

produced in both official languages more extensively. Further, a major effort was made to enable participants in formal meetings and conferences to use their first language through the provision of simultaneous interpretation. Despite the fact that these initiatives were not always comprehensive, there was a marked increase in the use of the French language - the language environment of Government operations began to change.

That constituted, in effect, an initial phase in implementation, based in large part on the goodwill of managers and employees. If this phase did not consistently produce spectacular changes, it nevertheless led to a greater sensitivity to the need for change throughout the Public Service. With the proclamation of the Official Languages Act in 1969, the need to respect the principle of linguistic equality became a legal, as well as a moral, obligation for the Public Service.

In the early seventies, it became clearer that although progress was real, it was often slow. Francophones represented approximately 18% of all employees, whereas they constituted over 25% of the total population. However, only 13.4% of employees in the officer categories said that their preferred language of work was French.

.../7