

LANGUAGE EDUCATION, CANADIAN CIVIC IDENTITY AND THE IDENTITIES OF CANADIANS

*Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe:
from linguistic diversity to plurilingual education*

Reference study

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Preface

This text, part of a series published by the *Language Policy Division*, is clearly significant in its own right because it deals with certain influential factors in the organisation and sociolinguistic foundations of language teaching and in the linguistic ideologies at work in problems related to the languages of Europe. It is, however, part of a larger project since it is one element of a collection of publications focused on the *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe: From Linguistic Diversity to Plurilingual Education*.

This *Guide* is both a descriptive and programmatic document whose purpose is to demonstrate the complexity of the questions involved in language teaching, often dealt with in a simplistic manner. It aims to describe the processes and conceptual tools needed for the analysis of educational contexts with respect to languages and for the organisation of language learning and teaching according to the principles of the Council of Europe.

There are several versions of this *Guide* for different audiences, but the *Main version* deals with a number of complex questions, albeit in a limited framework. It seemed necessary to illustrate these questions with case studies, syntheses and studies of specific sectors of language teaching, dealing in monographic form with questions only touched upon in the *Guide*. These *Reference Studies* provide a context for the *Guide*, showing its theoretical bases, sources of further information, areas of research and the themes which underlie it.

The *Modern Languages Division*, now the *Language Policy Division*, demonstrates through this collection of publications its new phase of activity, which is also a continuation of previous activities. The *Division* disseminated through the *Threshold Levels* of the 1970s, a language teaching methodology more focused upon communication and mobility within Europe. It then developed on the basis of a shared educational culture, the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (published in its final version in 2001). This is a document which is not concerned with the nature of the contents of language teaching but rather with the form of curricula and syllabi for language teaching. The *Framework* proposes explicit referential levels for identifying degrees of language competence, and thus provides the basis for differentiated management of courses so that opportunities for the teaching of more languages in schools and in lifelong learning are created. This recognition of the intrinsic value of plurilingualism has simultaneously led to the development of an instrument which allows each learner to become aware of and to describe their language repertoire, namely the *European Language Portfolio*. Versions of this are increasingly being developed in member States and were at the heart of the European Year of Languages (2001).

Plurilingualism has been identified in numerous *Recommendations* of the Council of Europe as the principle and the aim of language education policies, and must be valued at the individual level as well as being accepted collectively by

educational institutions. The *Guide* and the *Reference Studies* provide the link between teaching methods and educational issues on the one hand and policy on the other, and have the function of making explicit this political principle and of describing concrete measures for implementation.

In this text, Stacy Churchill discusses the complex relationships between identities and languages - and language education policies - in Canada. As a federal state, with language education policies developed within its constituent states rather than at Federal level, and with a range of ethnic and national majority and minority groups, the relationship between language education policies and identities, and in particular the evolution of a Canadian civic identity, offers a possible analogy with the evolution of states and their relationships in Europe. In the *Guide*, the question of the impact of developing plurilingualism on the sense of belonging to the European political and cultural space is considered as part of the analysis of Council of Europe policies on plurilingualism. Churchill's study shows above all how the impact of policies is a long-term process, of thirty or more years in the case of the policies promoting bilingualism. His study thus provides a perspective on the ways in which European policies promoting plurilingualism may develop, and the time needed for them to do so.

This specific aspect of the problems of language education policies in Europe gives a perspective on the general view taken in the *Guide* but nonetheless this text is a part of the fundamental project of the *Language Policy Division*: to create through reflection and exchange of experience and expertise, the consensus necessary for European societies, characterised by their differences and the transcultural currents which create 'globalised nations', not to become lost in the search for the 'perfect' language or languages valued at the expense of others. They should rather recognise the plurality of the languages of Europe and the plurilingualism, actual or potential, of all those who live in this space, as a condition for collective creativity and for development, a component of democratic citizenship through linguistic tolerance, and therefore as a fundamental value of their actions in languages and language teaching.

Jean-Claude Beacco and Michael Byram

1. Introduction

In the last few decades, Canadian public opinion has become extremely sensitized to issues of language and the learning of languages. This sensitivity is a direct result of the ongoing attempt to forge a national identity - or at least a civic identity - that is capable of encompassing all major groups living within Canada. Language learning - and language loss - have become major symbols relating to the status of different groups, their role within the framework of the state, and the personal identities of group members.

This paper is anchored around a success story of the last 35 years - the promotion of English and French as official languages of Canada, including the massive expansion of opportunities for Canadians¹ to acquire functional English-French bilingualism and for minority French-speaking Canadians living outside Quebec to pursue an education in French-language elementary and secondary schools. In acknowledging the strengths of the official languages model, we must also examine critically other aspects of policy on language education that have negative impacts on the personal and civic identities of many citizens, including Aboriginal Peoples and immigrant citizens-to-be.

Commentators both in Europe and Canada are often troubled by the contradictory perception that, while Canadian policies on official language education are supposed to be highly successful when viewed in a comparative international context, the continuing debate about the status of Quebec in Canadian federation is deemed to represent a failure of the same policies. It is my contention (a) that the media and an anxious but naïve public “bought” official language policies as a near-panacea for national unity during the late 1960s, (b) that this selling job was abetted by enthusiasts for bilingualism (including senior bureaucrats and many elected politicians), but (c) that the actual policies addressed only a few of the issues underlying the debate over Quebec status, most of which were non-linguistic. I have argued elsewhere (Churchill 1998) that the policies have been a resounding, but still incomplete, success. Far from a solution to national unity problems, the official language policies constituted an absolutely necessary *prerequisite* for the other policy actions needed to forge a new sense of Canadian civic identity. Moreover, the focus on the Quebec issue has eclipsed discussion of other aspects of language education that have great importance for Canadians and their sense of identity.

We shall use the term “language education” throughout to refer to what may be more correctly termed “languages-in-education”, including not only teaching of second languages but also teaching through one or more languages, as well as usage of languages for educational purposes in state-controlled or state-influenced venues such as public broadcasting. The implication of our

¹ The term “Canadian” in this paper refers here to all persons legally resident in Canada or holding Canadian citizenship, without implying that the term necessarily corresponds to their primary sense of personal national identity.

terminology is that language education is about more than teaching languages and may involve transmission of cultural and other values.

This paper explores the dimensions of policies pursued by both federal and provincial/territorial governments related to language education and provides a mapping of the main intersections between those policies and identity issues relevant to different parts of the Canadian population. The first section introduces briefly the background of linguistic and cultural identities in the context of debates on Canadian nationhood and citizenship. The second section presents the main accomplishments in official language education as part of a broader effort to create a new Canadian civic identity through official bilingualism, and takes note of “unfinished business” that remains in order to complete the process begun more than 30 years ago. The purpose is to examine a line of policy from the perspective of the state and to see how it has turned out in practice. Still, language education in Canada is not confined - far from it - to English and French. For this reason, the third section examines language education within the framework of a search for renewal in Canadian discourse on identity and diversity. The section examines the impact of the official languages model and language education from the viewpoint of different components of the Canadian population, outlines the types of provision (or lack of provision) of language education serving them, and assesses the implications of the whole for the formation of identity.

2. Linguistic And Cultural Identities In Canada

The term “Canadian identity” has been widely adopted by English-speaking Canadians but is less frequently used either in print or in talk by French-speaking Canadians (except in documents or speeches relating to federal programs and policies). The dichotomy in usage is rooted in an apparent contradiction related to differences in the French and English languages. To speak of Canadian identity in the singular is to deny a key aspect of Canadian identity as it is popularly understood by most Canadians of all origins and linguistic groups. The French phrase “*identité canadienne*” has a monolithic, unified semantic finality that is far more pronounced than the English “Canadian identity”, a fact which causes Francophones to avoid it. In English usage, the term can be construed as a vague, global abstraction rather than a specific, unified entity, so that English speakers such as Ukrainian-Canadians or Pakistani-Canadians can feel comfortable using the singular. French speakers usually refer to their own identities with adjectives such as *québécoise*, *acadienne*, or *franco-canadienne*, or by some term referring to a provincial linguistic minority such as *franco-manitobaine*, *franco-ontarienne* or *fransaskoise*.

Whatever the linguistic turn of phrase one adopts, for at least two centuries Canada has been the home of European and Aboriginal peoples with very different identities. In the year 1800 the population was perceived as comprising peoples of three different origins - European colonists from France and the British Isles together with the Indians and Eskimos, whom we now refer to as Aboriginal peoples or, respectively, First Nations and Inuit. Well into the 20th

century, racism fostered the belief that Aboriginal peoples could be re-made in the European image through repression and forced assimilation². But since well before Confederation in 1867, the French-English or French-British cleavage between peoples of European origin made it impossible for national political elites to assume that a single identity could be imposed without distorting the nature of the country and trampling on basic citizen rights.³ Two additional centuries of immigration and the gradual awakening of public consciousness to the rights of the First Nations and Inuit have only added to the complexity of defining a Canadian identity or set of Canadian identities.

Language policy in Canada is defined within a federal system that allocates separate powers to the federal government and the provincial and territorial governments. The Government of Canada - the central, federal entity - is forced by law and constitutional custom to be wary of provincial jurisdictional boundaries.⁴ It has the legal power to override provincial laws and policies in many areas, but the exercise of this option is so fraught with difficulties that such an option is rarely taken, except in relation to issues that are perceived by the federal level to engage the integrity of the state or the fundamental arrangements that underpin its existence. Language relationships and particularly relationships related to language education have been just such an arena where the central government has engaged its authority on more than one occasion.

Language policy and language relations in Canada have always been conducted in the shadow of the power relationships between what were once the two dominant ethno-linguistic groups - French-speaking Canadians and English-speaking Canadians tracing ancestry to the U.K. and Ireland ("Anglo-Celtic" origin). Three terms originally used by French-speaking Québécois have now also been adopted into Canadian English. Anglophone and Francophone refer, respectively, to speakers of English and French.⁵ The word Allophone is used to designate persons of recent immigrant origin (first or second generation) who

² Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) 1996, vol. 3, esp. Chap. 10.

³ Visitors like Alexis de Tocqueville in the 1830s and Lord Durham in the 1840s could still hypothesize that "natural" assimilation would dissolve the core French population in the flood of arrivals from the British Isles. The resounding failure of the colonial government that was installed in 1840 with a unified legislature for Upper and Lower Canada paved the way for the Confederation agreements of 1867 that consecrated Quebec's provincial autonomy and distinctive legal status within the Canadian state.

⁴ Territorial governments, but not provincial ones, are creatures of the Government of Canada, with final authority under control of Parliament.

⁵ Because Francophones have always been overwhelmingly of the same ethnic stock both in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada, the term is often used in French interchangeably to mean both an ethnic origin and a linguistic group. "Franco-Canadian" is the preferred ethnic designation for careful writers and speakers. "French Canadian" has fallen into disuse, a victim of the success of federal policies emphasizing linguistic affiliation and of Quebec nationalism. Federal legislation refers to members of the two official language groups as English-speaking Canadians (Canadiens d'expression anglaise) and French-speaking Canadians (Canadiens d'expression française).

may speak English or French in their work and even their homes, but whose mother tongue is not English or French. (By custom, the Aboriginal peoples are never subsumed in this group).

The vast majority of Canadian Francophones are of Franco-Canadian origin with roots dating back to the 1600s. Although some of Canada's Anglophones also have roots that go back to the same period, successive waves of immigration have eroded the ethnic dominance of both groups to the point that persons of non-French and non-Anglo-Celtic origin are more numerous than either of the two so-called "founding peoples" taken individually. In the 1991 census, the Anglo-Celtic (British) and French represented 28 % and 23 % of the population, respectively; a further 18 % had British and French origins in various mixtures with other backgrounds; but 31 % claimed other ethnic backgrounds only (Logan 1991). Out of a population of just over 27 million in 1991, close to one million persons, or about 2 %, identified themselves as Aboriginal (single origins 470,000; Aboriginal and other - which includes the Métis people - slightly over 500,000) (Burnaby 1996). Most immigrants to Canada in the last century have merged linguistically into the English-language community, except for those who have settled in Quebec since the mid-1970s. The latter group have demonstrated an ever increasing tendency to adopt French as their, or their children's, first official language (Harrison & Marmen 1994: 54). Although most descendants of older waves of immigration have adopted English or French, many retain vigorous ethnic identities rooted in religion and family networks and buttressed by networks of ethnicity-based associations and organizations (for ethnic self-identification data: Kalin & Berry 1995; Esses & Gardner 1996).

The terminology adopted to describe different groups is central to discussing identity. The terminology is also important to the political actors at federal and provincial levels, as well as to individual citizens. Using "Allophone" to designate a large portion of recent immigrants and their children is a convenient shorthand for sociologists, linguists, journalists and politicians of many stripes. But the term Allophone does not appear in the Official Languages Act (1988, a revision of the 1969 Act), in the Constitution or in any federal policy. The Constitution and federal policies deal only with individual citizens who have the right to be served by their federal government in either English or French, as well as with certain Aboriginal groups whose languages receive recognition along with - for want of a better term - certain status and privileges that fall short of those accruing to English and French. The language rights of Allophones are not explicitly protected by Constitutional provisions on multiculturalism, but governmental initiatives to promote retention of Allophone languages have long been considered to be compatible with official languages policy (Macmillan 1998: 195).

Further confusion arises when political discourse suggests that all persons of non-French non-Anglo-Celtic descent somehow constitute a "block" of the population. Allophones come from a vast number of linguistic and ethnocultural groups, and no collective "allophone" identity or political orientation exists. More importantly, contemporary Allophones may have little cultural or other

similarity to the older waves of immigrants: prior to the 1960s more than 80 % of immigrants were of European origin i.e. “whites”, whereas since the mid-1970s 80 % or more of immigrants come from Asia, Africa and Latin America and are mainly “non-whites”. The resulting rise in so-called “visible minorities” in the major urban centers of southern Ontario (Toronto and the Ottawa-Windsor corridor), Vancouver and Montreal has added a new dimension of discourse based upon skin coloration and race. Issues related to race and racial discrimination now significantly affect current efforts to build Canadian identity (cf. Dhruvarajan 2000 for typical critiques).

The development of official languages policies since the mid-1960s has been part of a deliberate effort in nation-building postulated on the need to bridge the psychological gap between French and English through official bilingualism. The concept of official bilingualism does not mean that all citizens must be bilingual but that the organs of the state must be bilingual in order to accommodate the needs of *unilingual* citizens of the two official language groups. Official bilingualism and the promotion of official languages has become a new ideology of state. As I have argued elsewhere, the new ideology emphasizes membership in the two official linguistic groups on the basis of personal language choice by individual citizens as a means of de-emphasizing group membership based upon ethnicity or “race” (Churchill 1998).

The bedrock of official languages policies lies in a single statistic: In census returns, 98 % of respondents across the country reply that they speak English or French. Neither of the two largest languages of recent immigration - Chinese and Italian - are spoken by more than 2 % of the population (Harrison & Marmen 1994).

The fault lines in Canadian language politics arise from the fact that the different ethnocultural, ethnolinguistic and ethnoracial groups are not evenly distributed across provinces and cities. Regional concentrations permit relatively small groups to exercise political leverage through local and provincial authorities. For example, representatives of Ukrainian-Canadian and German-Canadian associations in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta have played a major role - particularly in the late 1960s and 1970s - in shaping federal policies on multiculturalism, a role quite disproportionate to the absolute numbers of ethnic activists involved. The entrenched constitutional status of Quebec combined with the strength of local concentrations of varied ethnocultural groups across other provinces helps explain both the richness of Canadian language policy and the vigour of debate it generates.

3. Creating Identity Through Official Bilingualism

3.1. Origins of Federal Programs for Official Languages in Education

Promoting French-English language education has been one of the main components of Canadian federal official language policies since the mid-1960s and can only be understood in the context of those larger policies. The starting

point for all contemporary thinking about English-French language relations is the work of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. Named in 1963 as a response to a perceived crisis in national identity, the Commission produced during the following six years an extensive report that remains the foundation of all current policy both for the federal government and most of the provinces.

The Commission generated a public opinion consensus around the view that inequality and disempowerment of French-speaking citizens were the root causes of constitutional problems and Quebec separatist feeling. French-speaking Canadians were severely under-represented in the ranks of federal civil servants and frequently unable to use their language in dealing with the federal government. In the social sphere, Francophones had lower than average education and depressed incomes throughout Canada. Inside Quebec, many of the levers of private-sector economic power were in the hands of non-Francophones. Outside Quebec, hostile English-speaking majorities in the previous century had curtailed severely, or entirely abolished, the right of French citizens to educate their children in French. Where French schools existed (mainly elementary schools in Ontario and an incoherent elementary-secondary system in French-speaking portions of New Brunswick), provincial neglect had resulted in inferior educational provision, poorly trained teachers, inadequate teaching resources, and ill-adapted curricula. Assimilation had been going on for decades and, as birth rates fell in the 1960s, minority Francophone communities faced rapid demographic decline and, at least in some provinces, imminent disappearance. In short, a consensus emerged that French-speaking Canadians had the status of second-class citizens, and that wide-ranging language reforms supported strongly by the Government of Canada were to be one of the key instruments in removing such inequality and in preserving viable official linguistic minority communities in all the provinces.⁶

The Royal Commission devoted most of volume 2 of its report to the shortcomings of educational opportunities for minority Francophones outside Quebec. The conclusions were all the more jarring since the English-speaking minority in Quebec, concentrated mainly around Montreal and rural areas to the southeast, were among the most highly educated of Canadians and enjoyed a fully operational elementary and secondary school system⁷ as well as community colleges and two English-language universities. At the same time, the Commission documented the weaknesses of language instruction opportunities

⁶ For a review of the main components of official language policies at the federal and provincial levels, see Churchill 1998.

⁷ Most Anglophone children in Quebec attended Protestant schools in a provincial system divided along denominational lines: Protestant and Roman Catholic. Elected local school commissions provided de facto control of Protestant schools to English-speakers, though the Catholic system provided English schooling to Catholic Anglophones. The system was recently abolished through a constitutional change, followed by the creation of language-based school commissions whose schools offer schooling either in English or in French.

offered in elementary and secondary schools, as a result of which only a small proportion of English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians were able to learn each other's language sufficiently for direct interpersonal communication. In the 1961 census, only 12.2 % of Canadians reported knowledge of both English and French. Proportionately far more Francophones than Anglophones were bilinguals, though the vast majority of Francophone Québécois were unilinguals. Quebec and New Brunswick, with the largest proportion of French mother tongue speakers, reported bilingualism levels of 25.5 % and 19 %, whereas the figure for the English-majority provinces (Canada less Quebec) was only 6.9 %. (Marmen & Corbeil 1999: 104-108; Harrison & Marmen 1994).

The task in elementary and secondary schooling had two dimensions: (a) extending and strengthening educational opportunities for official linguistic minorities in their own language and (b) raising the number of English-French bilinguals among the provincial linguistic majorities (English mainstream outside Quebec, Francophone mainstream in Quebec). Very different outcomes were sought. For the minorities, schooling through the medium of the minority language was seen as the basis for language maintenance and community maintenance and survival. For the provincial majorities, the objectives of improved second language teaching was cultural and linguistic enrichment leading to the ability to understand and communicate with speakers of the other official language. Minority community survival was considered integral to the goal of ensuring equality of rights for English-speaking and French-speaking citizens in all provinces - including the option for Francophone families with children to establish themselves in all provinces with the expectation of having their children educated in their mother tongue. Teaching English and French as second languages to the youth of the majority communities was perceived as a means of increasing contacts and understanding between the two language groups.

3.2. Dimensions of Federal Policy

Canadian policies to promote language education have been praised for their comprehensiveness, particularly for not limiting efforts to elementary and secondary education but instead including incentives such as access to bilingual public service jobs (Kaplan 1997: xiii). Indeed, one effect of the *Official Languages Act, 1969* was to increase the number of bilingual officials in the agencies and organs of the federal government, and the prospect of public sector jobs does play a role in parental support for language education (O'Keefe 2000). But the programs to support language education were, in and of themselves, extremely comprehensive in approach. In 1970-71 the Government of Canada created the programs that were soon known as the Official Languages in Education (OLE) Program, originally housed in the Department (Ministry) of the Secretary of State, now in the Department (Ministry) of Canadian Heritage.⁸

⁸ Program groupings have shifted over the years. All programs related to official languages in the Department of Canadian Heritage are currently administered as Official Languages Support Programs (except for internal administrative programs related to fulfillment of the terms of the Official Languages Act).

Through negotiated agreements with the provinces, the OLE Program put in place a system of financial incentives which subsidized provinces to act in two directions: expanding schooling opportunities for minority Francophones and expanding and improving curricula for teaching English and French as second languages. Most of the funding given under both sets of stimuli was directly tied to the number of students studying in the official languages and the proportion of the school day devoted to such learning. The original formula for funding minority education was initially set at one-tenth of the average per pupil cost of the relevant province. The funding for second language instruction was a prorated percentage of this per-pupil subsidy, based on the percentage of the school day devoted to study of the second language. Subsequent negotiations have modified the structure and mode of subsidy, though a portion of federal contributions are still allocated to subsidies for “normal” classroom teaching (cf. analyses in Churchill with Kates Peat Marwick & Partners 1987; Canadian Heritage 2002).

Other streams of subsidies also facilitated expansion of minority post-secondary opportunities, particularly upgrading of teacher training facilities and other establishments providing all or most instruction in the minority language. By the mid-1980s the cumulative subsidies for minority *and* second language education exceeded one billion dollars (Churchill with Kates Peat Marwick & Partners 1987). Funding levels have ebbed and flowed over the years, but the core program of subsidies to provinces for minority language education, school governance and related services were supported at a level of some \$167 m. in 2000-2001. Expenditures for second-language instruction were an additional \$41 m. out of a total \$275 m. for all official language support programs (Canadian Heritage 2002).

3.3. Quebec Exceptionality

The objectives defined by a federally-appointed royal commission could only be achieved through action by the provinces in one of their most jealously-guarded areas of exclusive constitutional jurisdiction. In political terms, governments of the majority English provinces would have to act on behalf of minorities by improving teacher training, building schools, changing curricula and generally expending precious political capital. They would have to make changes that affected huge numbers of educators, children and parents - all in an area that had proved politically sensitive and sometimes explosive for the previous two centuries. It is important to understand that, much as language issues are central to Quebec political life and to relations between the provincial government and federal authorities, federal programs to promote official languages in education were designed to minimize conflict with the Quebec government and - in spite of strong objections in principle from provincial authorities - have operated with comparatively little public acrimony in that province.

Until very recently, successive governments of Quebec have been in a position to point to the excellent educational opportunities for English-speakers in the province and to assume a vigilant though non-combative stance towards federal

efforts directed mainly to causing changes that helped minority Francophones in other provinces. As regards second language instruction, Francophone Quebecois school children were all required to study English as a second language from the middle years of elementary school.⁹ Quebec insisted however that federal financial incentives given to assist other provinces in righting past wrongs towards minorities and for extending second language instruction should be shared equally, so that Quebec would not be penalized for having “done the right thing” all along. This did not mean that all was perfect in educational programming and delivery. Most parents in Quebec - both Anglophone and Francophone - want their children to benefit from the advantages of English-French bilingualism, and parent groups have frequently voiced criticisms about the quality of the teaching of English and French in publicly supported schools. Complaints of Anglophone parents that their children’s French language skills are not adequate preparation for working in a French language job market are often echoed by Francophone parents who fear their children will not learn enough English to benefit from the economic advantages of bilingualism. In addition, under the system of splitting schooling along denominational lines between majority Francophone Catholic school commissions and majority Anglophone Protestant commissions, Anglophone parents often complained about the quality and choice of English-language instructional options available to their children in the Catholic system (cf. Churchill with Kates Peat Marwick & Partners 1987).

The recent constitutional change required to create non-denominational English-language and French-language school commissions, approved in 1997, was done through close, albeit tense, federal-provincial consultation and cooperation. The new language-based structures are expected to remedy the difficulties that affected Anglophone Catholics. Meanwhile, rapid demographic decline of the English-speaking community in Quebec starting in the late 1970s, in combination with provincial financial difficulties, has shifted the equation. Whereas the English-speaking community of Quebec used to maintain its vitality by integrating new immigrants, including those whose mother tongue was not English, this source can no longer be counted on. Quebec language legislation – some of whose terms were adopted in the minority schooling guarantees of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms - requires the children of all immigrants from abroad to be schooled in French-language schools, thereby markedly increasing the likelihood of integration of the younger generations into the French-speaking community and, of course, reducing the numbers of school-age children available to attend English-language institutions. At the same time, for a variety of reasons, very large numbers of immigrants resettle in other provinces subsequent to their initial establishment in Quebec (Jedwab 2002; Smith 2001).

⁹ The compulsory requirement to study English as a school subject was, and remains, more far-reaching than the equivalent study of French in any of the English majority provinces, but it still falls far short of producing functional bilinguals.

In the last dozen or so years, federal authorities have progressively begun to intervene more actively to negotiate and assist measures that attenuate the impact of changed demographics and finances on the quality of educational services for the Anglophone minority. For the first time, long-time survival of the Anglophone minority in Quebec has come to be seen as an issue worthy of attention, even though public opinion among Francophone Québécois remains highly sceptical of the likelihood of English decline.

3.4. The Push for Minority Education

Major systemic change to create and expand minority education occurred in the nine English-majority provinces. The main force helping the process proved to be the readiness of English-speaking public opinion to embrace the principle of minority rights. Public opinion polls have shown a steady level of support in both language communities for official bilingualism since at least the mid-1960s (Churchill 1986: 53-57), a support that is particularly strong in terms of providing educational and other governmental services to provincial linguistic minorities (Churchill and Smith 1986).

The movement of the federal government into the provincial domain of education would not have been possible without strong leadership in some of the English majority provinces. In the breakthrough year of 1967 three provinces - Manitoba, New Brunswick and Ontario - whose populations accounted for some three-quarters of minority Francophones living outside Quebec, moved rapidly to implement reforms favouring their minorities and provided the initial basis for pushing forward the education agenda. The governments' strong concern to avoid a negative "backlash" within the provincial English-language majorities against French minority education was a powerful incentive to move forward in teaching French as a second language. Presenting the two programs together helped avoid a narrow opposition focus on "added costs" for minorities (Churchill 1981).

At the same time, other federal programs for promotion of official languages began providing assistance to provincial official language minority groups to develop province-wide organizational structures and to foster community development. The program proved extremely effective in mobilizing provincial minorities both for political action and to stimulate the development of language-based social institutions serving the local level. At the national level an umbrella organization grouping representatives of the provincial organizations, *Fédération des francophones hors Québec* [FFHQ or Federation of Francophones Outside Quebec], emerged as a strong national-level lobby group that used federal subsidies to coordinate ground-breaking research on Francophone educational rights that was instrumental in pushing forward agendas for change with provincial and local school authorities (Churchill 1981). The organization later changed its name to *Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada* [FCFA or Federation of Acadian and Francophone Communities]. A parallel provincial organization for Quebec Anglophones was set up in 1982 under the name *Alliance Québec* to fulfill a similar role of political mobilization and community development. Like its Francophone counterparts, Alliance

Quebec has also received federal assistance for organizational and lobbying expenses. (cf. Pal 1993: 166-188 for profiles of federally subsidized minority associations).

The impact of the programs on education of the French minorities was extraordinary. By 1981-82, even the least responsive of the majority English provinces had at least some elementary and secondary programs serving the French minorities.

The progress accomplished made it politically possible to adopt a constitutional guarantee of minority educational rights in Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This right to elementary and secondary schooling in the language of the minority was soon interpreted by the courts to include the right to be educated in establishments controlled by the minority. Some English-majority provinces resisted full implementation for a decade or more after fully binding court decisions were made against them (for Ontario cf. Welch 1995). Following the adoption of the Charter, the federal government set up a program that served all Canadians, not just minorities: the Court Challenges Program (*Programme de contestation judiciaire*). The purpose of the program (abolished in 1992 but reinstated later) was to permit citizens with limited means to have access to the court system to defend their constitutional rights. The program played an instrumental role in extending minority education rights in the courts (Churchill 1986; Goreham 1992). Finally, through a combination of minority litigation of Constitutional rights and federal cajoling, all provincial minorities have obtained formal control of their elementary and secondary establishments; in most provinces the mechanism was creation of unilingual French and (in Quebec) English school jurisdictions operated by elected representatives of the minorities. The minority control is subject to provincial education legislation, just as in the case of organs elected by majority voters to control schools in the majority language (Ducharme 1996; Goreham & Dougherty 1998). Although the Charter has never been accepted by the province of Quebec, its provisions were written to take into account existing Quebec legislation as we have noted above, and they apply with force of law in that province, where its existence and terms are now widely accepted (Smith 2001).

In a period of 35 years, a major transformation has occurred in the schooling opportunities of minority Francophones throughout Canada. In assessing what has been accomplished, it must be emphasized at all times that most of the basic cost of educating official linguistic minorities has always been provided by the provinces as part of their constitutional responsibilities for education, and all decisions relating to education of official linguistic minorities have ultimately been taken by provincial and territorial political representatives and appointed officials, not by federal officials. The federal role has been one of stimulating changes that could not have been effected without full provincial consent and initiative.

Today, the results of the push for minority education are impressive. A network of minority schools exists in all provinces and territories, with direct control by elected minority representatives over most of the establishments. In 2000-2001, 252,000 students were enrolled at primary and secondary levels, 102,000

studying in English in Quebec and 150,000 in French elsewhere in the country. The school network comprised 1,039 schools, 360 English-language schools in Quebec and 679 French-language schools elsewhere (Canadian Heritage 2002: 10, 22). Other federal programs have helped maintain and expand post-secondary opportunities, with the federal side often bearing major portions of the direct costs of infrastructure and program development, though not of operations.¹⁰ Only New Brunswick supports a fully functional French-language university, l'Université de Moncton. Ontario has created a network of French community colleges but most French university services are housed in two English majority bilingual institutions, the University of Ottawa and Laurentian University. In other provinces, smaller university-type colleges operate in French, usually under the aegis of English-language institutions. The advent of the Internet in recent years has created a “new educational frontier” so to speak, and federal institutions have established vigorous programs to strengthen particularly the availability of French sources on the Internet for access by Canadian citizens (cf. Commissioner of Official Languages 1999b; Government of Canada 2000).

3.5. Teaching English and French to Provincial Majorities

If the results just outlined for linguistic minority education had not been so profound and far-reaching in every respect and one were to make only international comparisons, the word “revolutionary” might be used to describe the expansion of teaching of French and English as second languages to members of provincial majorities in the same time period.

The changes of the last decades must be understood against the main aspects of second language learning as it appeared in the mid 1960s. Although the two languages were taught in school systems across the country (particularly as a high school subject required for university admission), I might summarize consensus opinion at that time in a few depressing statements: (a) teaching methods for instruction in French and English as second languages were out of date and relied upon very traditional formats of limited effectiveness; (b) teacher training left much to be desired, and many teachers themselves did not have a good functional command of the language they taught; (c) only a small proportion of students ever acquired a functional usage of the second language through school experience, and many came away with a conviction that they lacked language learning ability; (d) curricula emphasized language content rather than cultural matters and, particularly in French second language classes, dealt mainly with France and ignored the reality of French in Canada. The fact that many Francophones outside Quebec spoke English was primarily attributable to their minority status and, within Quebec, to the need to use English for economic

¹⁰ Under programs unrelated to official languages, the federal government in the 1960s and early 1970s provided a major portion of the funding required to establish and expand universities and colleges in all the provinces. The subsidies to extend post-secondary opportunities for official linguistic minorities may be interpreted as a delayed form of intervention to promote equity for minorities overlooked in the earlier wave of university and community college expansion.

purposes. An old adage among Francophones says French is learned but English is caught (*le français s'apprend, mais l'anglais s'attrape*) like a common cold.

The breakthrough in approaches to language teaching was stimulated by an experiment begun in 1965 by an English-speaking parents' group at the St. Lambert Elementary School near Montreal. The experiment was very simple, consisting in placing English-speaking children in a classroom where the teacher taught all topics only in French and used French as the only medium of communication. Wallace Lambert, the professor from McGill University in Montreal who led the related research effort for the parents, was a psychologist whose primary interest was less the language learning than the effects that the experience would have on attitudes of the children to the other language group (Lambert & Tucker 1972; Lambert personal communication).

With the easy-to-remember name of French Immersion, the methodology spread rapidly not only in Montreal but throughout the rest of Canada. Many variants exist based upon the age of beginning in French (early immersion beginning in the kindergarten years is often preferred) and upon the point at which English instruction is introduced (often in grades 3 or 4 for those who take immersion in the elementary years).¹¹ By the end of grade 8, typical students in early immersion programs receive over 6000 hours of total accumulated instruction in/via French; late immersion programs of two year duration in grades 7 and 8 provide between 1200 and 2000 hours of instruction in/via French (Turnbull 2000).

For years, the setting up of new programs in provinces and school districts was accompanied by research whose primary focus was to reassure parents that the experience of bilingualism would not be bad for the children. The results were, of course, quite contrary to their fears. The students not only did not fare poorly by comparison with students taught in English-only classrooms, but after a few years they showed significantly more progress even in certain aspects of English-language learning (Swain & Lapkin 1982). By the latter part of the 1970s, immersion drew approval from the most senior federal levels as the only methodology for developing functional bilingualism in Anglophone children (J. Hugh Faulkner, Secretary of State, cited: Sears 1997, note 45). The bilingualism achieved was, indeed, functional and usable, even though the methodology fell short of producing completely native-like fluency (Swain 1997).

Enrolments in French immersion grew rapidly across Canada throughout the 1970s and 1980s but have leveled off in recent years. In 1977-78, 37,000 students were enrolled in 237 immersion schools, or less than one per cent of the total school population of 5,385,000. In 2000-2001, the numbers rose to 324,000 out of 5,067,000 in more than 2,100 schools, or over 6 per cent of students. (Canadian Heritage 2002: 25). The quantitative success of French immersion drew, of course, strong criticism, which was countered by study after study,

¹¹ For a discussion of immersion variants and their multiple forms in a variety of countries, see Johnson & Swain 1997.

making it probably the most researched educational innovation in Canadian history.

Critics of immersion have often attributed the success of immersion students in learning a second language well without corresponding loss of achievement in other subjects, including English, to the idea that the programs tend to recruit “elite” students. The charges of elitism have been contradicted by growth in the numbers of students participating. In cities like Ottawa and Montreal and in the province of New Brunswick, up to a third of Anglophone students are enrolled in French immersion at one time.¹² In addition, recent research has examined the income levels of parents of students in New Brunswick, comparing students in the immersion and English-only streams; the profile of both groups showed similar education and occupation levels among the parents. More provinces have introduced compulsory province-wide examinations, and the results are showing significantly better performance by immersion students compared to their Anglophone peers in English-only streams, even when the recruitment to these streams appears comparable in socioeconomic terms (O’Keefe 2000). Research attention should probably be directed to the likelihood that additive bilingualism has significant cognitive benefits for students and that the choice of immersion education is a good indicator of parental concern for, and involvement in, their children’s education. In my opinion it is probable that the presence of both factors is mutually reinforcing and is positively related to over-all educational achievement.

One problem created by the success of the immersion methodology is the extent to which it has been misinterpreted in other countries. Prof. Lambert appears to have been the first to use in print the term “additive bilingualism” (in: Swain 1971) to describe the experience of children whose mother tongue is secure and reinforced by society (and broadcast media), who are taught initially in a second language and then are taught also in their mother tongue with the intent of maintaining native-like fluency. The misinterpretations arise when it is suggested that the Canadian experiment means minority and immigrant children should be forced into schooling situations where they do not understand the language and where the societal expectation is that their mother tongue will be replaced by the second language of the majority - a situation of “subtractive bilingualism”. The consequences for minority students are, in most cases, lower academic achievement, particularly for those in groups with low social status (Cummins 1999, for a critique of misrepresenting immersion findings in minority situations). A vast Canadian literature documents the negative effects on French minority students forced to study in English schools before the reforms of the last few decades.

¹² Since immersion is offered for various ages beginning with the preschool years, it appears likely that an even larger proportion of a given age cohort is enrolled in immersion at one time or another, if the cohort is followed over the entire period of schooling.

By its very nature, French immersion cannot be the dominant mode of second language instruction for all Anglophone students, and concern for preserving the French language caused the Quebec government to rule out English immersion as a mode of instruction for Francophone and immigrant (Allophone) students in that province. In other words, for most Canadian children of elementary and secondary school age, language learning occurs in a standard classroom where French or English are taught as one subject during a normal school day, in periods usually varying from 20 to 50 minutes. This one-subject-among-many approach to ESL and FSL is called “core English” or “core French” in Canadian English. Thus, at least on the surface, the delivery of core English and core French as second languages appears similar to the classroom mode of instruction prevalent in the 1960s. The surface similarity disguises very important, indeed major, changes that have transformed the content and implications of second language teaching.

Perhaps the most important change has been the increase in the number of Anglophone children and youth who are exposed for longer periods to teaching of the official languages, not only through immersion programs but also through core French courses. Whereas in English majority provinces, French was often a required secondary school subject for students going on to university, the pre-university stream remained highly selective until the 1960s, when a wave of university creation and expansion was accompanied by a corresponding democratization of high schools. In turn, the flood of students caused English-language universities to drop high school French credits as a prerequisite for university entrance. These events would have set the stage for the decline of French in public schooling except that a more powerful and opposite trend had already begun with respect to teaching French in elementary and pre-school years.¹³

We have already discussed one part of this trend, the success of French immersion schooling - a success that demonstrated “ordinary” people could “really” learn to speak French in school. The second factor was the growing groundswell of popular support for bilingualism as a symbol of Canadian identity and the conviction of many parents that knowing French would be a significant job market advantage for their children in their adult years. Strong grassroots leadership took form in an organization called Canadian Parents for French, founded in 1977 and subsequently recipient of federal assistance for its organizational activities. With chapters in all Canadian provinces, the organization provided research and information resources to local activists who rapidly became a major force in overcoming provincial authorities’ resistance to expansion of access to French as a second language teaching and, particularly, to the continued proliferation of French immersion schools. They maintained good relationships with organizations of provincial Francophone minorities and borrowed from the latter’s vocabulary the concept of language learning as a right,

¹³ In Canada, elementary school ordinarily lasts from grade 1 through 8, high school from grade 9 through 12, except for Ontario where a pre-university grade 13 is being phased out.

declaring that “we want language rights for the majority as well as the minority.” (Pal 1993: 168, 166-171). The linkage of second language learning with individual rights illustrates how language learning became associated with citizenship identity, a topic to which we shall return.

The period from 1970 to the present has seen a shift in the educational systems of English majority provinces to expand and extend enrolments in core French. A key role was played by researchers such as the late H.H. Stern in promoting core French as a viable alternative, pushing in particular for compulsory curricula in the elementary years to ensure that most children would be exposed over their schooling to a considerable number of hours of teaching, on the principle that cumulative exposure¹⁴ to language teaching was necessary to reach threshold levels of competence for communicative purposes (cf. Stern 1982, 1985). Some of the provinces that have instituted compulsory French in the lower grades with guidelines for recommended number of hours of teaching include Ontario (1986), New Brunswick (revisions 1994), British Columbia (1994, other languages may be substituted), Nova Scotia (1997) and Prince Edward Island (revisions 1999) (“Second Official Language Education Policies,” Commissioner of Official Languages 1999a). Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan allow local authorities to decide the points in schooling where French will be offered. New Brunswick has the longest requirement in an English-majority province, with French as a subject in grades 1 - 10 (Turnbull 2000). One final factor in the development of core French has been the renewal of the content of the programs. Again with federal funding, the Canadian Association of Second language Teachers undertook the National Core French Study, a multi-year project (1985-1990) that resulted in revisions to most provincial curricula and in the production of new teaching materials by textbook publishers (Turnbull 2000).

In an interesting parallel development, the Quebec government announced in 1996 a major educational reform which included in its provisions - to be implemented over a period of several years - moving the mandatory study of English as a second language in French schools from grade 4 to grade 3; English is mandatory to the end of secondary studies (Ministère de l'Éducation, Québec 1996).

The general quantitative results of these policies has been a gradual rise in the total percentage of school-age population enrolled in second language instruction across Canada. In 2000-2001 approximately 51.5 % of all elementary and secondary pupils, 2,611,000 out of 5,067,000, were enrolled in some form of second language instruction, up from about 41.6 % in 1977-78 (Canadian Heritage 2002: 25).

¹⁴ The idea of cumulative number of hours of exposure to a language over the course of elementary and secondary schooling has been dubbed “time on task” in recent policy documents, a considerable distortion of the concepts promoted by John B. Carroll and Benjamin Bloom.

The main impact of the surge in teaching of second language teaching in all its forms has been a drastic increase in the numbers of English-French bilinguals among the younger generations. For Canada as a whole, the percentage of bilingual teenagers aged 15-19 years increased from 17.7 % in 1981 to 24.4 % in 1996. Most of this growth is due to the extraordinary increase in the numbers of young Anglophones who speak French. Comparing the levels of bilingualism among Anglophone teenagers in 1996 (18.9 %) to the bilinguals among the age groups 30 to 49 (9.0 %), we observe a *doubling* of the rates of bilingualism in less than a generation, mostly due to the immersion phenomenon. In Quebec, English-French bilingualism of Anglophone teenagers rose from 47 % in 1971 to 82 % in 1996; given that the census data include teenagers who have migrated to Quebec after schooling in other provinces, it is clear that almost all Anglophone youth passing through the Quebec school system are achieving functional bilingualism, though not necessarily to the high levels of literacy required for many types of employment in French. The nearly universal bilingualism of Quebec Anglophone youth closely parallels that of minority Francophones in the English majority provinces (Churchill 1998: 59-62).

3.6. Opening The Identity Question

The policies that have so drastically altered the place of official languages in Canadian education, have always been predicated on the assumption that the promotion of two official languages was a basis for creating a sense of shared Canadian identity that would eventually transcend English-French political differences. The core federal programs of promotion of official languages, including support for official languages in education, are housed in the Department of Canadian Heritage and dealt with as part of programs in the Canadian Identity Sector (Canadian Heritage 2002).

Beginning in the mid-1970s, federal strategists de-emphasized programs in the public services aimed at retraining large numbers of unilingual officials (mostly Anglophones) to use a second official language in the workplace, though the training programs continued on a gradually reducing scale for years afterward. Instead, the idea was to push forward strongly with the “youth option”, emphasizing language learning combined with interprovincial exchanges and other forms of promoting shared values.

In drawing up a balance sheet of the changes and their effects over a period of some 35 years, I concluded: “The Canadian experiment in official languages is a roaring success” (Churchill 1998: 80). Part of the evidentiary basis for this conclusion lies in the widespread support that exists for most of the key programs involved in the youth option - particularly the overwhelming conviction of both adults and youth that knowing both official languages is important for the future and that official linguistic minorities should have the right to schooling in their own language. Evidence from a very broad national sample survey, conducted for the Commissioner of Official Languages in the mid-1980s, showed that a majority of Canadians in all provinces supported official bilingualism policies. Tony Smith and I carried out an in-depth analysis of the survey data including

examination of age as a factor in attitudes. As in earlier surveys, Francophones both in Quebec and in English majority provinces had the highest levels of support for various policies (in the 90 % range for education issues). Support levels were highest among youth and decreased with age, though the age-related differences among Francophones were small. Among Anglophones, however, the study revealed a major watershed in attitudinal history. The older generations of Anglophones, who entered adult life under a system where French had a clearly subordinate status, showed relatively lukewarm (though majority) support. But among the youth who had reached adolescence under the new official languages regime (roughly from 1965-67 onwards), the levels of support shot up drastically, almost reaching the same levels as among Francophones. We termed this an “emerging consensus”, and considered it clear evidence that the policies were working in shifting attitudes. We felt that continuation of the policies would result in an ongoing generational shift in outlook on official bilingualism (Churchill & Smith 1986).¹⁵

In summary, the vast majority of younger Canadians have adopted a view of Canada as a bilingual country where English and French coexist on a level of formal equality and where both English-speaking and French-speaking citizens should enjoy certain basic rights including the right to an education in the official language of the parents. As a result, Canada is emerging as a bilingual country where the majority of citizens in all provinces have come to terms with the core principles of policy, even if the interpretation and application of the principles may be matter for dispute or rejection by some. In a real sense, official bilingualism and official languages in education have become integral parts of a Canadian civic identity.

This positive conclusion about the results of more than three decades of policy change does not mean that official languages policies have resolved issues of identity for all Canadians. Rather, I think we must examine identity issues in the light of hard realism about the politics of language relations:

The changes anticipated with the help of official languages programs in education require at least two generations to institutionalize, so that the process is perhaps only a little more than half over. Because contemporary politics de-emphasize many roles of the state, the next phases of change will require a firm commitment to pursue official language policies as a foundational element of the existence of Canada that justifies continued high levels of intervention.

Rather, I think we must examine identity issues in the light of hard realism about the politics of language relations:

- (a) The changes anticipated with the help of official language programs in education were envisioned as requiring at least two generations to

¹⁵ Unfortunately, no sponsor has ever been found to redo the analysis on a national scale. No other survey conducted on language attitudes has had a sample large enough to permit the fine-grained study that we did. The project design was by Tony Smith.

institutionalize, so that the process is perhaps only a little more than half over. Because contemporary politics de-emphasize many roles of the state, the next phases of change will require a firm commitment to pursue official language policies as a foundational element of the existence of Canada that justifies continued high levels of intervention.

- (b) Language changes aimed at better understanding cannot, under any circumstance, be expected to eradicate differences in interests between regions, provinces or major ethnolinguistic groups. Language differences will continue, therefore, to be used as a symbol or proxy for larger interest clashes which language alone cannot resolve. Official language policies will continue to be blamed as a scapegoat for the failure to resolve other non-linguistic social and political differences.

The current regime of language policies was created mainly to deal with Anglophone-Francophone differences by raising the status and role of Francophones and Franco-Canadian language and culture. The success in achieving this objective of greater equity for Francophones and French would have been impossible without federal leadership but cannot be attributed to only one party: Many English majority provinces have moved so far from earlier positions on these issues that the change is almost revolutionary. And the very differences of approach and competitive nature of relations between Ottawa and Quebec provincial authorities have reinforced the emergence of a dynamic Francophone society in Quebec.

4. The Search for a Renewed Discourse on Identity and Diversity

4.1. Social Cohesion, Citizenship, Identity: Research and Policy Interactions

Both federal and provincial authorities have sensed that a page has been turned and that the pursuit of official language policies in the future must be better coordinated with the interests represented by groups in Canadian society who confront other identity issues than those addressed directly by the current official language model. A major policy ferment provides the backdrop for the identity issues we will examine in connection with language in education. We will sketch only briefly the contours of this policy renewal process which in the near term will probably lead to new federal policy orientations, followed by a prolonged period of consultation and adjustment involving all the provinces.

The early to mid-1990s brought a radicalization of discourse on identity issues within Canada, perhaps a by-product of a severe and enduring economic downturn combined with the election of an extreme neo-conservative government in Ontario, the largest Canadian province and the major pole of attraction for immigrants. As one of its first actions, the government ordered provincial education officials to suspend programs dealing with equity issues pending a review. Observers felt an anti-immigrant backlash in public opinion was

underway and, given the fact that most immigrants and refugees were of non-European origin, fears were expressed that racism would emerge as a major issue that could destabilize social calm. A report published by the business-oriented C.D. Howe Institute raised the specter of “a conflict of identities that, if unsettled, will have enormously adverse consequences for the well-being of all” (Stein, Cameron and Simeon 1997, cited: Jenson 1998).

It is perhaps no coincidence that in the early 1990s Canadian policy makers and researchers began devoting much more attention than in the past to social cohesion, citizenship and identity. The Canadian discussion of these topics has been extremely rich, led by researchers working through two “networks” subsidized by a variety of federal agencies and private foundations to stimulate academic and public debate on important topics: the Canadian component of the Metropolis Project (cf. www.metropolis.net) and the Canadian Policy Research Network (www.cprn.ca).

The theme of social cohesion rests essentially upon a defensive view, that the existing social order is menaced - or perceived to be menaced - by forces that undermine its stability. Following perestroika and the outbreak of conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, social cohesion became a focus for discussion on social policy among emerging democracies in Eastern and Southeastern Europe and the Caucasus; international agencies such as the World Bank have subsequently used it as a means of organizing discussion about integration of impoverished marginal groups within Third World societies. The concept of social cohesion is generally presented as integrative and intended to reduce social inequality (Jenson 1998), but critiques have highlighted the potential for using calls to common allegiance as a basis for suppressing justifiable opposition to inequities (Bernard 1996).

The range of Canadian research on identity is particularly vast (Rummens 2001; Kaspar & Noh 2001), as is that on citizenship issues (Jenson 1998). We shall limit our discussion here to identifying key nodes where the research intersects with the topic of language in education and related policies or programs.

Already in 1996 a major briefing paper was prepared for senior federal officials who coordinate programs for stimulating research, under the title “Canadian Identity, Culture and Values: Building a Cohesive Society”. The paper defines social cohesion in terms of three dimensions: (a) building shared values and communities of interpretation, (b) reducing disparities in wealth and income in a diverse society, and (c) engaging in a common enterprise as members of the same community (Government of Canada 1996: 2). It is intriguing to note that senior Canadian officials have long been comfortable with using concepts such as communities of interpretation - borrowed from recent elaborations of discourse analysis - to channel discussions of policy. The paper links notions of social cohesion with symbols of personal identity and citizenship and with the “decline in legitimacy of the traditional touchstones of Canadian identity, such as the monarchy.” One study cited in the paper concluded that “there are no strong symbols (with the possible exception of the maple leaf) which are acceptable to

all ethnic groups” (Government of Canada 1996: 3). The exchanges surrounding citizenship have gradually evolved towards a still very imprecise attempt to structure discourse around the theme of “diversity” as a means of forging a new consensus on official languages, multiculturalism and Aboriginal identity.

A significant problem in the briefing document¹⁶ resides in the continued willingness to use uncritically results from opinion polls that are crudely designed in their approach to official languages and their impact. The term “official bilingualism,” for example, became politicized in the mid-1960s and has negative historical connotations both in Western Canada and in Quebec, so that it cannot be used accurately to measure support for current official languages policies (Churchill 1993). The paper reports an April 1996 poll of opinion regarding symbols of Canadian Identity and finds that “bilingualism” (not even “official bilingualism”) is considered as a “very important” symbol of Canadian identity by 54 % of respondents in Quebec but only 28 % of respondents in the rest of Canada. The predictable unenthusiastic response in Canada outside Quebec is a product of using misleading terminology in the polling question and reveals little or nothing about the role of official languages policies as a symbol of Canadian identity. Tony Smith and I have presented data elsewhere to show that *all of the core policies receive very strong, sometimes overwhelming, majority support throughout Canada, provided that the opinion poll asks about the specifics of official languages policies* in concrete terms about what they do and who they have an impact on (Churchill 1993; Churchill and Smith 1987). Opinion studies show a widespread conviction - with minimal differences by region or age - that knowledge of both official languages is important for future generations of young Canadians (Churchill and Smith 1986; Churchill 1998).

In other words, we have strong evidence that citizens across Canada believe two official languages will endure as the norm and that younger citizens would be advantaged by acquiring personal English-French bilingualism. Acceptance of the official languages as an enduring feature of Canadian life may be considered, therefore, to be a prime marker of civic identity related directly to citizenship as a Canadian. Moreover, the civic identity is rooted specifically in acceptance of policies that promote official languages in education both for official linguistic minorities and for provincial mainstream majorities.

The marker has three aspects of very different implications. The first aspect, of official languages as a marker of citizenship, is language of [state] services. The right to services in one of the two official languages is now accepted without question as a price of being Canadian, though the practicality of providing services in a geographically vast country raises the issue of “where numbers

¹⁶ Although several years old, the briefing document reflects currents of discussion that are still actively pursued today in very similar terms. This continuity of discourse is the reason for examining the paper’s assumptions here.

warrant”¹⁷: Does the number of beneficiaries in a given locality / point of service justify the costs associated with provision? In a few short years since the adoption of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, politicking and litigation have built widespread confidence that issues of practicality can be resolved, if not amicably, at least acceptably. We shall not further discuss this aspect.

The second aspect is the symbolism of recognizing two languages in a country of great linguistic, ethnocultural, religious, and racial diversity. The recognition of two official languages inevitably creates two “mainstreams” in the sociological sense, implying two dominant discourse communities and an associated dominant culture for each. Conversely, it also implies the non-recognition of other languages and discourse communities from which many citizens derive their sense of personal identity and worth.

The third aspect is personal knowledge of one, or both, of the two official languages. Not all citizens know one, or both, official languages equally well, so that the symbolism of personal language knowledge is potentially threatening to some individuals and their sense of identity and self-worth.¹⁸ The pan-Canadian *official languages policy is specifically based on the principle that Canadians have a right to be unilingual in one of the two official languages and, therefore, to receive services in their official language of choice*. In technical terms, federal language rights have been defined as individual rights - the rights travel with the individual - rather than on the principle of territoriality - that the rights can only be exercised in defined geographical areas, as in countries such as Belgium, Finland or Switzerland. The underlying identity principle is, of course, that citizenship as a Canadian confers language rights that are available throughout the national territory, rather than in only one province or part of a province (MacMillan 1998). The portability of rights is an extension of a much older principle of Canadian citizenship as conferring access to various social services (Jenson & Papillon 2001). On the other hand, some of the individual language rights, particularly the right to minority language education in Section 24 of the Charter, is a right that can only be exercised by a group of parents belonging to the linguistic minority (cf. above, “where numbers warrant”) and therefore has certain aspects of collective rights (MacMillan 1998: 30-33).

4.2. Theory and Terminology Shifts

In the following, we shall discuss first the symbolism of recognizing two languages and secondly promotion of official languages in education in terms of their implications for the personal and civic identity of individuals. Before

¹⁷ The “where numbers warrant” [“là, où le nombre le justifie”] phrase is used in Section 24 of the Canadian Charter of rights and freedoms to qualify the right to elementary and secondary instruction for official linguistic minorities, but it is widely applied in debates about the practicality or feasibility of other services - usually to oppose expansion that favours the minorities.

¹⁸ This explains why poll questions referring simply to “bilingualism” as a symbol draw far fewer positive responses than questions about the value of bilingualism for younger generations (see discussion above).

addressing these issues, a few clarifications are in order here with respect to the theoretical shifts that underlie current Canadian writing on the topics.

Canadian discourse is strongly influenced by the so-called “discursive turn” of the social sciences, in which individual identities are visualized as being shaped through social interactions that express and mediate power relationships. Analysis of language learning and teaching has moved away from the conceptualizations of older mainstream linguistics where, in Fairclough’s words, “questions of identity have entered the picture only in terms of the concept of ‘expression’ which presupposes a prelinguistic and prediscursive conception of the subject and ignores the constitutive effects of discourse on social identity” (Fairclough, cited: Sarangi & Baynam 1996: 78). Much attention has been focused on the discourse of schooling and language teaching, borrowing analytical concepts from Bourdieu, Foucault and Freire to throw light upon the types of constraints, including various forms of discrimination, that bear upon individual learners and their classroom experiences, including language learning (cf. Corson 1995).

Civic identity is, by definition, a social construction that interacts with the other forms of social identity found in each individual. The work of Kymlicka has attempted to reconcile the theoretical position of the classic liberal state protecting individual rights with the needs of a polity such as Canada where groups demand and, in some cases, “need” collective rights. His resolution depends in part on identifying different levels of citizenship recognition accorded to self-identified minorities, ranging from special representation in public institutions (for non-ethnic minorities), delegation of self-governing powers to groups to permit identity protection (for national minorities, i.e. ethnocultural minorities of long-standing), and protection of cultural differences and practices along with measures to reduce discrimination (for recent immigrants and certain excluded groups) (cf. Kymlicka 1989).

Breton’s (1984) seminal contribution was to highlight the state’s role of allocating “symbolic resources” through recognition of cultural symbols of various groups, thus linking the politics of group and collective identities with general theories of the state.

Working from his vantage point as a minority Anglophone living in Quebec, Taylor has broadened the search to show the complex implications of recognition and non-recognition of identities, popularizing the phrase “politics of recognition” to describe the quest of groups as diverse as Québécois separatists, feminists, and racial minorities to achieve state recognition of their identity and values. Taylor’s work, in particular, traces the complexities of multiple identities of individuals living in contemporary western liberal democracies (Taylor 1992). And it is this multiplicity of identities that we shall observe in looking at the implications of language learning and use.

To discuss civic identity, we shall use the dimensions of Jenson and Papillon (n.d.): rights and responsibilities, access, and belonging. The first dimension,

consisting of citizen *rights and responsibilities* to the collectivity, is familiar to most in terms of civil, political and social rights (“entitlements” in the terminology of right-wing theorists). *Access* refers to the means to make use of the rights, such as access to courts and legal counsel to exercise civil rights, or access to health services or income security. The third dimension, *belonging*, is regulated by the state, which determines who is considered to be a member of the collectivity (Jenson & Papillon n.d.).

In terms of linguistic and cultural minorities, the classic form of the nation-state has traditionally set parameters on *belonging* that reduced many citizens to less than equal status on the basis of criteria emphasizing commonality of ethnicity, race, language, religion, or culture. The nation-state further uses public schooling as a primary means of eliminating such differences by use of one language (or a limited number of languages) as media of instruction and structuring a curriculum intended to ensure knowledge of a single common national heritage (Churchill 1996; Pagé 1997). In Canada, the constitutional structure has precluded the federal government from intervening directly in shaping school curricula, forcing it to use a variety of indirect measures and incentives whenever it sought to influence citizenship education in provincial school systems. Even federal support for language classes for immigrant adults were seen in the 1960s as “at least, irregular, if not illegal” (Sears 1997: note 65, briefing paper n.d. but circa 1967). The Official Languages in Education Programs with their massive funding involvement represented, of course, a total shift in mentality with respect to federal activism to promote civic values through language instruction.

4.3. Recognition, Non-Recognition and Multiculturalism

The fundamental identity issue involved in recognition of English and French as official languages is the extent to which the non-recognition of other languages impacts on personal and/or civic identity. It should be emphasized, however, that the formal recognition of official languages emerged through a political process in which multiculturalism as state policy was viewed as a parallel component of the policy “package”.

4.3.1. Persons of non-French non-Anglo-Celtic Immigrant Origin

Representatives from groups of relatively recent European ethnic immigrant origin expressed strong opposition in the 1960s to the mandate implied by the very name of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. They interpreted the name and mandate to mean Canada would have two national cultures that would take precedence over their own. In a formal response to Vol. IV of the Commission’s Report (The Contributions of the Other Ethnic Groups), Prime Minister Trudeau proclaimed in a 1971 speech to the House of Commons, a policy of “multiculturalism within a bilingual framework,” emphasizing that Canada had two official languages but no official culture. The policy picked up on threads of federal programs of multicultural content extending back into the 1940s and set in motion programs: (1) to assist cultural groups to retain and foster their identity, (2) to overcome barriers to their full participation in Canadian society, (3) to promote interchanges among all Canadian cultural

groups, and (4) to assist immigrants in acquiring at least one of the official languages. The policy, in Trudeau's words, was intended to be "...the conscious support of individual freedom of choice. We are free to be ourselves... National unity, if it is to mean anything in the deeply personal sense, must be founded on confidence in one's own individual identity..." (cited: Canadian Heritage 1996: 11-12, 23-24).

The elegance of the policy resides in its implicit belief that a confident nation can trust its citizens of different origins and cultures to be themselves, to retain distinctive identities and group affiliations while acquiring a sense of citizenship that protects national unity. Since its initial proclamation in 1971, federal multiculturalism policy and programs have lost their initial emphasis on supporting the conservation of culture and have progressively shifted to promoting integration and greater participation for groups that would otherwise be excluded from participation in political and social life (Canadian Heritage 1996 *passim*). But the understanding of most Canadians is that the policies are intended to encourage cultural retention and long-term maintenance.

At a macro level, census data along with national survey results provide some clues as to the soundness of the policy. A comparison of ethnic self-identity responses to the 1971 and 1991 national censuses was highly revealing of trends after 20 years of visible multiculturalism policies. The study concluded that there had been a decline in the choice of an "ethnic" identity (British, French, other) versus a "Canadian" or "Provincial" identity. In Quebec the earlier preference for "French Canadian" had given way to a choice of "Quebecois". "Identifying as 'Canadian' does not diminish the acceptance of multiculturalism, and maintaining a heritage identity is compatible with having at the same time a strong 'Canadian' identity and attachment to Canada" (Kalin & Berry 1995: 1; Esses & Gardner 1996).

As noted, the original statement of federal policies spoke of assisting in learning one of the official languages, a measure directed at recent immigrants. But no explicit mention was made of ethnic language retention for immigrant or established groups. Programs during the 1970s and even into the 1980s gave limited support to community initiatives for maintaining non-official "heritage" languages, sometimes encouraged and assisted by provincial education authorities, but priorities shifted rapidly and, by the 1980s, federal and provincial programs placed major emphasis on reduction in discrimination against marginalized groups and on integration of newcomers to Canadian society (Canadian Heritage 1996).

Macro data also permit us to examine the language consequences of the benign neglect practiced by public authorities towards heritage languages of immigrant origin. Studies in the 1970's showed that, among older immigrant groups, almost complete language loss had occurred by the third generation in Canada (O'Bryan, Reitz & Kuplowska 1976). More recent studies of census data show major language shifts occurring in the first generation after immigration, though a few language groups are more likely to transmit their language to the next generation:

in Montreal, Italian, Portuguese, Armenian, Vietnamese, Thai and Slavic languages; in Toronto, Armenian and Thai. Although the data for Montreal are often interpreted as suggesting a lesser attraction of French for immigrants, the differences in over-all transmission of languages between generations may also be explained by the population mix: among key immigrant groups sometimes analyzed to demonstrate the purportedly weaker attraction of French, a significantly higher proportion of the groups in Montreal are recent immigrants compared to other parts of Canada. (Pendakur 1990). On the other hand, the trends for new immigrants to Canada within the last 30-40 years appear entirely consistent with the findings of O'Bryan et al. for older groups. Micro-analysis has shown, rather, that "the absolute transmission rate of heritage languages has actually fallen sharply between 1981 and 1991" (Swidinsky & Swidinsky 1997), i.e. that proportionately fewer children learn their immigrant parents' language in the next generation.

For groups of recent immigrant origin, the evidence strongly suggests that current policies do not force integration but nevertheless result in considerable degrees of language shift over short periods and in adoption of a Canadian civic identity. Clearly, without strong public support for linguistic and ethnic identity retention, the vast majority of immigrants and their descendants appear destined to continue the pattern of their predecessors where most lose the heritage language within three generations and, except for religion and certain within-family practices, merge into the dominant English and Franco-Quebecois mainstreams. As noted in a study of immigration by The Economic Council of Canada in 1991, "Canada's multiculturalism policy is an integrationist strategy that 'does not aim to maintain complete cultural systems but to preserve as much of ethnic culture as is compatible with Canadian customs' " (cited: Kalbach & Kalbach 1999).

4.3.2. *Aboriginal peoples and métis*

Our discussion has thus far not considered a third major population grouping: Aboriginal Peoples and the Métis. The symbolic implications of proclaiming English and French as official languages cannot be dealt with in the same terms for Aboriginal Peoples as for persons of non-French non-Anglo-Celtic descent. The unstated assumption made in our preceding discussion has been that the individuals and groups under discussion may be considered to enjoy full citizenship rights or, for newly landed immigrants, can expect to enjoy them after a modest transition period. Historically, the assumption has not been true for Aboriginal Peoples and the Métis. Centuries of discrimination, deprivation of citizenship rights, and forced assimilation had placed these peoples and their cultures in a most precarious state well before the adoption of the first Official Languages Act in 1969 (cf. [RCAP] Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1996, vol. 3). Despite attempts to rectify their unequal status, social, economic and other forms of inequality continue to be an everyday fact of life for many of Canada's Aboriginal Peoples.

Discussion of civic identity must be understood in the historical context that Aboriginal Peoples consider themselves the original Canadians, the people whose

language gave Canada its name and whose occupation of the continent preceded the arrival of the first Europeans. They strenuously objected to the French and British (English) being considered the “founding” or “charter” peoples of Canada, a status which they consider to be legitimately their own. On the other hand, their Canadian identity existed until recently without their enjoying full citizenship rights. The claim to First Nation status can be understood to transcend the legal framework of the Canadian state (including its constituent provinces) and is linked indissolubly to a quest for recognition of pre-existing rights (RCAP vol. 3).

The main implication of the recognition of English and French as official languages has been to legitimate the demand of certain native groups that the status of their own languages be given similar recognition. The major step in extension of recognition came with a federal decision to add French to English as an official language in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon Territory. In ensuing negotiations official status was given to several indigenous languages in the territories. Within the newly created entity of Nunavut, Inuktitut, the language of the Inuit, has official status. The official status in each jurisdiction is often limited in its practical application and must be understood within the context of the respective cultures. But the symbolism of official language status is viewed as strengthening Aboriginal identities as Canadian First Nations and confirming their pre-existing rights.

The status of Aboriginal languages in Canada is precarious. A survey of First Nations reported in 1990 showed that “25 % of bands have declining languages, 30 % have endangered languages (where less than 50 % of adults speak their language and there are few, if any, younger speakers) and 11 % have critical languages (those with less than 10 speakers in the community)” (Heimbecker 1997: 57). As noted in the report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, “assigning a language official status will not guarantee intergenerational transmission” (RCAP, 3 (2): 11). Nevertheless the approach taken in the federal response to RCAP (Government of Canada 1998) - a continuation of negotiated trends dating back at least 15 years - corresponds to one of the options for minority status discussed by Kymlicka (1989): the granting of partial autonomy and governance. The model of native control of local schooling (cf. Paquette 1986b, Assembly of First Nations 2001) has been implemented in some places, and autonomy for Status Indian Bands on reserves is a matter of ongoing negotiations.

Clearly, the history and context of Aboriginal and Métis issues places them in a different realm of discussion than is possible in this paper. Federal policy initiatives span many departments and are of a complexity that defies summary (see however the short, authoritative discussion in Burnaby 1996). The response of the Government of Canada (1998) to the RCAP Report outlined major objectives for change with numerous proposals for action, whose implementation and likely impact remain difficult to assess. The next section will discuss specifically the use of aboriginal languages in education and their relationship to identity of Aboriginal Peoples.

4.4. Language Learning and Identity: Post-modern Complexities

Promoting official languages in education has strong implications for identity formation, implications that vary depending upon the individuals concerned and their personal identities, shaped by their histories and social relationships. Although our analysis of the Canadian model of official languages has led to highly positive conclusions about the role of those policies in their areas of intended impact, we have yet to examine other federal and provincial policies that also affect language learning and identity. Some of these other policies interact with official language programs in ways that produce unintended and even contrary effects in forming the identities of Canadians. As Canadians search for new forms of discourse on language and identity, attention has turned to the results of studies that raise intriguing and important questions based upon the “discursive turn” in theory and methodology. Unfortunately, most of the findings on groups other than Anglophones and Francophones are very fragmentary. Nevertheless they have proved helpful in defining major problems implicit in citizenship identity formation.

From a recent innovative synthesis of critical discourse theory and methodology applied to language learning (Norton 2000), we shall note a few core concepts that are repeated in much recent research and may assist in understanding the questions being raised below: Learning a new language may be conceived as an investment by the learner, an investment that alters the learner’s identity and is, so to speak, an investment in that identity. The context in which learning occurs is a social context where power relationships shape the learner’s behaviour, determine the opportunities for learning, and have major impact on identity formation - both in terms of private social identity and civic identity. The primary power relationships that are of interest in observing language learning include inequality based on gender, race, class, ethnicity and sexual orientation (Norton 2000, esp. 1-22). These factors are particularly relevant when considering the impact of language in education programs as they affect certain groups: minority Francophones, non-French non-Anglo-Celtic immigrants and their children, and Aboriginal Peoples.

A crucial test of identity formation resulting from official languages policies is the impact of expanding educational opportunities in French for *minority Francophones* living outside Quebec, i.e. *the direct impact of the official languages in education programs on their primary public*.¹⁹ Given that widespread assimilation and language loss has affected minority communities across Canada, what difference does a minority French-language school make? If

¹⁹ Loss of Anglophone identity has never been considered a serious issue for English-speaking students in Quebec schools, even though many English speakers and their descendants have merged into the Francophone population over the last two centuries. The spread of French immersion has been strongly supported by Anglophone parents, who perceive the language learning to be “additive” with no substantial risk of mother tongue loss for their children.

the results on this point were negative, there would be little reason either to continue the policies or, for that matter, to discuss implications for other groups.

Studies by Landry and Allard over a period of more than 15 years have given a detailed profile of identity orientations among minority Francophones attending French-language schools in provinces across Canada. Perhaps the most striking and significant conclusions of their research concern the relationship between French-language schooling, home language conditions and youth attitudes towards the French language and culture. The demographic background to assimilation is that, in the past, mixed marriages between Francophones and non-Francophones have tended to result in failure to transmit French to the children and its replacement by English. Most of the language losses among Francophone children of mixed Francophone-Anglophone marriages appear to be reduced drastically, if not eradicated, if two factors are present: (a) one of the parents [i.e. the Francophone] continues to use French in the home talking to the child and (b) the child attends a French-language school. Even in localities where many children entering school are only nominally Francophone and have English as their dominant language, by the mid-years of adolescence, the children are fully functioning bilinguals with a knowledge of French suitable for their age and grade level and with strong attitudes of attachment to the French language and culture. The attachment to French does not imply that the children have necessarily “abandoned” the language and culture of the other non-Francophone parent (Landry & Allard 1994; Landry 1997).

When we turn to the other groups mentioned - those of immigrant origin and Aboriginal Peoples - we are dealing with very different issues, not the direct impact of official languages in education programs but rather *the lack of parallel programs supporting non-official languages*.

Children of recent immigrants are to be found in all provincial and territorial educational systems, together with a certain number of children descended from *earlier waves of immigration* whose families may still speak a non-official language. Nowhere in Canada have provincial governments put in place substantial programs where the language of school instruction is the mother tongue of children who do not speak the majority language of schooling in the province, such as occurs in some European countries or in parts of the United States. Instead, some provinces authorize teaching “heritage languages” (langues d’origine in Quebec) as a school subject for a small fraction of the school day, usually in the elementary years, when sufficient numbers of parents in a school request it. Ample evidence exists to show that even limited amounts of mother-tongue support can facilitate transition to schooling in the majority language and tends to enhance achievement even in the second, majority language as compared to immersion without support in the majority language (Cummins & Danesi 1990). No evidence exists to suggest that the limited amounts of language support provided in typical heritage language classes are sufficient to reverse language loss, but anecdotal evidence from multiple sources indicates that such exposure to the language can reinforce family-supported ethnic identity formation. Studies of children of highly committed parents show that by seeking

out and exploiting available heritage language schooling opportunities and reinforcing those opportunities with family-based activities, the process of language loss can be slowed down drastically and communicative competence retained into the adolescent years (Chumak-Horbatsch 1999).

The prospect for long-term retention would appear to be dependent upon finding further opportunities for language development in late youth and early adulthood. In Alberta provincial policies maintain, for example, Ukrainian language public schools that operate on principles similar to French immersion and serve limited numbers of children whose ancestors immigrated 50, 60 or more years earlier. Quebec has a system of providing certain baseline funding for ethnically maintained private schools, provided that the schools follow the provincial curriculum. The private schools have had strong results among some groups (e.g. Armenians in the Montreal area) in fostering intergenerational language transmission (Pendakur 1990).

The identity implications of limited amounts of heritage language exposure, offered on a voluntary basis to a fraction of students from non-English-speaking families, are twofold: (a) for those who participate, support is given to maintenance of ethnic identity, a factor which can serve to reinforce their self-esteem and give balance to their identity formation as Canadians; (b) for those who do not participate in heritage language programs, the main aspects of identity formation are based upon the uncertain power relationships in classrooms where the non-English-speakers are almost always in a less powerful situation – some groups being more vulnerable and others. Even though most non-English speakers acquire a reasonable knowledge of English over a period of years, learning English is only a part of the process of forming their identity. For students whose background lowers their power standing – on the basis of race, social class or other social markers that reduce their status – learning English will occur in a context that tends to reinforce social differences. The identity internalized is Canadian. But the civic identity may be formed with a second-class status that lowers key aspects of citizenship identity such as access to rights and sense of belonging.

Programming for *immigrant children in Quebec* is framed entirely within the context of promoting adoption of French as the main official language in preference to English. The model is primarily oriented towards what is termed “convergence”, namely “that all groups will converge to share in the responsibility for the maintenance and promotion of French” (d’Anglejan & De Koninck 1992: 99). The continental European approach of “interculturalism” is the dominant theoretical orientation for improving intergroup relations, and the Quebec government has devoted substantial resources to fostering successful integration through French as a second language “welcoming” classes (classes d’accueil), special regional programs, and support for students making the transition from the welcoming class to the mainstream program. The French-language schools still face a difficult problem of systemic adaptation from a system based largely on common ethnicity (and language) to a pluriethnic reality (McAndrew & Lamarre 1996).

The identity formation issues for immigrant children in Quebec schools closely parallel those in English-majority provinces, given that power imbalances between immigrants and host society are similar. At the same time, however, the socialization process occurs in an environment where the acquisition of French is strongly linked to an official provincial ideology emphasizing French unilingualism as a goal. Conceived in a defensive mode to protect French against the perceived threat of English and of French-English bilingualism, this ideology runs the risk of creating a situation where children of immigrant origin may perceive the rejection of English bilingualism as a rejection of bilingualism itself, an implicit if not explicit rejection of their own prior linguistic and cultural identity. In Quebec - as in English majority provinces - school authorities express strong support for inclusive treatment and work vigorously to eliminate forms of social exclusion that might undermine formation of identities prepared for active citizenship roles. Social realities in all provinces make their efforts an uphill battle.

The language instruction given to *adult immigrants* after arrival is not conceived or administered as a part of the official languages effort at the federal level, and the relevant programs are unrelated at the provincial level to the mainstream of elementary and secondary schooling.²⁰ Indeed, reviews of the delivery of ESL programs sponsored by the federal government over the last few decades emphasize the difficulty of coordination between federal and provincial levels and incoherence in the delivery mechanisms (Burnaby 1992, 1996).

Language learning problems of adult immigrants have been the subject of numerous studies demonstrating the negative consequences for identity formation related to citizenship. For example, programs that historically tied access to second language training to immediate job prospects often excluded immigrant women, whose husbands were the first to enter the job market in the initial phases of settlement. Lack of access for women may have resulted from a variety of reasons (e.g. lack of daycare facilities for small children during class times) but had a common effect of reducing their personal autonomy and access to gainful employment, reducing levels of income for themselves and their families, and creating dependency situations that reduced their likelihood of assuming modern family roles of lesser dependency upon their spouses (Boyd 1992; Burnaby 1992 for related sources).

The incoherence in terms of identity formation results from subordinating the goals of adult ESL training to labour market placement, isolating its conception and delivery from concerns about citizenship identity formation. The relevant federal subsidy programs have traditionally operated through economic ministries, not through those concerned with citizenship and identity. Reforms instituted in 1992 reduced many of the former inconsistencies and sought to

²⁰ A very small proportion of adult immigrants participate in regular school programs, usually as part of upgrading their basic education and achieving, for example, an educational level equivalent to secondary school graduation.

increase the number of immigrants receiving language training (from about 28 % in 1990 to a planned 45 % in 1995). Unfortunately, the programs still continue to exclude refugee claimants prior to their obtaining landed immigrant status (a process that may take years) and persons already holding citizenship, a criterion which excludes particularly women who have remained out of the labour force to raise children in the first years after arrival (Burnaby 1996: 198-201). Very recent changes in Canadian immigration policy are intended, if implemented, to drastically reduce the number of persons admitted who do not have mastery of either English or French, a draconian proposal that would “solve” the problem of Canadian identity formation by eliminating the experience as a phase necessary for settlement (Arat-Koc 1999).

It should be noted that drastically reducing the numbers of adult immigrants in English and French as second language programs – a by-product of current immigration policy proposals – would eliminate one of the few formal environments where trained teachers with Canadian experience can interact on a sustained basis with immigrants, teaching them social mores and expectations as an integral part of language acquisition. It is not clear whether the disadvantages of relying on the forces of socialization in society at large to promote Canadian identity have received sufficient attention in policy deliberations.

Some studies have, in fact, probed beyond the realm of formal training systems to examine identity formation among adult immigrants as they are socialized into language usage within society. Norton (2000) examines in detail the language learning experiences of recent immigrant women, showing the often highly negative and disempowering situations in which their language acquisition occurs and characterizing their identity formation as a form of personal struggle against severe odds.

A recent doctoral thesis explores an unusual set of issues that have become increasingly important in southern Ontario, namely the formation of citizenship concepts among Francophone immigrants to Ontario. The study illustrates the problems of often highly-educated immigrants, particularly from African and Middle Eastern countries, as they seek to situate their identities between the rival ideologies of official languages and multiculturalism while still struggling with societal discrimination based upon skin pigmentation and regional origin. Many had difficulty in choosing between status as a Francophone - i.e. as a member of an official language group - and that of a “multicultural” - i.e. as a member of a group that is culturally very distinctive from the Franco-Canadian model underlying official languages policies. The study is particularly valuable for illuminating some of the more complex intersections between ethnic, linguistic and cultural memberships (Quell 1998).

The identity issues arising from current systems of providing instruction to recent immigrant adults in English and French as second languages have arisen from a tradition of treating language transmission and language learning as a technical issue of acquiring a set of skills through persistence and practice of features of the target languages. Programs for providing language instruction to immigrants

have been conceptualized in highly technocratic terms, limiting the vision of context solely to the utility of language for obtaining and retaining paid employment in the economy.²¹ Learning and practicing features of the target language and being able to use them in relation to work are, of course, valid purposes. The limitations of the approach only become visible if one seeks to understand and explain the relationship of learning activities to identity formation. Researchers are examining the learners' activities using broader frames of reference, such as Layder's four element "map" of research foci: context, setting, situated activities, and - particularly - self, that is the implications for individuals in terms of their lived psychobiographies (Candlin 2000).

The resulting vision of language learning shows it as being situated in a context where immigrant language learners are in positions of relative disempowerment, so that the impact on civic identity is directly related to the main dimensions of citizenship: rights, access to rights, and belonging to use Jenson and Papillon's (1998) terms. Far from being homogeneous, the learners' identities are multiple and place them simultaneously in multiple networks of socially defined identities. Current studies emphasize the very important differences in civic identity and relationship to national feeling for specific groups such as women (cf. de Sève 2000, Vickers 2000) or "persons of colour" (Dhruvarajan 2000).

For younger immigrants whose lived experience in Canada may include both attendance in public schools and colleges or universities followed by entrance to the work force, the complexity of identity issues means that language learning is connected to a variety of identity linkages, such as racial identity and status as a citizen enjoying equal rights. In successive studies comparing young first-generation Indo-Canadian immigrant families and young unmarried second-generation Indo-Canadians aged 18 to 25 who grew up in Canada, "most first-generation immigrants were convinced that they were not welcome in this society, and they interacted mostly with members of their own ethnic group." Their children experienced racism even though they were born in Canada. Many of the second generation group also reported experiencing racism, particularly in junior high school, and were "struggling to gain acceptance from the mainstream" (Dhruvarajan 2000: 171).

The pervasive nature of difficulties that affect immigrants' socialization into any host society raises questions about policies for adult language training that, by and large, have been conceptualized around narrow employment objectives. An alternative would be to examine the possibilities of using the formalized second language learning environment as a vehicle for shaping more directly aspects of civic identity and assisting in developing more effective skills for access to rights

²¹ Individual teachers and many service delivery agencies did, and still do, use the language classes to further citizenship development. The critique here is of over-all vision and resulting lack of a strategy coordinated to produce maximum positive effects on identity formation.

and a more developed sense of belonging - all key elements in citizenship and national identity.

The identities of *Aboriginal Peoples* have been severely affected by the history of their education at the hands of more powerful Europeans. For centuries down to approximately the early 1960s, almost all educational efforts made for Aboriginal Peoples were predicated on the idea that their languages should be replaced by English or French. The cruel and abusive treatment of Aboriginal children taken from their families and forced to live in residential schools, where they were physically and psychologically abused and subjected to myriad punishments for using their native languages, are among the darkest pages of Canadian history (Heimbecker 1997; RCAP Vol. 1, chap. 10). In the 1950s, making school attendance by Inuit children compulsory was used as a means of constraining the Inuit to abandon traditional life styles and move into permanent settlements (RCAP Vol. 3, Chap. 5).

Although many piecemeal efforts were made to change Aboriginal education in the 1950s and 1960s, the stage for current schooling was set by a policy statement, "Indian Control of Indian Education," issued in 1972 by the National Indian Brotherhood (forerunner of the Assembly of First Nations). At the time, education was organized through a multitude of uncoordinated schools, some in off-reserve provincial schools, others in reserve schools controlled by federal authorities. Details are lacking, but already a few years earlier, more than half of the Aboriginal elementary school population was attending provincial schools. (Burnaby 1996). Paquette (1986a) considered Aboriginal education administration to be so fragmented that coordination and cooperation on policy was virtually impossible. Aboriginal control of schooling continues to advance at a very slow pace, though it is not at all clear that current methods of providing control make any real difference. An intense study of education among two Northwestern Ontario native school jurisdictions raised serious doubts about the extent to which political control had meaningful impact when the control did not permit changing the fundamental assumptions of schooling that were borrowed from the mainstream Canadian society (Paquette 1986b).

Serious efforts have been made to introduce Aboriginal languages into the formal school curricula. The most authoritative recent surveys of Aboriginal language programs showed that about 34.5 % of schools taught a First Nations language, a practice much more frequent in band and federal schools than in provincial schools. But the authors concluded that, with the exception of schools serving Innu and using Inuktitut as the language of instruction, there was "a dearth of courses that use(d) First nations languages as the language of instruction" (Kirkness & Bowman cited: Burnaby 1996: 216). A number of promising models for program delivery through schooling have been reported, including variations on the French immersion model and use of community adults in auxiliary roles (cf. Heimbecker 1997 for descriptions of some of the more well-known experiments). Such efforts still reach only a small proportion of pupils, and the means are lacking to generalize them.

The language effects of the current pattern of education are unambiguous. An analysis of data from the census of 1951 and 1981 compared the proportion of mother-tongue speakers of Aboriginal languages among the Aboriginal population. "In 1951, 87.4 % of the aboriginal population had an Aboriginal language as a mother tongue, whereas in 1981 it was 29.3 %" (Burnaby 1996: 209).

Language maintenance and even language revitalization are much talked about, but only recently have stronger measures been taken to increase broader use of Aboriginal languages in localities where the languages retain viable discourse communities. The Aboriginal Peoples' Program of the Department of Canadian Heritage operates with a current (2001-2002) budget of about C\$65.5 million that is distributed across a number of social development initiatives, including capacity-building for native organizations, youth initiatives, and language and cultural development (Canadian Heritage 2000a). Part of the funds for language and cultural development come from an initiative announced in 1998 for a program to preserve aboriginal languages, budgeted at C\$20 million over four years (Canadian Heritage 1998). The long-term objectives of the program are to increase the number of Aboriginal language speakers, expand the domains in which Aboriginal languages are spoken and increase the rate of intergenerational transmission (Canadian Heritage 2000a). Funding is provided to projects that are submitted and operated by Aboriginal organizations such as communities/nations, Aboriginal governments, education centers, and Friendship Centres (Canadian Heritage 2000b).

If one examines the *direction* of current initiatives to promote native languages in education, the potential implications for identity development are promising, at least for the relatively small numbers of localities and Aboriginal languages which appear to have a reasonable chance of language maintenance and revitalization. Although it is easy to question the *magnitude* of the efforts, the effects of historical events on all aspects of community life and social organization have been so deleterious as to render it impossible to proceed rapidly, hence the emphasis across governmental departments (not just Canadian Heritage) on activities that will ameliorate the living conditions and help restore the tissue of social relations within communities where social pathology has often disrupted basic day-to-day existence.

If one examines the impact of programs and policies as they have worked down to the present - notwithstanding good intentions and great expenditure of resources and effort from many sources, not least from the Aboriginal Peoples themselves - the consequences for civic and citizenship identity remain massively negative. In the three dimensions of citizenship - rights, access and belonging - it is clear that the residue of overt social discrimination along with personal disempowerment of many persons of Native ancestry means that they are socialized into a civic identity that, as part of the Canadian nation-state, amounts to a second-class version of citizenship. Language in education policies and practices of the past, together with the administrative difficulties of instituting vigorous and renewed policies in the present, have played - and continue to play - a significant role in defining Aboriginal identity as subordinate, alienated,

marginal or excluded (terminology depends on the individuals and the analytical perspective adopted).

At the same time, the ethnic and cultural revitalization movements of Aboriginal Peoples and their vigorous assertion of claims to First Nations status and rights provide hope. Revitalization means asserting an alternative identity that is a challenge to the existing order, particularly legal and constitutional. I would note that the willingness - in principle - of Canadian authorities to recognize collective rights, not only to control of schooling but to create alternative forms of governance, is extremely significant with respect to revitalizing languages. The unique situation created by the reversion of much political control to Inuit in the new entity of Nunavut constitutes a model that, in my view, is at least as original as some of the experiments that characterized the early structuring of the former Soviet Union.

In the case of minority Francophones, the model of promoting community development (a predecessor similar to much of the Aboriginal Peoples' Program described above) was combined effectively with development of schooling rights that were conferred upon individuals but exercised by the communities (where numbers warranted...) who have right to schools under minority control. This model of minority language education is probably suited to certain communities but inappropriate for others. But its success in some Aboriginal environments will require a degree of control that allows for restructuring the aims and objectives, not just the means, of schooling.

For many communities and families, language shift has pushed too far to be reversed, less because of lack of resources than because of lack of will and the demography that might offer reasonable chances of linguistic revival, though ethnic revitalization is still a viable alternative for most. If willpower is at the heart of any such effort, then the ethnic revitalization movement combined with vigorous measures to create new forms of Aboriginal-controlled governance of communities and institutions appears the only likely and viable solution. If such solutions are pursued vigorously in the coming years, predictably the impact of new forms of education under Aboriginal control will be to create positive identities (in the plural), identities that are varied to reflect the diversity of peoples and cultures subsumed under the Aboriginal heading. But most of these will be counter-identities born of struggle against centuries of injustice. As such, Aboriginal identities will not fit easily within the existing Canadian identity matrix based upon juggling and restructuring components of the official languages - multiculturalism model. Rather it will require an historic accommodation and acceptance of Aboriginal identities as parallel and equally Canadian forms of identity.

5. Conclusion

The Canadian model of using official languages in education has been pursued for more than three decades with considerable success and has raised the concept of official languages to the status of a powerful shared symbol of the Canadian nation-state. The successes achieved are important but incomplete. None of the

successes could have been achieved without the converging efforts of both federal and provincial authorities. The strengthening of minority Francophone identity and the viability of communities has been a major outcome of policies and programs deliberately pursued over decades. But declining demography - a product of declining fertility levels for all Canadians - combined with the effects of exogamy as a factor in assimilation means that minority Francophone communities will only remain viable and vibrant if the effort is pursued and expanded over the coming decades. Similarly the rapid expansion of bilingualism among majority English speakers, while extraordinary in absolute and comparative terms, falls short of permitting all Canadians who want it, the right to acquire functional English-French bilingualism.

The creation and pursuit of the official languages programs has had marked positive effects in promoting a sense of Canadian identity, though this identity has not replaced nor submerged the parallel existence of Franco-Canadian, Acadian and Québécois identities. Acceptance of official languages as a symbol of Canadian civic identity has not, either, resolved all interest issues, but it has made it easier to address them within a democratic framework of discourse. Multiculturalism policies have made alternative multiple ethnic and cultural identities acceptable, but these identities have not eclipsed feelings of Canadian citizenship and belonging for the majority of citizens.

When one examines the impact of the official languages model upon major sub-groupings of the Canadian population - grouped in terms of their mother tongue and self-identification of ethnic ancestry - it is clear that certain major identity needs have not been directly addressed by the official languages in education model. Other programs exist that, for a variety of reasons, are neither coherent nor specifically addressed to the identity needs of certain categories of citizens. Children of recent immigrants whose home languages are neither English nor French have not received, except in relatively small numbers and for short periods, mother tongue language support through the school system. The heritage languages model of voluntary additional instruction for short periods of the school day does provide demonstrated benefits in assisting adjustment to schooling but falls far short of what would be required to maintain immigrant languages and cultures beyond the second or third generations. Models of providing instruction in English and French as second languages for adult immigrants have been subordinated mainly to concerns for short-term job placement. The consequences have been twofold: (a) failure to use the second language instruction system systematically to reduce problems of insertion in Canadian society and actively to promote a positive sense of Canadian citizenship identity and (b) exclusion of certain groups, particularly women, whose identity formation has been left largely to chance, where the typical result is socialization into a marginalized or subordinate civic identity.

Aboriginal Peoples were marginalized long before the official languages models became law. Their marginalization was not altered significantly by the new programs begun from the mid-1960s onward. A variety of social forces not derived from the official language model have continued to undermine

Aboriginal languages and have produced as a sort of counter-reaction a movement of Aboriginal ethnic revival. The key demands of Aboriginal Peoples for forms of recognition and self-government are the most likely avenue for progress. If recognition of Aboriginal rights and the progressive creation of autonomous models of self-government and community control of institutions such as schooling proves to be successful, the likely consequence of success will be the creation of Aboriginal identities that are a form of counter-identity, forged out of resistance to centuries of marginalization. The policy challenge of new Aboriginal identities will be to give them a parallel and equal status to those that have been constructed for other Canadians from the crucible of official languages, multiculturalism and ethnocultural allegiances.

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