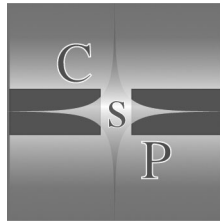


Language Issues in Canada

Language Issues in Canada
Multidisciplinary Perspectives

Edited by

Martin Howard



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PREFACE

This book has its origins in a research seminar hosted by the Association for Canadian Studies in Ireland in April 2005. The seminar was held at the Canadian Embassy, Dublin, and focused on the theme of this volume by exploring, from a comparative perspective, language issues in two bilingual countries, namely Canada and Ireland. I gratefully acknowledge the support of the Association for Canadian Studies in Ireland in organising the event, along with the support of the Canadian Embassy, Dublin and the Canadian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Some of the papers in this volume were originally presented at that seminar. I am extremely grateful to the presenters for allowing their papers to be published here, as well as to those other authors who accepted my invitation to contribute a paper to this volume.

Martin Howard
Cork, January 2007

CHAPTER ONE

LANGUAGE IN CANADA: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

MARTIN HOWARD¹

This volume has its background in Canada's linguistic duality based on its anglophone and francophone identities. While in the latter case, that identity can be traced back to 1534 with the arrival of Jacques Cartier, it was the 17th century that particularly saw the settlement of French emigrants, especially in Quebec and in Acadia, comprising the present-day provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Historically, the difficult relationship between French and English is reflected in a number of key-events, such as the Treaties of Utrecht and Paris (1713 and 1763 respectively) and "le Grand Dérangement" of rebellious Acadians of 1755. In the former case, the treaties saw the respective colonies of "la Nouvelle France" and Acadia being ceded to England, such that English became the official language. In the latter case, Acadians were deported principally to Louisiana in the USA, giving rise to the important French-speaking population now living in that state.

While today, both English and French equally constitute Canada's official languages, following the Constitution Act of 1969 / 1988, that duality gives rise to a number of issues concerning the relationship between each language, and between these two languages and those spoken by allophone speakers, that is to say the other non-official languages of Canada such as the First Nations languages, as well as immigrant languages.² Indeed, taken together allophone speakers currently make up just 4% less than the proportion of francophone speakers who constitute 22% of Canada's population of 30 million (Conrick in press). In spite of their equality in law, the relationship between English and French is nonetheless less equal from a linguistic point of view at least, whereby English has dominant status, with the francophone and allophone groups, in turn, constituting minority speaker groups. The challenges that such a situation gives rise to in bilingual and multilingual countries such as Canada are diverse, and include, for example, political (governance) issues, legislative issues, social issues, educational issues, as well as more linguistic and psychological issues such as in the case of language contact and change, as well as speech

accommodation and identity issues. Taken together, the issues provide an insight into the complexity of the relationship between two or more languages in society, which can significantly impact upon the status and survival of the minority language(s). (For discussion in the case of the French language in Canada, see Robillard 1986; Bourhis 1984, 1994.)

Language challenges in bilingual and multilingual societies: The case of Canada

The challenges referred to can be briefly outlined as follows:

Governance issues from a political and legislative perspective

Canada's language legislation is often hailed as a role model for other bilingual countries whereby a number of measures has been seen as highly positive in the development of minority language rights.³ The measures in place in Canada principally stem from the Official Languages Acts of 1969 and 1988 giving equal status to Canada's two official languages. While the first act stemmed from the work of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism between 1963 and 1970, established in response to linguistic polarization and Quebec's increasing dissatisfaction with its place in Canada, the act was revised in the newer act of 1988 which sought to make more explicit the broad rights developed in the 1982 Canadian Charter of Official Rights and Freedoms. Such an approach to linguistic duality is clearly different to that adopted in other countries. For example, in Ireland, the Irish constitution identifies Irish as the country's first language, in spite of the fact that it constitutes by far the minority language relative to English. Indeed, an Official Language Act was only adopted in 2003. An alternative approach is that adopted in Belgium where a more territorial approach to language planning is evident, with only the capital city of Brussels constituting a bilingual entity, providing services in both Flemish and French to its inhabitants, while the north constitutes the Flemish-speaking entity of Flanders, and the south constitutes the French-speaking entity of Wallonie.⁴ Each territory is unilingual insofar as administrative and public services, including schooling are available only in the relevant language.

Through its language legislation, the Federal Government of Canada has committed itself to enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic communities in Canada by supporting and assisting their development, and fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.⁵ In practical terms, it means, for example, that bilingualism is evident in Canada's parliament, federal courts, and government offices, thus ensuring the

rights of minority speakers to access federal government services in their chosen language,⁶ as well as their rights as federal employees to use their language in their place of work as public servants in designated regions.⁷ Another important area is that of education, whereby French schools are available to the French minority population of a province, where numbers warrant. It is also mandatory for virtually all consumer goods to have packaging and labelling in both languages.

Similarly, at provincial level, some provinces have adopted a number of language laws. For example, New Brunswick passed its own Official Languages Act in 1969, reflecting the principle of equality enshrined in the federal Act. While New Brunswick thus constitutes Canada's only officially bilingual province, Ontario's French Language Services Act of 1969 ensures that most government, legislative and court services are available in French in designated regions. While other provinces outside Quebec have similarly adopted the principle of linguistic equality through which their legislation, policies or practices ensure that a range of provincial services can be accessed in French, Quebec's language legislation is at odds with federal legislation: following the passing of the *Charte de la Langue française* in 1978, popularly known as Bill 101, Quebec is officially monolingual in contrast to Canada's official bilingual status! As Canada's only French-dominant province, the Bill requires the use of French in government, commerce, business and education, although the use of English is still mandatory in the legislature, statutes and courts.⁸ Quebec's Bill 101 has been instrumental in reversing the province's language fortunes, changing the social and economic hierarchy of the province from the pre-Bill 101 days when Quebec's anglophone elite enjoyed social and economic gains not experienced by many of the more dominant francophone population: as Bourhis (2000, p. 109) writes referring to the findings of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, not only did they show "that Francophones were under-represented in the Canadian Federal Administration with English as the dominant language of work, but that with equal qualifications and experience Francophones had systematically lower wages than Anglophones across Canada."⁹ In relation to results of the Gendron Commission (Quebec 1972) confirming these findings, Bourhis continues: "English, not French, was the language of business and upward mobility" (p. 109).

Demographic, social and educational issues

These issues are wide-ranging. At a demographic level, issues to do with the changing numbers and proportion of anglophones, francophones, and allophones can be analysed thanks to the wide-ranging census data available at www.statscan.ca. The census data capture in a very detailed way Canada's

demolinguistic situation, offering findings at federal, provincial and local level concerning mother tongue usage, knowledge of Canada's official languages, and language usage in the home and workplace. The very rich analyses performed by Statistics Canada provide insights that go beyond showing mere changes in the numbers of speakers of each language, but rather illuminate over time questions to do with the survival and maintenance of each language. On the one hand, such issues illuminate language transfer in terms of diachronic changes in levels of bilingualism. For example, in learning a language other than one's mother tongue, the individual may go beyond mere knowledge of that language such that, depending on circumstances, the second language increasingly dominates over the individual's mother tongue in either the public or private sphere, potentially leading to subsequent loss of one's mother tongue. On the other hand, synchronic differences provide important insights into the impact of social factors such as age and gender on levels of bilingualism, as well as geography in terms of province and locality.¹⁰

At a social level, such data can be used in addressing issues to do with the availability of services in French for minority francophone speakers. They also allow some insight into the impact of legislative and social initiatives in increasing the number of French speakers in Canada, such as in terms of changes in the number of anglophone, francophone and allophone speakers at provincial and local level, as well as the number of anglophone and francophone speakers knowing each others' language. The same is also true in the case of allophone speakers knowing French and/or English. Such issues receive particular attention in the work of the Office of the Commissioner for Official Languages in Canada, which oversees and promotes the practical implementation of Canada's language legislation, as well as evaluating its impact, such as in terms of the provision of services to minority French speakers. The Commissioner effectively constitutes a languages "ombudsman" through which Canadian citizens may have recourse when they feel that their language rights have not been upheld.¹¹ A particular case in point concerns the availability of French-medium schools in areas where such schools are required by minority French-speaking children. Indeed, on an educational level, Canada has also been at the forefront of developing French immersion programmes for anglophone children, which serve as an important means of promoting knowledge of French among the anglophone school-going population.

Linguistic and psychological issues

While the Canadian approach to linguistic duality may in some regards be seen as exemplary, a large of body of research on minority speakers in Canada points, in contrast, to the idealism at the heart of that approach. For example,

studies from within a sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic framework point to a considerable discrepancy between the minority speaker's reality and the ideological aims of Canada's language legislation. In particular, we are concerned with the issue of language contact in bilingual communities in terms, for example, of the impact of the dominant language on the minority language, as well as socio-attitudinal issues among minority speakers concerning use of their language variety in society, as well as the characteristics of that language variety.

That linguistic and attitudinal impact concerns, for example, such phenomena as language transfer from and speech accommodation to the dominant language. In the former case, the issue relates primarily to the use of English words in French in terms of code-switching and borrowing which are characteristic of bilingual communities. In the case of speech accommodation, the issue concerns a range of factors underlying the minority speaker's ethnolinguistic identity in terms of the opportunities they take to use either the minority or dominant language in society.¹² As a wealth of Canadian research within a sociological and psycholinguistic framework has shown, language usage is never solely about the availability of opportunities to use one's language, but rather a range of social, psychological and cognitive factors intervene, creating a highly complex dynamism at work behind the speaker's choice of language. Those factors concern, among others, the speaker's motivation, attitudes and linguistic confidence in relation to their language as well as the other language, such that the extent to which they accommodate towards either the dominant or minority language is not a simple matter. Other factors concern the speaker's perception of the vitality underlying either language, which arises out of the status of each group in society, demographic strength, institutional support and control factors (Sachdev and Bourhis 1990, p. 299). In terms of its evaluative significance, code-switching to the other language, as a means of speech accommodation, therefore, constitutes an important means of expressing and gaining social approval and integration, while not to code-switch may serve to accentuate linguistic differences between speakers of each language.

Apart from such linguistic code-switching in terms of both the use of English words in French, as well as speech accommodation in terms of using the other language, other linguistic issues concern the development of the minority language in terms of the potential simplification of some of its features. While such simplification may reflect natural developmental tendencies within the language, such simplification may quite likely reflect the effects of language contact with the dominant language, as compared to the maintenance of those same features in speech communities where the minority language has more dominant status.¹³ On this score, a large range of sociolinguistic research has

been done on Canadian varieties of French, such that a comparison is possible of how the characteristics of minority varieties such as those in Ontario diverge from Quebec French which has more dominant status, albeit nonetheless a minority language variety relative to English.¹⁴ Particularly interesting work concerns the impact of varying degrees of restriction on the minority speaker's opportunities to use French in minority speech communities (see R. Mougeon, this volume; Mougeon and Beniak 1991). All in all, such divergence of the minority language from more standard varieties has been found to give rise to a range of attitudinal issues surrounding the status of the minority language as a standard linguistic variety. In this regard, a large body of research in a Franco-Canadian context has traditionally pointed to the negative evaluative judgements of French Canadian speakers towards their variety of French compared to more international varieties.¹⁵

* * *

A brief outline of language issues in Canada¹⁶

As the presentation of some of the principal language issues at work in bilingual and multilingual societies shows, such issues are diverse, and have given rise to a very rich body of research in a Canadian context. The collection of papers presented in this volume focuses on such issues primarily from a minority language perspective, in relation to the French language in Canada, but also in relation to First Nations language issues. The volume foregoes a more singular approach in terms of focus on a particular issue such as the political or the legislative, reflecting the need to consider the impact of one issue on another, whereby one language issue cannot be seen to exist in isolation, but rather each issue is interrelated.¹⁷ In so doing, the volume adopts a more varied approach in exploring the complexity of a range of key-issues underlying the theme of language within a Canadian context, by illuminating the relationship between such issues across the political, legislative, social, educational, and linguistic horizons. For example, a concrete example of the need to relate the fields of inquiry in order to gain more expansive insights into the global issue of language in Canada concerns the implications of the political, legislative and demographic situation for the standardisation of Québécois French, whereby this variety of French is increasingly seen to assume the status of a standard language in its own right. This change in status from a perceived less standard variety is in spite of the minority status of French in Canada, and thanks to a number of factors such as those concerning the demographic, the institutional, the legislative, the political, and the attitudinal.¹⁸

The collection firstly aims to illuminate a number of political and legislative issues surrounding language governance in Canada. Those issues stem from Canada's official bilingual status, and relate, for example, to the range of measures at federal level which are seen to enhance the vitality of both English and French in Canada so as to foster the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society. At a practical level, those measures concern, for example, the provision of federal services in French and the availability of French schools in minority francophone communities.

As a means of ensuring that Canada's linguistic legislation is properly implemented and availed of, Canada has also established the Office of the Commissioner for Official Languages through which the public may have recourse in the case where they believe that their linguistic rights are not upheld in the public domain. The impact of such measures can be seen insofar as Canada has received some international acclaim such that its language legislative framework is held by some as a role-model for other bilingual societies. On the other hand, however, much criticism is directed at the Commissioner for Official Languages insofar as the measures seen to promote bilingualism are often deemed to be simply over-ambitious among federal employees. Furthermore, the fact that the First Nations languages have only been assigned official status in certain territories, unlike French and English, has also given rise to considerable debate.

In contrast to Canada's official bilingual status, however, Quebec's prioritisation of the French language through its monolingual approach is of particular interest for the insight it provides into the impact of language legislation on the maintenance and survival of a minority language. The implications of such legislation can be seen in terms of its impact on Québec's changing linguistic landscape, whereby, in contrast to the situation prior to the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s, a range of demographic, political, legislative, institutional, and social factors have contributed to making Quebec an international success story with regard to the survival of the French language in the province.¹⁹ For example, although a minority language group in Canada, and indeed throughout North-America as a whole, francophone speakers in Québec have been found in recent years to increasingly demonstrate "linguistic security" concerning their language variety, as opposed to the "insecurity" that can characterise minority speakers.²⁰ For example, in a comparative study of minority Franco-Ontarian speakers in Ottawa and their more dominant Quebec counterparts across the river in Hull, Quebec, Poplack (1989) reports that those in Quebec are less open to the anglophone community than the Franco-Ontarians in terms of speech accommodation, while they also have a less positive perception of bilingualism. Taken together, Poplack interprets such

differences as reflecting greater insecurity among the Quebecois speakers, whereas the Franco-Ontarians demonstrate relative security.

However, the increased security experienced among French speakers in Quebec in recent years has contributed enormously to the changing status of Québécois French, whereby it is increasingly assuming the status of a standard language with its own linguistic norms of reference, which are no longer necessarily identified with the dominant international variety of metropolitan French. The relationship between language legislation and language standardisation within the context of Québec is a second area explored in the volume. Furthermore, in tandem with the issue of language standardisation goes the need to illuminate the norms of reference of standard Québécois French. For example, to what extent do those norms of reference approach / diverge from those seen in other international varieties of French as well as in other Canadian varieties of French? By what means are those norms established, promoted, and further filtered into everyday Québécois speech? For the most part, those norms of reference remain to be characterised, which contrasts with the vast work done on the idiosyncratic characteristics of Quebec French. Indeed, it is those idiosyncratic characteristics which gave rise in part to the attitudinal belief that Quebec French was less standard than international varieties of French, nicely captured by other anecdotal evidence such as Pierre Trudeau's description of Quebec French as "lousy French," comments made in 1968 when he was Minister for Justice. He further added that the Federal Government should not give more powers to Quebec until it could teach better French in its schools, thus explicitly linking language quality with political rights. A further example concerns the media reference to Quebec French as a creole language, as opposed to a language in its own right 20 years ago, which caused consternation among the public and linguists alike.

While the use of anglicisms is one important characteristic of Quebec French which gives it a quality of a variety of French which is in some way less standard than other international varieties, other features include the specificity of aspects of its pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar which can be summarised as follows:

- at a phonetic level, we note, for example, considerable lengthening of vowel sounds which number 17 in total, as opposed to the more restricted range of 12-13 vowel sounds to be found in continental French. A further pronunciation trait concerning vowels relates to the marked use of diphthongs such as in the case of "fête" [festival] which is pronounced as "faête." With regard to consonants, we note, for example, the palatalisation of /t/ and /d/ which are pronounced as /ts/ and /ds/. (See Walker 1984 for a presentation of the pronunciation traits of Canadian French.)

- lexical items are wide-ranging and include borrowed words from English, such as “factrie” and “barmaid,” English words and expressions translated into French such as “je suis quinze” [I am fifteen], and “québécoismes” not found in other varieties of French and which are culture-specific, such as “motoneige, nordicité, cégep, traversier, érablière, souffleuse” (Ashby 1988, p. 693).
- more extensive use of non-standard grammatical forms with corresponding underuse of standard grammatical forms. For example, there is a tendency for incorrect verb conjugation such as “ils risent” [they laugh] as opposed to “ils rient.” We also note the strengthening of plural personal pronouns, such as in “eux autres ils sont pas là” [the others are not there]. Other vernacular markers concern the marking of futurity as “m’as venir” [I will come]. In minority communities outside Quebec, we also find other simplification phenomena such as the lesser usage of the subjunctive, the misuse of certain prepositions such as “sur la television” [on television] and some incorrect verbal agreements such as “ils part” [they leave], as opposed to “ils partent.” Syntactic idiosyncrasies are also obvious such as in the case of the underuse of the relative pronoun “dont” as in “le livre que je parle” [the book I’m speaking about], and the use of direct question forms in indirect contexts, as in “il veut voir qu’est-ce qu’il a fait” [he wants to see what he did]. (For discussion of all such characteristics, see Ashby 1984; Boisvert *et al.* 1986; Cajolet-Laganière and Martel 1995; Corbeil 1982; Dubois and Boudreault 1996; Dumas 1987; King 2000; Lemieux and Cedergren 1985; Maurais 1993; Motapanyane (2006); Péronnier (1989); Poirier *et al.* 1994; Poplack 1992; Thomas 1986.)

While such characteristics have been the focus of various descriptive studies, such studies are all the more important for the insight they provide into the impact of social factors on the manifestation of such characteristics. In particular, the minority language status of French outside Quebec, for example, has very serious implications in terms of the linguistic development of the language. That is to say, in contrast with the linguistic standardisation to be observed in Québec, issues to do with linguistic simplification are much more prevalent in certain linguistic communities outside Quebec such as in Ontario, where francophone speakers are very much in the minority, accounting for just 5% of Ontario’s 10 million inhabitants. Such linguistic simplification relates to the speaker’s more restricted contact with the language in minority speech communities, where the English language is present to varying degrees. For example, one observes the gradual loss of some prepositions in favour of others which more closely reflect the semantic transfer of their English equivalents. Examples identified by Mougeon and Beniak (1991) concern use of the

prepositions “à” and “chez” whereby their usage is replaced with their English equivalents, such as in “sur la television” in place of “à la television” [on television] and “à la maison de Jean” instead of “chez Jean” [at John’s house]. Extensive research studies such as those by King (2000) in the case of Acadian French, Thomas (1986) in the case of a Franco-Ontarian community in Sudbury, and Mougeon and Beniak (1991) have illuminated such linguistic simplification in terms of its characteristics, as well as the sociolinguistic factors at work behind it. In particular, Mougeon and Beniak (1991) have identified an effect for the degree of restriction in terms of the speaker’s contact with the French language in his/her speech community (For discussion, see Mougeon, this volume). For example, not only are such restricted speakers found to underuse vernacular and non-standard variants in favour of more standard variants, but the social and stylistic stratification surrounding their usage is often found to be missing in their language usage among non-restricted speakers (see, for example, Mougeon 1999). Taken together, such characteristics of the French language in Canada, as well as attitudinal issues towards Canadian varieties of French have given rise to lower esteem being attached to such varieties compared to metropolitan French.

Such attitudinal issues have been the focus of a large body of work within a sociological framework in recent years. Such work has investigated the relationship between language attitudes and language practices in terms of standard and less-standard language usage. For example, in a comparative study of French language practices in the workplace, Roy (2004) outlines how local varieties of French differ in terms of the perception held of their suitability in the workplace, namely in a bilingual call-centre in Southern Ontario and in the Alberta tourism industry. In particular, she finds that greater importance is attached to use of the standard language in the call-centre, while non-standard local varieties of French, as well as code-switching and lexical borrowing from English are negatively evaluated. In contrast, in the Alberta tourism industry, much less importance was attached to the idiosyncrasies of the individual’s speech variety, but rather all varieties of French were valued. In particular, the ability to speak French, irrespective of those idiosyncrasies, was viewed positively as a means of promoting French language services. In conclusion, Roy interprets such differences in terms of a “deterministic connection between social practices and language varieties” (pp. 370-1).

Similarly, in an educational context, Gajo (1999) presents a study of social practices and language usage in the broader framework of the relationship between French and English. His study is based on a comparative investigation of French immersion schools in Ontario and French schools in the same province. From a sociological perspective, his findings point to both similarities and differences in each school setting in terms of the relationship that emerges

between French and English. For example, although recourse is made to English in both settings such as in the form of cultural references specific to an anglophone context, or use of an English translation for pedagogic efficiency, discursive cues suggest that such recourse seems to be similarly viewed negatively. Participants in such educational settings are constantly confronted with the complex questions of when, what, and how to manage such recourse to English within their French microcosm existing in a larger anglophone milieu. It is in this regard that differences emerge since the questions emerge as being especially pertinent in the French school setting, where the modalities of such linguistic management diverge from those at work in the immersion setting.

In further work of a sociological nature, Heller (1999) also offers a range of insights into the language contradictions at work in an educational setting in Franco-Ontarian schools. In particular, she highlights the “otherness” value attached to English, whereby a discrepancy emerges between the ideological aim of monolingual standard French language usage within the school against the societal value attached to bilingualism as well as the affective value attached to more local, but less-standard varieties of French. Taken together, Gajo’s and Heller’s work points to the highly complex relationship that arises between the francophone speaker’s identity, be they a member of the teaching staff or student body, and the educational constraints characterising a francophone educational setting.

Apart from minority speakers, however, linguistic duality also has repercussions for dominant speech groups in the realm of education, and beyond. On this score, Canada is once again often hailed as an international success story, thanks to the important uptake among anglophones on French immersion education programmes which are seen to entail highly successful outcomes for French language acquisition. The success of such programmes has important political and social implications, as exemplified, for example, by the increasing knowledge of both French and English among the public, at 17,7% of the population in 2001 as opposed to 16.3% in 1991, while one quarter of young people aged between 15-19 are now bilingual—more than double that of their parents’ generation. In contrast to such positive points, however, we note that, while bilingualism is on the increase at 17% of the population, this figure is rather biased, since we find that the level of bilingualism among the francophone population reaches 44%, as compared to just 9% of the anglophone population. Indeed, in the case of anglophones, this figure is little changed since 1991, whereas bilingualism has increased by 5% among the francophone population. We further find that, rather ironically, bilingualism is most extensive in Québec where 66% of anglophones know French, while 37% of francophones know English. Thus, as Conrick (in press) reports, the province that has

distanced itself from the Canadian mainstream is the one that most closely matches the federal ideal of linguistic duality.

While such figures provide some insight into the impact of educational and other social initiatives on bilingualism, a number of challenges lies ahead in terms of the future place of French immersion programmes in promoting bilingualism in Canada. This is in spite of the extensive funding that the Canadian government has provided for research into immersion language education. Indeed, such research has resulted in a wealth of work on language learning in immersion, giving rise to a range of pedagogical developments such as in relation to the nature and benefits of different types of language interaction in the immersion classroom.²¹ Such pedagogical developments have impacted enormously on international language education practices beyond Canada. However, as outlined by Swain 2000, such funding of immersion education research is increasingly jeopardized as a result of the “normalcy” which surrounds French immersion programmes right now, which contrasts with the innovative air which originally surrounded such programmes at their outset. In concrete terms, such “normalcy” makes it all the more important to evaluate how immersion programme outcomes in linguistic terms match the federal ideal of bilingualism. In this regard, questions arise, for example, concerning the characteristics of the French learner variety spoken by immersion programme graduates in relation to their native speaker counterparts, as well as the use of such language skills among graduates in their working and private lives (see Hart *et al.* 1998).

The language experiences of immigrant speakers who equally constitute a linguistic minority in Canada are naturally another important area when considering language in Canada. Those experiences relate to their continued usage, or not, of their own language within Canada, as well as their learning and usage of Canada’s official languages. Of particular interest is the uptake of French as opposed to English by immigrants to Quebec. For example, in their place of work, French is only the slightly more prevalent language of use compared to English: based on the 2001 census data, Conrick (in press) reports that, taken together, 76% of allophone immigrants report using French “most often” and “regularly,” compared to 70% in the case of English. (For further discussion of the place of allophone speakers in Quebec, see Molinaro 1999. See also Forlot 1999 for discussion of immigrant language usage.)

A further area concerns Canada’s response to the language needs of immigrants such as in the domain of education. For example, while those pupils attending immersion programmes in Canada’s urban centres reflect the increasingly multilinguistic background of their residents, a further challenge facing such programmes concerns precisely the need to now take full account of the range of language backgrounds among immigrant learners in their learning

of French. That is to say, the traditional aim of immersion schools to provide the right conditions for additive bilingualism no longer applies to many immigrant pupils whose first language is not English, and for whom the acquisition of French constitutes their third language. As Swain and Lapkin (2005) point out, immersion schools now need to seek ways of not only promoting the learning of French, but also fostering the pupils' home language as well as their second language of English in ways that have not been necessary until now. These are, indeed, issues of widespread interest across the Western world.

While, taken together, immigrants constitute an important group of speakers in Canada, the challenges facing maintenance of such immigrant languages are, in some regards, not unlike those experienced by Aboriginal speakers. In the latter case, Foster (1982) has identified fifty-three Aboriginal languages which can be classified into eleven language families and isolates. Whereas federal language legislation is solely concerned with upholding the language rights of francophone and anglophone speakers, Aboriginal languages are not included in such legislation, giving rise to concerns surrounding the maintenance and ultimate survival of Canada's Aboriginal languages. Indeed, from this perspective, Foster (1982) categorizes such languages as ranging from "verging on extinction" to "excellent chances of survival." Although over 1 million people claim aboriginal origins, using the criterion of the number of speakers of the language, only three languages are classified within the latter category, namely Cree and Ojibwa of Algonquian, and Inuktitut. Cook (1998) adds, however, that Chipewyan also has excellent chances of survival. (For an outline of aboriginal languages in Canada, see Maurais 1992.) The picture is even more complex insofar as census returns indicate significant discrepancies in the number of respondents who claim to understand their native Aboriginal language, as opposed to speaking the language, as well as between respondents claiming to use the language in their daily lives, as opposed to merely within a domestic context. Such discrepancies reflect the impact of Canada's more dominant languages of English and French, whereby considerable language shift has occurred in the direction of the uptake of either of the more dominant languages, through language contact beyond native language communities, such as through marriage and interaction in Canadian society in general. The impact is not only language loss through a reduction in the number of speakers of a language, but also in the form of the loss of native vocabulary to express concepts specific to Aboriginal culture and identity. (For discussion of such issues, see Kinkade 1991; Rigsby 1987.) Such issues are the focus of a chapter by Keith Battarbee in this volume which looks towards the future for aboriginal languages in Canadian society. For example, important areas concern the role of education and language policy in aiding to reduce the language shift that has

already occurred, as a means of ensuring inter-generational transmission of Aboriginal languages into the future (see Richstone 1989).

As is clearly evident, language issues in bilingual and multilingual societies are complex, giving rise to a range of challenges for speakers of both dominant and minority languages. With these multitudinal issues in mind, this volume presents a range of chapters which aim to provide a number of recent insights into such key-issues in the case of Canada.

Outline of chapters in this volume

In the following chapter, “Legislating for Language: The Canadian Experience of Language Policy and Linguistic Duality,” Maeve Conrick presents an overview of the Canadian approach to linguistic duality in relation to the political reactive response as represented through the country’s language legislation. That overview treats the key-developments in the adoption of such legislation at both federal and provincial level. A number of themes emerge in the chapter, such as the underlying historical situation giving rise to that legislation, the key-components of the legislative measures, and the societal impact of such legislation. The “Canadian approach” to linguistic duality is further considered in terms of a comparison with the legislative approach adopted in bilingual societies beyond Canada, such as Ireland, so as to identify a number of similarities and differences, as well as to illuminate the relative success of the Canadian approach in terms of its strengths and weaknesses, as well as the future challenges that lie ahead.

While federal legislation is solely concerned with Canada’s two official languages of French and English, Keith Battarbee considers, among other things, the relationship between such legislation and Canada’s indigenous languages, in a chapter entitled “Aboriginal languages in 21st century Canada.” He outlines the plight of speakers of Aboriginal languages in ensuring the survival and revitalization of their linguistic traditions, such as in terms of their current demolinguistic situation, the transmission of indigenous cultural values, as well as the legislative framework in place in some indigenous territories and regions. In the former case, it becomes apparent how difficult it is to gain a real picture of the real numbers of speakers involved, due to the ambiguity of some terms and their definitions in the Canadian Census Dictionary. With regard to the transmission of heritage-language cultural values, Battarbee outlines how such transmission is often only possible through English or French by recourse to the use of words and phrases from the traditional language. The chapter

concludes by looking at what the future might hold for indigenous languages in Canada in terms of the impact of the linguistic legislation which has been adopted in some regions and territories, in contrast with the limitations of federal legislation to more adequately support such languages.

Moving beyond the federal level to issues arising at provincial level in Quebec, Leigh Oakes outlines a number of questions surrounding the development of Standard Quebec French in his chapter, “Whose French? Language attitudes, linguistic insecurity and standardisation in Québec.” The chapter begins by considering a report published in 2001 by the *Commission des États généraux sur la situation de l’avenir de la langue française au Québec* [the General States Commission on the future situation of the French language in Quebec], otherwise known as the Larose Commission, which was primarily a contribution to status planning in Québec in the context of promoting French as the common public language among all Quebecers, irrespective of ethnic origin. Against this background, Oakes discusses the thorny corpus planning issue which has dogged francophones in Québec since the 19th century, namely which variety of French to speak?: *Le français de France* or *le français d’ici* [the French of France or the French of here]? The article follows successive debates over the quality of French spoken in Québec, from the original myth of a French Canadian patois that was the source of linguistic insecurity to the tirades of le Frère Untel during the Quiet Revolution and of Georges Dor in the mid-1990s. In more recent years, the question has continued to give rise to discussion within the context of efforts to “de-ethnicise” Québec identity and make French, in the words of the Larose Commission, “*une langue pour tout le monde*” [a language for everyone]. Despite the increasingly widespread belief that the French spoken in Québec cannot and should not necessarily approach the norms of the French of France, the belief that Quebecers should adopt so-called “international French” norms is nonetheless also prevalent. The difference of opinion impacts on efforts to characterise standard linguistic norms in Québec French, as seen recently in the context of the debate surrounding the development of the FRANQUS project at Sherbrooke University which aims to publish a new dictionary of standard Quebec French norms in 2007.

The following chapter continues with the theme of the characterisation of Quebec French by presenting a comparative analysis of the use of standard linguistic norms in media language in both Quebec and France. In the chapter, entitled “Sociolinguistic variation and standard Québécois French: A comparative analysis,” Martin Howard firstly outlines the folk-belief underlying attitudinal surveys of francophone speakers both in Québec and in minority Canadian francophone speech communities outside Québec which have traditionally shown such speakers to consider their variety of French less

standard than continental French varieties. Such a folk-belief has often been borne out in studies of native speaker language usage where use of “non-standard” features prevails to a greater extent in Canada. Notwithstanding the use of such non-standard features, more recent work has, however, revealed changes in attitude, suggesting that Québec French is gaining in linguistic self-confidence, whereby it is increasingly assuming the status of a standard language variety in its own right. While previous work on French in Canada has tended to focus on the use of (non-)standard features in different speech communities, little work has considered the characteristics of standard Québécois French. That is to say, it is unclear to what extent its characteristics reflect more local speech varieties, or the more international varieties spoken in societies where French has more dominant status. With a view to exploring from a comparative perspective standard Québécois French as reflected in the francophone media in Québec, the chapter presents results of a large-scale quantitative analysis of data collected from a variety of radio and television media in both Québec and France. Questions addressed include:

- To what extent are (non-)standard forms present in the francophone media in Québec?
- What factors impinge on the use of such forms such as in relation to media type, discourse type, and the speaker’s sociobiographical characteristics?
- Is use of such forms a uniform phenomenon, such that use of a particular standard form implies corresponding use of other forms, or does their usage differ depending on the form in hand?
- How does use of such forms differ between France and Québec?

While results of the study point to the greater use of non-standard markers in the francophone media of Québec than in France, a number of similarities also emerge concerning the characteristics of how those markers are used. The results of the study are discussed in relation to existing findings concerning the use of (non-)standard forms by the Canadian and continental francophone public.

In the following chapter, Pierre Larrivée investigates the relation between Quebec French speakers and French speakers in Acadia. He firstly treats the historical experiences of each group within Canadian history, following which he presents a number of issues which currently distinguish each group in terms of their social identity as speakers of French on the North American continent. Such issues concern the characteristics underlying their demography, geography, and politics within Canadian society. In view of those differences, Larrivée presents a study which explores the issue of linguistic (in)security surrounding both groups of speakers in terms of their representation in the

media. A number of differences emerges concerning the perception held by more dominant speech groups of minority groups of varying degrees.

While Quebec constitutes at once both a dominant and minority speech community, the characterisation of the French spoken by true minority speakers outside Quebec is the focus of Raymond Mougeon's chapter, "Variation in the speech of francophone adolescents in Ontario." While predominantly anglophone, Ontario's population is made up of approximately 500,000 speakers of French who constitute a minority speech group to varying extents in their local communities in terms of their use of French in the private domains of society and outside such domains. Such differences are evident among pupils attending Ontario's French-medium schools, whereby pupils demonstrate varying proficiency levels in French, as well as in their familiarity with the vernacular language. Franco-Ontarian students can therefore be situated on a continuum which includes dominant French speakers at one end of the scale who are full-fledged speakers of vernacular French. At the other end of the scale, one finds French speakers who are more English-dominant, reflecting their isolation from contact with vernacular French. In this chapter, R. Mougeon presents an overview of the main sociolinguistic phenomena at work in the speech of Franco-Ontarian adolescents at different points of this continuum. The author argues that such phenomena call into question the traditional view of the Speech Community by pointing to a grey area on the continuum where restricted speakers of minority French and advanced second language learners of French demonstrate similar sociolinguistic patterns in their speech.

In the following chapter entitled "Geographical motivation of stylistic variation in French: A comparison of French speakers in France, Quebec and Ontario," Françoise Mougeon continues with the theme of "variation," by examining its differential manifestation from a geographical perspective. In particular, she explores how the speaker's choice of stylistic marker is constrained by their geographical origins, giving rise to a range of differences between francophone speakers from France, Quebec and Ontario in their use of such markers. Apart from such stylistic markers, the chapter further investigates the speakers' recourse to code-switching and lexical borrowing, where differences are also evident, reflecting the differential dominant / minority status of French in their speech communities.

While the chapters by both F. Mougeon and R. Mougeon's deal in some way with the impact of English language contact among francophone speakers in Canada, Shana Poplack, James A. Walker and Rebecca Malcolmson take the reverse perspective in their chapter, "An English 'like no other'?: Language contact and change in Quebec," where they discuss from a comparative perspective the impact of French language contact among anglophone speakers in Quebec City, Montreal, and an anglophone community in Ontario. In

particular, while R. Mougéon finds an effect for contact with the dominant language of English among his francophone speakers in Ontario, Poplack *et al.* seek to investigate whether a similar effect is evident for the dominant language of Quebec French in the English spoken by Quebec anglophone speakers. Unlike R. Mougéon's findings, the authors of this large-scale corpus study find minimal evidence to suggest that French language contact is giving rise to lexical change in Quebec English. The chapter provides a wealth of further insights concerning the sociolinguistic patterns of language usage among Quebec anglophones, such as in terms of the effect of a number of sociolinguistic factors on their use of French and English, as well as their linguistic attitudes.

While R. Mougéon's chapter deals with French language usage among minority French-speaking pupils, Isabelle Lemée, Martin Howard and Vera Regan focus on a similar issue in the context of anglophone students in Canadian French immersion schools, in their chapter entitled, "Canada's French immersion programs: Comparative perspectives in relation to other contexts of language learning." While Canadian French immersion programmes have assumed a certain folklinguistic status in view of the benefits they seemingly offer as a context for language learning, the chapter seeks to illuminate that folklinguistic belief against the background of the debate surrounding the quality of French spoken by immersion speakers in Canada. The chapter is based on a comparative analysis of the similarities and differences existing between the Canadian immersion context and other language learning contexts, such as in the case of the more traditional language classroom, as well as the naturalistic acquisition that takes place in the target language community. Based on a range of comparative quantitative analyses, those similarities and differences are exemplified in relation to the learning outcomes on a number of features of the anglophone learner's speech repertoire. The findings are discussed in terms of their pedagogical, educational, and social implications.

Notes

¹I gratefully acknowledge the support of the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences, University College, Cork, in facilitating the preparation of this chapter through a research grant.

²Except in some territories, First Nations languages do not have official status.

³For an outline, see Conrick (this volume); Coulombe (1995); Burnaby (1996); MacMillan (2003); Maurais (1995); O'Keefe (1998).

⁴For discussion, see McRae (1982).

⁵For an outline, see the website of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages www.ocol-clo.gc.ca. For a critique of language governance issues, see Cardinal (2006).

⁶Subject to a very flexible 5% "significant demand" criterion.

⁷Federal employees have the right to use their language in the National Capital Region, in New Brunswick, and in parts of Ontario and Quebec. Otherwise, they are expected to use the language of the provincial majority.

⁸For discussion of Quebec's language policies, see, among others, Chevrier (1997); Larrivée (2003a, 2003b, 2003c); the Quebec Government's 1996 Rapport du comité interministériel sur la situation de la langue française.

⁹For discussion, see Bourhis (2000).

¹⁰For discussion of recent changes in Canada's linguistic demography, see Churchill (1998); Conrick (in press); Termotte and Gauvreau (1988).

¹¹For discussion of the Commissioner's work, see her office's website www.ocolclo.gc.ca.

¹²For an overview presentation of speech accommodation theory and ethnolinguistic identity, see Sachdev and Bourhis (1990). For an overview presentation of studies within such a framework in a Canadian context, see Clément and Baker (2006).

¹³For an overview of such work in a Canadian context, see Thibault (1991-2, 2001).

¹⁴For a vast range of studies, see Mougeon and Beniak (1991).

¹⁵For discussion, see Oakes (this volume); Poplack (1989).

¹⁶While there may be other issues, we will forego an expansive discussion here in favour of a more selective outline, since detailed analyses are presented in the individual chapters which constitute this volume.

¹⁷Among the many volumes which focus on a particular theme, see, for example, Churchill (1998); Herriman and Burnaby (1996); Larrivée (2003a, 2003b, 2003c); O'Keefe (1998) in the case of linguistic politics in Canada and Quebec; King (2000); Mougeon and Beniak (1991) in the case of language contact issues; Lemieux and Cedergren (1985); Poirier (1994); Thibault (1979, 2001) in the case of sociolinguistic perspectives on the French language in Canada; Boisvert *et al.* (1986); Cajolet-Laganière and Martel (1995); Dumas (1987); Thomas (1986) in the case of the linguistic characterisation of Canadian French; Dubois and Boudreau (1996); Mougeon and Beniak (1989) in the case of the French language outside Quebec.

¹⁸For discussion of language standardisation in Quebec, see Bourhis (2000); Oakes (this volume).

¹⁹For discussion of such factors, see, for example, Bourhis (1984, 1994, 2000); Levine (1990).

²⁰For discussion, see Bourhis (1984, 1994, 2000).

²¹See, for example, Harley (1989); Lyster (1998a, 1998b).

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