority language - in several domains of society (e.g., in the immediate neighbourhood, at work, in church, at school), or when communicating with different interlocutors (e.g., parents, siblings, children, friends, etc.). These data not only provide us with additional explanations for the very high levels of bilingualism found in the francophone minority communities, but they also allow us to better assess the vitality of these communities. One survey (CROP, 1982) provided detailed data

here; however, it had a relatively small respondent sample and so its findings must be taken with some caution.

For the work domain, it was found that although the majority of the respondents reported using English often, or all of the time, 34 per cent of them claimed to use French as often or more often than English. It was also found that proportionally more respondents from the Atlantic provinces than from the western provinces reported using French at work. The respondents from British Columbia hardly ever reported using French in this domain. We have thus an indication that, although English dominates the work world in the eight provinces under study, francophones can, to some extent find jobs where they can use French.

Of the respondents, 45 per cent reported using French as often or more often than English with neighbours, and there was geographical variation here. Over 70 per cent of the respondents from Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia reported using French as often or more often than English, only 9 per cent of the respondents from British Columbia. These findings indicate that although francophones in the provinces under study almost always reside in regions where they are clearly outnumbered by anglophones (see Dallaire and Lachapelle, 1990), they can live in localities or neighbourhoods where they represent a substantial proportion of the local population.¹⁰

Of the respondents, 22 per cent reported using French as often or more often than English in shops. Use of French in this domain was also reported more often by respondents from the Atlantic provinces than by those from the west. The fact that fewer respondents reported using French as often or more often than English while shopping than while at work or when conversing with neighbours suggests that the availability and quality of products may be more important a factor in determining the choice of a particular store than the language abilities of the store personnel. It may also reflect the fact that proportionally fewer French Canadians than English Canadians have jobs or own businesses in the commercial sector.

The CROP survey also asked two questions about language use in two institutions over which francophones can exercise total or significant control- namely, the *Caisses populaires* (Credit Unions which were specifically established to provide banking services to the local French-Canadian population) and the local Catholic church. The proportions of respondents who reported using French as often or more often than English in these two institutions were, respectively, 65 per cent and 71 per cent. Furthermore, there was considerably less geographical variation here. These findings underscore the importance of

the existence of separate or community-controlled institutions for the maintenance of French in anglophone Canada.

The recently created French-medium schools are also, of course, institutions which are controlled by francophones. Unfortunately the CROP survey does not provide data on school language use. We have to turn to a nation-wide survey of students enrolled in a sample of secondary and post-secondary French-medium schools (Bernard, 1991a) to find such data which, unfortunately, are not fully comparable to those furnished by the CROP survey (because Bernard breaks his statistics down by regional levels of francophone concentration and not by province). None the less, it is interesting to point out that a majority of the respondents from areas of weak or relatively weak francophone concentration (most of the francophones from the eight provinces under study reside in such areas) report having been taught only or primarily in French at the elementary and secondary levels. A great majority of the respondents also report using French as often or more often than English in school-related activities (i.e., home work and school-book reading). They further report that in the schools that they have attended, students used French most of the time when communicating with their teachers, but only half of the time when communicating with other students outside the classroom. All in all, then, these findings indicate that the French-medium schools are a major source of exposure to French and of opportunities to use it. The finding that French is used significantly less often in peer-group communication is partially understandable because French-medium schools include students who are dominant in English. It is natural that such students would rather communicate in this language in a situation where they feel less constrained to use French. However, these same French-medium schools also include students who are either dominant in French or who are equally proficient in both English and French. Research by Mougeon and Beniak (1991) and by Heller (1994), in Franco-Ontarian schools located in majority anglophone settings, has shown that this latter group of students is also prone to make frequent use of English in peer-group communication. This suggests that in English Canada, French-medium schools include students who communicate in English with their peers for reasons that are more related to the high level of sociosymbolic prestige assigned to this language in their community than to less than perfect mastery of oral French.

If we turn to exposure to French via the media, we note that the CROP survey revealed that theatrical plays and television programmes are the main sources. Over 40 per cent of the respondents reported that they go to see French plays as often or more often than English plays, and 30 per cent reported watching

French television as often or more often than English television. The proportions of respondents who reported listening to French radio programmes, reading French newspapers and magazines and going to see French movies as often or more often than English ones were, respectively, 20 per cent, 18 per cent and 5 per cent. Findings from the Bernard survey confirm these patterns - the only difference is that the proportions of respondents who report using the French media as often or more often than the English ones tend to be somewhat lower than in the CROP survey. The findings on theatrical plays are interesting inasmuch as they indicate once again that institutions over which francophones can exercise significant control are associated with higher levels of use of French or exposure to it. The finding that French television programmes are somewhat more popular than French radio ones may be attributed to the fact that radio stations tend to provide a more narrow range of programmes than do television channels. The finding on movies is not surprising, given that this sector of the media is overwhelmingly controlled and dominated by the American film industry. Overall, then, francophones in English Canada do not make frequent use of the French media. The fact that the latter are much less developed and varied than their English counterparts largely accounts for this general trend.

The most important domain for the survival of French in English Canada is probably the home. It is at home that parents pass French on to their children and where they sustain the language maintenance efforts of the French-medium schools by continuing to speak French to their children as they become older.

The Canadian census provides data on language use at home. As with the mother-tongue question, that on home language was modified in 1986 to allow census respondents to report the use of more than one language at home. The data allow us to calculate a rate of French-language retention or loss at home among the French mother-tongue population (recall that mother tongue is defined as the first language learned at home in early childhood). Since loss of French at home involves adoption of another language, some researchers refer to it as a rate of linguistic mobility (e.g., Dallaire and Lachapelle, 1990). Instead of calculating rates of French-language retention for the entire French mother-tongue population, I have (following Castonguay, 1994) focused on the thirty-four-forty-five-year-old respondents. This age cohort is particularly interesting since, as Castonguay points out, it includes respondents at a stage in life where they may have chosen to stop using their mother tongue at home (e.g., as a result of linguistic exogamy, child rearing, etc.). As with my examination of rates of monolingualism and bilingualism, I will deal here only with the two main sub-groups of French mother-tongue respondents - namely, those who report

Table 11.4 French mother-tongue population by home language (35-44-year-old respondents; percentages)

Province	Mother tongue	Language use at home			
		French	English	French and English	Other Languages ¹
Newfoundland	French	29.9	68.2	1.8	
	French and English	–	66.6	–	33.4
Prince Edward Island	French	42.4	55.3	2.2	
	French and English	–	100		
Nova Scotia	French	46.8	51.3	1.8	
	French and English	5.3	68.4	21	5.3
Ontario	French	52.1	43.5	3.8	0.5
	French and English	11.6	69.4	18.1	0.8
Manitoba	French	34.8	61.9	3.2	
	French and English	–	90.1	9.8	
Saskatchewan	French	17.1	80.1	2.7	
	French and English	–	67.4	32.6	
Alberta	French	22.7	73.9	2.9	0.4
	French and English	3.0	86.0	10.9	
British Columbia	French	19.0	77.5	3.0	0.4
	French and English	1.3	79.5	16.3	2.8
Yukon	French	36.9	58.7	4.3	
	French and English	–	100		
Northwest Territories	French	38.4	58.4	3.1	
	French and English	–	71.4	28.5	

¹ Other languages = French and a non-official language; French, English and a non-official language; English and a non-official language; a non-official

Source: Statistics Canada, 1991 census, Language Retention and Transfer: 20 per cent sample data.

French as a single mother tongue and those who report both English and French as mother tongues.

Table 11.4 shows that in all but one of the provinces under study (Ontario) and in the Territories, more than half of the respondents who claim French as a single mother tongue have shifted to English as their language of communication at home, either radically (English only) or relatively (English and French). The former kind of shift is much more frequent than the latter. The pattern of geographical variation in rates of English-language shift at home is reminiscent of the patterns found in other societal domains. Note, however, that the rates of shift found for the most western provinces (Saskatchewan, Alberta and British

Columbia) are very high, over 80 per cent. The rates of shift to English found for those respondents who claim both French and English as mother tongues exhibit considerably less geographical variation, but only because they are uniformly high. We saw earlier that simultaneous acquisition of French and English in early childhood was associated with higher rates of loss of French-language competence; the same association obtains with rates of English-language shift at home in the Territories and in all but two of the eight provinces under study (Newfoundland and Saskatchewan).

Generally, then, in the age group under study, the French mother-tongue population evidences a surprisingly low rate of French retention at home (except in Ontario). It is surprising because we saw earlier that, in other domains (e.g., the church, the school, the *caisses populaires*), francophones exhibit relatively high levels of French-language use—hence we would have expected that, in the private domain of the home, French-language use would have been just as high if not higher. A major explanation for this unexpected finding lies in the phenomenon of linguistic exogamy. We know from previous research by Castonguay (1979) that French Canadians who marry outside the francophone community shift massively to English at home; in contrast, where both partners are of French mother tongue, French is generally retained at home. Statistics Canada provides data (1991) on the mother tongue of Canadians who live in a husband and wife relationship and who have children; I was thus able to calculate rates of linguistic exogamy for this component of the thirty-five-to-forty-four-year-old French mother-tongue population in the provinces and territories under study. The rates are as follows: Newfoundland (77 per cent), Prince Edward Island (53 per cent), Nova Scotia (52 per cent), Ontario (45 per cent), Manitoba (53 per cent), Saskatchewan (71 per cent), Alberta (66 per cent), British Columbia (75 per cent), Yukon (60 per cent) and the Northwest Territories (56 per cent). As can be seen, these rates of linguistic exogamy are very much in line with the rates of shift to English at home displayed in table 11.4, an indication that exogamy continues to play a major role.

The high levels of language shift at home displayed by the thirty-five-to-forty-four-year-old French mother-tongue population should not make us lose sight of the fact that English language shift at home is not a complete measure of individual linguistic assimilation. Individuals who have shifted to English at home can none the less use French in other domains (e.g., at work, at school, in church, in the neighbourhood, etc.) and remain competent in the language. We should remember, too, that there is only limited loss of oral French proficiency among the French mother-tongue population overall. Still, when a francophone parent

married to an anglophone parent shifts to English at home, or when two bilingual francophone parents do likewise, there is a real chance that this will translate into an erosion of French among the subsequent generation. The best evidence that such an erosion is taking place would be information on the mother tongue of the children of francophone parents who shift to English at home. Since Statistics Canada does not provide such detailed cross-tabulations in its publications, we have to rely on other evidence, which will be examined in the next section.

Erosion of the French mother-tongue population

In order to understand the effect that shift to English at home has on the French mother-tongue population, we will: (a) look at the evolution of francophone rates of linguistic reproduction over the last forty years or so; (b) examine data on the mother tongue of the children of French mother-tongue parents.

Castonguay (1994) and other demologists use a measure of linguistic reproduction which is based on a comparison of the number of francophones who are between twenty-five and thirty-four years of age with those who are nine years old or younger 11. This is the measure which was used to calculate the rates of linguistic reproduction which appear in table 11.5 below. Rates which are higher than 1 mean that linguistic reproduction is high enough to ensure group survival; rates lower than 1 mean the contrary. The merit of this measure

Table 11.5 Rates of linguistic reproduction of French mother-tongue respondents in 1961, 1971, 1986 and 1991 and of English-mother tongue respondents in 1991

<i>Province</i>	<i>French mother tongue</i>				<i>English</i>
	1961	1971	1986	1991	<i>mother tongue</i> — 1991
Newfoundland	0.47	0.91	0.49	0.35	0.83
Prince Edward Island	1.76	1.45	0.51	0.36	0.97
Nova Scotia	1.19	1.01	0.44	0.35	0.79
Ontario	1.34	1.08	0.51	0.36	0.85
Manitoba	1.42	1.13	0.55	0.49	0.96
Saskatchewan	1.17	0.97	0.37	0.36	1.03
Alberta	1.02	0.84	0.34	0.30	0.89
British Columbia	0.41	0.49	0.25	0.22	0.86
Yukon and Northwest Territories	0.46	0.56	0.30	0.34	1.01

Source: The 1961, 1971 and 1986 rates are taken from Castonguay (1994). I have added the rates for 1991. All rates were calculated with the 100 per cent data

is that it offers a contemporary picture of linguistic reproduction for each of the census years under consideration. Evidently, this measure of group reproduction should not be confused with the measure of natural reproduction which is the ratio of children per parents or mother in a given group, and which is simply referred to as birth rate in this study.

Table 11.5 shows that, with the exception of Newfoundland - we should remember that the francophone population of this province includes Quebec born residents - francophone rates of linguistic reproduction have been declining steadily over the last three decades, from levels that were high enough to ensure community survival to levels which are considerably below the survival threshold. A partial explanation for this decrease lies in the evolution of the birth rates of the two linguistic groups. About fifty years ago, the birth rates of francophones were somewhat higher than those of anglophones in the area of English Canada under study. Over the last couple of decades, however, the birth rates of francophones have fallen markedly, to the extent that they are now on a par with those of anglophones (Le., only fractionally higher or lower; see Dallaire and Lachapelle, 1990). However, if we compare the 1991 francophone and anglophone rates of linguistic reproduction, we see that the latter are about three times higher. Since francophone birth rates are currently on a par with those of anglophones, this suggests that failure to transmit French to young children is also an important cause in the decline of linguistic reproduction levels.

Let us now consider the evidence provided by the statistics on the mother tongue of children of French mother-tongue parents. Statistics Canada provides a cross-tabulation of 1991 census data which allows us to calculate rates of mother-tongue transmission, and to distinguish marriages where both partners are of French mother tongue from linguistically exogamous marriages (francophones married to anglophones).

The data in table 11.6 reveal that the decrease in francophone linguistic reproduction established earlier is to a large extent related to linguistic exogamy. We can see that in all but one of the provinces under study (Ontario) and in the Territories, the rates of transmission of English by linguistically-mixed couples are higher than 80 per cent and that, in contrast, the rates found for the non-mixed couples are considerably lower. Note, however, that in the provinces west of Manitoba and in the Northwest Territories, non-mixed couples also exhibit a non-negligible trend towards transmission of English. The data in table 11.6 also show that the rates of transmission of English by linguistically-mixed couples are somewhat lower when the mother, rather than the father, is francophone (see Castonguay, 1979, for a similar finding in relation to home-language

Table 11.6 Rates of English-language transmission to children by French mother-tongue parents as a function of marriage type and sex of the French mother-tongue parents (percentages).

Province	All	Mixed marriages		Non mixed marriages
		French mother-tongue father	French mother-tongue mother	
Newfoundland	91.4	94.1	88.0	11.1
Prince Edward Island	91.0	95	87.3	11.7
Nova Scotia	88.9	92.3	85.7	15.1
Ontario	79.8	88.1	70.7	6.4
Manitoba	87.0	90.8	81.5	16.2
Saskatchewan	92.9	95.9	88.9	37.0
Alberta	90.7	94.3	85.3	25.5
British Columbia	89.2	95.7	86.5	29
Yukon	85.7	96.4	73.6	6.2
Northwest Territories	85.0	91.8	78.3	23.3

Source: Statistics Canada, 1991 census, *Mother Tongue*: 20 per cent sample data.

use). It can also be pointed out that the current rates of transmission of English by linguistically-mixed couples displayed in table 11.6 are quite similar (only fractionally lower) to the rates of English-language shift at home of linguistically mixed couples, found by Castonguay (1979) in the eight provinces under study. This means that there is a strong link among linguistic exogamy, English language shift at home and transmission of English to young children. However strong the association among the three phenomena is, the role of linguistic exogamy in shift to English and transmission of English can be more aptly characterized as mediating or catalytic than causative, since, as we have just seen, shift to English also takes place in linguistically-homogeneous marriages. In fact the more one goes back in time, the more English-language shift at home took place primarily within non-mixed couples. Furthermore, it would be wrong to view the decision to switch to English at home, and to transmit English, by linguistically exogamous francophones as the sole result of the need to accommodate unilingual anglophone partners (the proportion of bilinguals among anglophones in English Canada is quite low). It seems reasonable to also assume that there are linguistically exogamous francophones (and linguistically endogamous ones) who base their decision to shift and to pass English on to their children on an assessment of the instrumental value of English and French

(at the local or provincial level), of their own socioeconomic position, of their own skills in English and in French, and so on.

We must, finally, discuss the implications of the statistics on linguistic reproduction for the survival of Canada's francophone minorities. If we consider (together) the rates of linguistic reproduction of the twenty-five-thirty-four-year-old francophones, the rates of transmission of English by francophone parents and the rates of linguistic exogamy, we can predict that in three provinces (Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia) the number of French mother-tongue individuals in the youngest age cohorts (i.e., the replacement generation) will soon be very small indeed. Hence, the survival of francophone communities in these provinces will be very much threatened (unless, of course, francophone immigration provides new blood). We have seen that, in English Canada, francophone parents increasingly avail themselves of the right to send their children to French-medium schools - the survival of Canada's francophone minorities is no longer solely dependent on the efforts of parents at home. However, it should be borne in mind that most students who attend French-medium schools in minority francophone communities, and who are not raised in French at home, are dominant in English - i.e., they do not attain first language fluency in French by the end of secondary school (see Mougeon and Beniak, 1991, 1994) ¹². Consequently, in provinces such as Newfoundland, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, if the francophone minorities rely primarily or solely on the French-medium schools to ensure linguistic maintenance, the replacement generations will include individuals who will probably not go on to transmit French to their own children. While it is conceivable that some of these students may later elect to enrol their children in French-medium schools and thus prolong the existence of their community, it is clear that the process of natural linguistic reproduction (i.e., the reproduction of native speakers of Canadian French) will have come to an end.

In the other provinces under study, and in the Territories, French appears to have a better chance of surviving in the short term. English-language shift among the French mother-tongue population is not as advanced, francophone rates of linguistic reproduction are somewhat higher and rates of linguistic exogamy are significantly lower. Of all the francophone minorities who live in these latter regions, Franco-Ontarians appear to have the best chances of survival, both in the short term and the longer term. Franco-Ontarians make up only 5 per cent of Ontario's population, but they number over half a million individuals. They have the lowest rate of linguistic exogamy, the lowest rate of English-language transmission to children by linguistically-mixed and

non-mixed couples and, finally, they enjoy the greatest degree of institutional support for French.

CONCLUSION

In a study devoted to language policy for endangered languages, Fishman (1987) points out that linguistic minorities should, above all, concentrate their efforts on buttressing the position of their community's language in what he calls the primary determinants of language transmission (home, neighbourhood, elementary school, work sphere and religious domain). In the area of English Canada under study, the francophone minorities tend to reside in areas where they can communicate in French with their neighbours, they exhibit a high level of French-language maintenance in their churches and, to some extent, they are able to find jobs where they can use French. We have also seen that they have won the right to French-medium schooling (both at the elementary and secondary levels) and that they increasingly support such schools. In the private domain of the home, however, French-language retention is not high and French mother-tongue parents tend not to pass French on to their children. In fact, the generation of francophones currently placing their children in French-medium schools shows high levels of shift to English at home. I have pointed out that most children who attend French-medium schools and who are not raised in French at home do not achieve first-language proficiency in French, and that when they grow older they are unlikely to transmit French to their own children. If the growing support for French-medium schools is the expression of a real interest in the survival of francophone linguistic and cultural heritage, then the minorities need to go one step further, and attempt to reverse the process of English-language shift at home. Obviously, this is easier said than done, since this shift has been going on for decades and is deeply rooted in several powerful socio-political factors (e.g., urbanization, superior utilitarian value of English, negative views of local French and francophones among anglophones, etc.). If the reversal of the shift to English does not start to take place soon, however, then there is a strong chance that - given the current context of government budget restriction (both at the federal and provincial levels) - the French-medium schools and other forms of government-funded institutional support for French will be curtailed or abolished (as they have been abolished in the past).

If Quebec were to separate from the rest of Canada, this too could have an impact on institutional support for French in anglophone Canada. On the one hand, the backlash against francophones that Quebec secession might cause could also result in the curtailment of institutional support for French. On the

other hand, if Quebec remained economically associated with Canada, it is conceivable that anglophone provinces which have strong commercial ties with Quebec (e.g., Ontario) would be willing to strike reciprocal agreements guaranteeing institutional support for the anglophone and francophone minorities. It remains, however, that reversal of shift to English at home is probably the best weapon against a possible roll back of institutional support for French in English Canada and is ultimately the key factor in the survival of French.

Notes

I would like to thank Terry Nadasdi and Charles Castonguay for their useful comments on a preliminary draft of this article and the latter author for his expert guidance on some of the statistics used in this study.

- 1 There are a few villages which were settled primarily by French people from France in the second half of the 18th and the first half of the 19th centuries (e.g., Cape Saint George on the Port-au-Port Peninsula, southwestern Newfoundland).
- 2 In the twentieth century some Acadians from New Brunswick and the other Atlantic provinces emigrated to the provinces west of Quebec, notably to Ontario and Alberta. In Saskatchewan there are also localities which were settled by French people from France (e.g., Saint-Brieux, northeast of Saskatoon in Saskatchewan)
- 3 This last measure was not taken in Ontario, where the provision of Catholic education was guaranteed by the 1867 British North America Act.
- 4 Thus, every now and then, one can read or hear statements by political leaders or authors from Quebec to the effect that the French Canadian minorities are a lost cause, and statements by political leaders from the French Canadian minorities which deplore the fact that the various governments in Quebec have been pursuing a policy of increased autonomy which may trigger anglophone backlash against the minorities.
- 5 In 1984, Ontario removed the 'where numbers warrant it' clause from its Education Act and committed itself to offer French-medium schooling to all Franco-Ontarians who wish to avail themselves of the right to such schooling for their children.
- 6 One such action made it clear that French-medium schooling for the francophone minorities is not to be confused with the French immersion programmes or schools of Canada's anglophone community.
- 7 Note that west of Quebec it is the average income of francophone men which is lower than that of anglophones. In Ontario and in the western provinces, francophone women are slightly ahead of anglophone women in average income.
- 8 In contrast, the Quebec government, following the implementation of the French Language Charter, has gathered considerable information on the use of French in provincial private-sector institutions.
- 9 To arrive at the global statistics presented in table 11.1, the number of dual or triple answers to the mother tongue question were divided by two or three. The statistics

presented in table 11.2 were not so adjusted. This explains why the total figures of table 11.2 are higher than those of table 11.1.

10 One can point out (for instance) that, at the locality level in Ontario, the rate of francophone concentration can be as high as 85 per cent and that, in localities where Franco-Ontarians are outnumbered by anglophones overall, the former may none-the less reside in neighbourhoods where they are strongly concentrated (e.g., in the cities of Ottawa and Welland).

11 The number of twenty-five-thirty-four-year-old respondents is augmented by 2 per cent to compensate for early childhood mortality.

12 It may be also mentioned that the French of these students is removed from the variety of local Canadian French spoken by the older generations (see Mougeon and Beniak, 1991). This is understandable since these students have primarily, or entirely, learned French at school and have confined their use of the language to that setting.

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