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BILINGUALISM IN CANADA

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Canada belongs among the bilingual countries of the world, with English and French as its official languages. The following notes give data about population groups and the respective position of each of these languages in various fields.

Population

Canada was first settled by the French in the 17th century and was a French colony from 1608 to 1759. During that period, French explorers discovered a large part of the territory now forming Canada and the United States. At the end of the French administration, some 60,000 inhabitants of French origin had settled mostly along the St. Lawrence Valley and these were the ancestors of most Canadians of French origin today.

Due to immigration and natural growth, the English-speaking population became the majority in the course of years in all provinces except Quebec. In 1961, as indicated in the census taken that year, the total population and the population of French origin in all parts of Canada were as follows:

	<u>Total Popu- lation</u>	<u>Population of French origin</u>	<u>% of population of French origin</u>
Newfoundland	457,853	17,171	3.8
Prince Edward Island	104,629	17,418	16.6
Nova Scotia	737,051	87,883	11.9
New Brunswick	597,936	232,127	38.8
Quebec	5,259,211	4,241,354	80.6
Ontario	6,236,092	647,941	10.4
Manitoba	921,686	83,936	9.1
Saskatchewan	925,181	59,824	6.5
Alberta	1,331,944	83,319	6.3
British Columbia	1,629,082	66,970	4.1
Yukon and N.W.	37,626	2,403	6.4
	<u>18,238,247</u>	<u>5,540,346</u>	<u>30.4</u>

The above table shows that French-speaking Canadians are 30 per cent of the total population. While the majority (80 per cent) lives in Quebec, French-speaking Canadians are found in all provinces, one and a quarter million living outside Quebec. In Ontario they number more than half a million and in New Brunswick they form 39 per cent of the population.

The 1961 census gives the following data about languages spoken by the population:

English only	12,284,762	67.4
French only	3,489,866	19.1
English & French	2,231,172	12.2
Neither French nor English	232,447	1.3
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	18,238,247	

The figure given for bilingual Canadians (12.2 per cent) does not perhaps reflect the true situation. The relevant census question referred only to the ability to speak both languages; it is likely that the percentage of bilingual people would have been higher if the ability to read a second language had also been taken into account, as most Canadians who have been through high school have learned English or French as a second language. Moreover, many Canadians declared that they spoke only one language when they had some knowledge of, but were not fluent in, a second one.

Statistics indicate also that Canadians of French origin are more bilingual (31 per cent) than Canadians of British origin (4 per cent). In Quebec, 25 per cent of the French-Canadians can speak English, while in Ontario only 2 per cent of the Canadians of British origin can speak French. Statistics show also that bilingualism is more widespread in urban areas than in rural areas, among men than among women, and among the better educated. The percentage of bilinguals in the French-speaking population outside Quebec is larger (55 per cent) than in Quebec (25 per cent). It may be added that most immigrants to Canada adopt English rather than French unless they settle in rural Quebec.

The relatively low percentage of bilingualism in Canada is mainly due to the homogeneous grouping of the population. In most rural areas of Quebec, the population is 99 per cent French, while in most other parts of Canada people have little opportunity to speak French.

Governments and Public Administration

The Treaty of Paris (1763), which confirmed the cession of New France to Great Britain, did not refer explicitly to the language of the inhabitants; however, French continued to be used. In 1774, the Quebec Act restored French civil law, which implied that French might be used before the courts, and the retention by the inhabitants of their customs and usages. In the Legislative Council, where the members were appointed and the majority was English-speaking, both English and French could be used in the debates.

In 1791, the territory was divided into Lower and Upper Canada and the country was given a measure of responsible government. In Lower Canada (Quebec), the elected members of the Legislative Assembly decided to conduct their debates and publish all laws and related documents in both French and English. The Common Law was then introduced in Upper Canada (now Ontario).

In 1840, the two provinces of Upper and Lower Canada were united into the Province of Canada, under one responsible government. The Act of Union provided (Section 41) that English was to be the only official language in parliamentary affairs, although all laws were to be translated into French.

In 1842, despite this regulation, a French-speaking member made a speech in French in the House; thereafter French came to be more widely used. In 1848, after a petition from the members, Section 41 was repealed and French and English became official.

In 1867, the Province of Canada united with the Provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in a federation. The Province of Canada was divided into Ontario and Quebec and the name Canada was applied to the country as a whole. The new nation's constitution was embodied in the British North America Act, Section 133 of which reads as follows:

"Either the English or the French language may be used by any person in the Debates of the Houses of Parliament of Canada and of the Houses of the Legislature of Quebec; and both those languages shall be used in the respective Records and Journals of those Houses; and either of those languages may be used by any person or in any Pleading or Process in or issuing from any Court of Canada established under this Act, and in or from all or any of the Courts of Quebec.

"The Acts of the Parliament of Canada and of the Legislature of Quebec shall be printed and published in both those languages".

According to this section, English and French are the official languages in both the Federal Parliament at Ottawa and the Provincial Legislature at Quebec. In the two Houses of both Parliaments, a member may speak either in French or English, laws must be printed in both languages and the speech from the Throne is delivered in both English and French; reports of the debates (Hansard) are also printed in both languages. In Ottawa, about one third of the members have French as their mother-tongue and since Confederation two prime ministers (Sir Wilfred Laurier) (1896-1911) and Mr. Louis St. Laurent (1953-1958) have been of French origin.

All publications of the federal and Quebec governments must be issued in both languages and paper currency and postage, which come under federal legislation, are also printed in both French and English. Crown corporations of the federal or Quebec governments also use the two tongues; examples of these are the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, National Film Board, St. Lawrence Seaway, Quebec Hydro-Electric Commission, etc. Correspondence with any service of the federal or Quebec governments may be carried either in French or in English. Civil servants appointed to bilingual areas are usually bilingual. Communications in international affairs are carried on either in English or French, according to circumstances.

According to the Quebec Municipal Law, either French or English may be used in sittings of a municipal council. While notices are usually published in both languages, special notices may be written in the language (English or French) of the person to whom they are addressed.

Some authorities maintain that French and English are both legally official in provinces other than Quebec. However, this thesis has never been tested in the courts and in all provinces except Quebec English alone is considered official.

Justice

In compliance with Section 133 of the British North America Act, both languages may be used before federal courts (Supreme Court, Exchequer Court, Income Tax Appeal Court, Admiralty Court), and also before any court in Quebec Province. In the Supreme Court, three of the nine justices must come from Quebec. The law (Criminal Code, 2 - 3 Elizabeth II, Chap. 5, Sections 535 and 536) provides for mixed juries in criminal cases in Quebec and Manitoba courts in cases in which an accused moves that the jury be

composed of at least half of the jurors skilled in his language, provided it be French or English. An alien is triable in the same manner as if he were a natural born Canadian citizen; however, an interpreter is always provided, if required.

Jurisprudence may be cited in English or French, according to the case. As mentioned above, the Civil Law is followed in Quebec and the Common Law in other provinces. Judicial reports publish court decisions in the language in which they are rendered and an extensive legal literature is available in both languages. As the Quebec Civil Code is largely based upon the Civil Code of France, citation of opinions of legal authorities in France (Beaudry-Lacantinerie, Capitant, etc.) are not infrequent in the Quebec courts.

At the law faculties of Laval, Montreal and Ottawa Universities, the teaching is done in French.

Education

Section 93 of the B.N.A. Act provides that, subject to certain restrictions, the provincial legislatures have exclusive powers to make laws in relation to education. Thus the medium of instruction comes under each province and the situation varies with each one; however, school administration in all provinces is the responsibility of local school boards, under the supervision of the provincial department of education.

In Quebec, the most bilingual province, public schools (Grades I - XII) are denominational, either Roman Catholic or Protestant, but full freedom is given to dissentients from the majority to establish their own schools, which are then on an equal footing with the majority schools. In all schools, the medium of instruction is the mother-tongue of the child, provided it be English or French. French and English schools are available in all areas. In French-speaking schools, which are 85 per cent of the total, English is taught as a secondary language in each grade, from Grade V. In English schools, whether Catholic or Protestant, French is taught from Grade III. In each category of schools, the second language is compulsory as a subject of study and of examination.

In Ontario, the most populous province, 10.4 per cent of the population is of French origin and the law provides for the establishment of separate schools. At the present time, there are 1775 French classes (Grades I - X), with 55,000 pupils, and 27 bilingual high schools. The French schools are supervised by a Director of French Schools, and separate-school inspectors appointed by the Department of Education. There is also a Normal School for French teachers, a French section of the correspondence courses given by the Education Department and an active French Education Association.

In Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, English is the usual medium of instruction, but in French communities there are usually French elementary public schools, conducted by French-speaking teachers and using French textbooks. The figures for French classes and pupils are as follows:

New Brunswick	1,175 classes	36,000 pupils
Nova Scotia	205 classes	5,000 pupils
Prince Edward Island	75 classes	2,000 pupils

New Brunswick has, in addition, 45 French high schools.

In Manitoba, French-speaking Canadians live mostly along the Red River, between Winnipeg and the American border, and this grouping facilitates the maintenance of French schools by local school boards. Although French is not officially recognized, a modus vivendi allows an elementary course in that language. There are 450 French classes, with 9,000 pupils.

In Saskatchewan, the law provides for separate schools, which are nevertheless subject to official regulations. At the elementary level, French may be taught, at the discretion of the school board, one hour a day. There are 7,000 French-speaking pupils in such schools. Similar regulations are in effect in Alberta, where the French school population is 6,000.

British Columbia and Newfoundland have no French public schools, the French population being small and dispersed.

Throughout the country (outside Quebec), at the secondary level (Grades VIII - XII), English is the medium of instruction, except in a few French high-school classes. French as a subject of study is optional except in Prince Edward Island, where it is compulsory and is studied by 80 per cent of the English-speaking pupils.

All provinces outside Quebec have French private schools. At the secondary level, there are many French colleges, offering an 8-year course, leading to the B.A., e.g. College Ste. Anne, Church Point, Nova Scotia; Université Saint-Joseph, Moncton, New Brunswick; Université St. Louis, Edmunston, New Brunswick; Collège de St. Boniface, Manitoba; Collège Catholique, Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan; Collège St. Jean, Edmonton, Alberta; Université du Sacré-Coeur, Bathurst, New Brunswick; Collège de l'Assomption, Moncton, New Brunswick.

There are six universities in which French is the language of instruction: Laval (Quebec City), Montreal, Sherbrooke, Ottawa, Sudbury, St. Joseph University (Memramcook, N.B.), St. Louis University (Edmunston, N.B.). French is taught in all English universities and is required for admission to some, e.g. British Columbia. Some universities offer French summer sessions for teachers of French and for those who wish to learn the language or increase their fluency; these include Laval, McGill, Western Ontario, Alberta.

In addition to the above there are about 100 French-language classical colleges in Quebec, and about 35 theological colleges across Canada using French.

Commerce

While, throughout Canada, English is, of course, the predominant language, there are many hundreds of business firms belonging to French-speaking owners. These businessmen use French in their dealings with one another and English in their relations with English-Canadian firms. In view of the importance of the French-Quebec market, firms managed by English-speaking Canadians normally use French with their clients, advertise in French in that province, employ French-speaking staff, etc.

New Teaching Methods

Of recent years, there has been a rapidly-growing interest in making Canada more truly bilingual through an effective use of such newer media for teaching languages as language laboratories, television, films and records. To assess and encourage this, the Canadian Teachers' Federation convened a representative seminar, from which came the report Teaching Modern Languages in November 1963. Other conferences have followed in several provinces.

The Association Canadienne des Educateurs de Langue Française (ACELF) was organized to serve the cause of French culture and of Catholic education in Canada. It enlists the co-operation of French-language educators in all provinces, publishes lists of French-speaking private schools, produces education reports, convenes annual conferences and stimulates research in the field.

Royal Commission Appointed

The Canadian Government, with the consent of the provinces, in July 1963 appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into and report on the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada, including practices within all branches of the Federal Administration, the role of public and private cultural organizations, and the opportunities available for Canadians to become bilingual.

Recapitulation

Throughout their history, French-speaking Canadians have always been strongly determined to retain their language, despite a predominantly English environment, and at times have had to battle vigorously to defend their linguistic rights, and thus to secure a firm foundation for their culture. French-speaking Canadians have built up a fine network of social and economic organizations: schools, hospitals, co-operatives, newspapers, associations, etc. They are well-represented in Parliament; they have produced writers and artists at least equal to those of English-Canadians. French-language radio is now available across most of Canada and is often listened to by English-speaking citizens.

In recent years, a definite trend towards a wider bilingualism has been noted and, in particular, attendance at institutions for the teaching of English or French as a second language has been increasing. Most French-speaking parents desire that their children secure a working knowledge of the language of the majority. Associations for the promotion of bilingualism, like Les Visites Interprovinciales, l'Alliance Canadienne, Le Monde Bilingue, have met with a ready response. Many periodicals print articles in both languages. In 1955, a French theatrical company, "La Comedie Française" paid a visit to Toronto - which visit would have been improbable only a relatively few years ago - and met with a most enthusiastic reception. The University of British Columbia has recently established a chair of French-Canadian literature. These facts and many others reveal the growth of bilingualism in Canada.

RP/A